

State Advocates for Reimbursement (STARs)

Roles and Responsibilities

The State Advocates for Reimbursement (STARs) are ASHA-member audiologists and speech-language pathologists appointed by their state association president, who are willing to advocate locally with:

- Legislators
- State insurance commissioners
- Health plans
- Unions
- Employers

On matters related to private health plan reimbursement. They share their advocacy skills and help create coverage and reimbursement strategies with state associations. They are the link between their state and ASHA.

The Stars will:

1. Develop a means to share information across states as well as between ASHA and the network (e.g., such as e-mail listserv, monthly conference calls, meeting at ASHA's annual convention).
2. Serve as a conduit to their state association for all information related to ASHA's Focused Initiative on Health Care Reimbursement.
 - Establish an e-mail listserv to facilitate communication among network members. The address is stareimbursement@lists.asha.org. Network members have posting rights.
 - Establish a member community forum for private health plan reimbursement issues. The address is: http://forums.asha.org/discussion/general/professional/private_health
 - Hold quarterly conference calls.
 - Regular feature story prepared by a different network state in *The ASHA Leader*.
 - Incorporate a STAR presentation (recruitment activity) into every state association meeting.
3. Develop strategies for successful private insurance advocacy across the states
 - Establish/revive committee within their state to work on private health plan reimbursement issues.
 - Prioritize obstacles to coverage (e.g., ICD-9-CM codes, coverage limitations) that were defined at the Reimbursement boot camp.
 - Share anecdotal information on advocacy successes/failures as a resource for other network members.

- Compile and disseminate current resources (ASHA's and Network's) to assist one another with advocacy efforts.
 - Create disorder-specific advocacy tools (e.g., apraxia, autism, hearing aids for children).
4. Promote to legislators, consumers, health plans, and related professionals the importance of comprehensive coverage of and reimbursement for speech-language pathology and audiology services.
- Arrange to meet with state legislator(s) when they are in their home office.
 - Initiate grassroots activities on the state level (letter writing campaign, phone calls, and visits).
 - Initiate contact with human resource trade journals (SHRM, IFEBC, and World at Work). Outcome could be an article, a meeting, a posting on their website, a session at their convention.
 - Initiate contact with trade associations that have health plans as their members (America's Health Insurance Plans). Outcome could be an article, a meeting, a posting on their website, a session at their convention.
 - Initiate contact with your state insurance commissioner. They are historically consumer-friendly. Focus of message should be your desire to assist consumers in obtaining more comprehensive coverage per their request.
 - Initiate contact with related professional organizations (AOTA, APTA, NARA, and ASA). Outcome could be an article, a meeting, a posting on their website, a session at their convention.
 - Initiate contact with the Academy of Professional Coders. ASHA has published articles in *Nancy Maquire's Coding and Billing Expert*, which is the coders' "bible."
 - Initiate contact with unions that are familiar with ASHA (American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, and United Autoworkers). Outcome could be an article, a meeting, a posting on their website, a session at their convention.
 - Provide clients with an Employer Insurance Packet and ask that they set up a meeting with their benefits manager to request more comprehensive coverage of speech-language pathology and audiology services.