Legislative Trends and Challenges for SLPs and AUDs
The National Perspective

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ASHA Public Policy Agenda Framework

- Each issue objective assigned to priority levels:
  - Highest Priority
  - Priority
  - Monitoring
  - Planning
- Based on:
  a) Importance to the ASHA members and those they serve;
  b) Immediacy and likelihood meaningful action will occur.
- These priorities are not absolute, and can be adjusted according to opportunity, importance to membership, and resource availability.

ASHA’s Public Policy Agenda
2011 Development Process
Based on ASHA member input to the Government Relations & Public Policy Board

March-May: Request to ASHA Committee Chairs & State Presidents
May-June: Member Input Solicited
- ★★★ Input over 2000 comments (20% increase over previous year)
- ★★★ Online survey
July-August: GRPP Board Deliberations
September-October: ASHA Board of Directors Review & Vote to Accept
November: Approved 2011 PPA available to share at 2010 Convention

Process

- Our goal is to ensure member and staff input in the identification and prioritization of issue objectives for the Association's Public Policy Agenda.
- ASHA’s Public Policy Agenda must be approved by the annual convention in November.

Do Your Homework

- Review the 2010 ASHA Public Policy Agenda at www.asha.org/Advocacy/briefs-agenda/Public-Policy-Agenda/
- This agenda has been instrumental in focusing ASHA’s advocacy efforts that have lead to a number of successes in 2009 & 2010
Submitting Your Input
✔ Simplified process using Survey Monkey.
✔ Visit ASHA’s Web site to complete the survey at www.asha.org/News/Advocacy/2010/Public-Policy-Agenda-Input.htm
✔ Submissions must be received by June 30, 2010
✔ Additional notices will be e-mailed to members as well as posted in the June 8 issue of The ASHA Leader and other ASHA e-newsletters

ASHA’s Public Policy Agenda
2011 Outreach & Input
- Letters to state presidents & Government Relations chairs
- All members solicited via e-mail (at least twice)
- Listservs, e-newsletters & The ASHA Leader
- Question on PPA Outreach: How can we further encourage state input into 2011 Public Policy Agenda?

ASHA’s Public Policy Agenda
Recent Changes
➢ Access & Coverage -
  - SLP supplier status (July 1, 2009 Implementation)
  - Move towards comprehensive Medicare audiology benefit
  - Extension of therapy cap exceptions process through 2010
  - Inclusion of habilitative services and devices in HCR
  - Exclusion of hearing aids from HCR medical device tax
  - Procedural codes being converted from practice expense to professional work.

ASHA’s Public Policy Agenda
Changes since Last Year
Quality & Utilization -
- CMS studies on therapy cap alternatives
- Eight NOMS FCMs recognized for Medicare Physician Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI)
- NOMS recognized as approved registry for PQRI reporting
- Audiology Quality Consortium convened and developed three measures adopted by CMS for PQRI.

ASHA’s Public Policy Agenda
Changes since Last Year
Workforce Incentives (Shortages) -
- $26,000 federal earmark for Nevada Coalition for Personnel Shortages to address shortage issue
- NV received recognition for the Federal Teacher Shortage Area Loan Forgiveness Program. SLPs recognized to receive loan forgiveness for working in Title I schools.
- $12 million + in state and local salary supplements

2010 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA
Audiology
2010 Public Policy Agenda: Audiology

Audiology-Related Objectives
- Federal-level strategies
  - Expanded Hearing Benefits in Federal Employee Health Benefit Plans (FEHBP)
  - Expand Medicare coverage of audiology diagnostic & rehabilitation services
  - Increased professional development through dissemination of information about research-based practices in audiology; and
  - Increasing Early Hearing Detection & Identification (EHDI) federal grants to states, as well as for reimbursement for early intervention services

- State and Local-level strategies
  - Influencing Medicare local payment policies
  - Supporting health plan and insurance appeals
  - Promoting EHDI legislation to increase payment & coverage of intervention services
  - Promote funding increases for IDEA Parts B & C
  - Reducing IDEA paperwork
  - Support laws and regulations for improving classroom acoustics and amplification systems using ANSI 2002 standards in school building construction.

Questions on Federal, State & Local Audiology-Related Objectives
- What are the greatest challenges for audiologists in your state?
- How will expanded private insurance coverage for hearing aids impact audiologists in your state?
- To what extent do audiologists in your state incorporate rehabilitative services into the delivery of care?
- How effective and uniform are school-based hearing screening programs in your state?

2010 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

SLP Education-Related Objectives:
- Federal-level strategies
  - Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization
  - Effective use of multiple measures to assess student progress
  - Consider legislative or regulatory remedies for inconsistencies created between IDEA and ESEA
  - Promote the use of speech-language pathologists in literacy
  - Support a parent’s right to know provider qualifications
  - Link the CCC’s with salary increases
  - Conform federal and state policies that regulate the use of support personnel to be consistent with ASHA criteria for appropriate training, supervision, and the delineation of job responsibilities.

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Questions on SLP Federal Education-Related Objectives
- What elements of the ESEA standards should be changed or aligned with IDEA?
- Would your state be interested in promoting state legislation or regulations to increase participation in early intervening activities using the Response to Intervention (RTI) model?
- How would school-based members be impacted with the expiration of access to federal stimulus funds?
2010 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

SLP Education-Related Objectives
- State-level strategies
  - Work with state associations to engage key stakeholders on personnel vacancies in schools
  - Collaborate with state associations in dealing with threats to reduce state certification & licensure
  - Promoting EHDI legislation to increase payment and coverage of early intervention services, enhance follow-up and tracking, and family support services, as well as state Medicaid and private health plans across the age span.
  - Promoting funding for IDEA Parts B & C.

- Local-level strategies
  - Assisting members facing cuts when ARRA funds are no longer available, IDEA funds and attributing Medicaid funds to SLP Programs

Questions on SLP State & Local Education-Related Objectives
- How are shortages of SLPs impacting the members of your state association?
- What encroachment threats is your state facing from new or other providers?
- How are Medicaid funds being utilized in school districts within your state?

SLP Health Care-Related Objectives
- Federal-level strategies
  - Repealing or implementing an alternative to the Medicare outpatient therapy cap
  - Increasing EHDI federal grants to states, and reimbursement for early intervention services
  - Ensure that appropriate professional work and technical components for audiology and speech-language pathology services are included in Medicare fee schedule payment rates
  - Promote access to telepractice services.
  - Defining habilitative services under new health care reform regulations.

- State and Local-level strategies
  - Influencing Medicare Local Payment Policies
  - Supporting Health Plan and Insurance Appeals
  - Influencing State Licensure Policies

Questions on SLP Federal Healthcare-Related Objectives
- Is the therapy caps exception process providing appropriate care to Medicare Part B beneficiaries?
- Are (or could) tele-services for SLPs being utilized in your state?
- How will the passage of HCR legislation impact the provision of speech-language pathology services through coverage through private insurance and schools. Is there a need to better define medical vs. education services?
- What are some of the greatest Medicaid challenges in your state?
2011 Public Policy Agenda

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◊ Go to the ASHA Web site to view ASHA’s 2010 PPA:
  http://www.asha.org/about/legislation-advocacy/briefs-agenda/2010PPA.htm