Aspects of Advocacy
CSAP Spring Conference
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Learner Outcomes
- Discuss the role of advocacy at the state and national level;
- Review ASHA's role in your advocacy attempts;
- Summarize the process of working with legislators;
- Discuss ASHA's current advocacy efforts

Disclosure
- Shelley Victor was the Chair of the ASHA Governmental Relations and Public Policy Board in 2013. She is currently a member of ASHA's Financial Planning Board.

- Rachel Williams is Chair of CSAp. She is currently a member of ASHA/CSAP Joint Committee.
**Advocacy Defined**

- The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal
- Political advocacy would be supporting a political cause or proposal associated with your field.

**Why learn advocacy skills?**

- Gain self-empowerment
- Understand the political process
- Need to advocate for the professions
- To have a seat at the table
- Not accept the status quo
- Maintain a professional identity
- Represent our patients as a whole

**Why Be An Advocate?**

- We are the experts! It's time to share our knowledge and expertise.
- We can use our expertise to educate elected officials and encourage them to increase their commitment to goals we find important.

- Group advocacy has its benefits: there is strength in numbers!
Understanding Advocacy: The Break-Down

The 2 types of **Grassroots Advocacy**:

- Legislative Advocacy
- Regulatory Advocacy

Legislative Advocacy is aimed at:

- Introducing a bill in the U.S. Congress or state legislature.
- Changing a bill that has been introduced.
- Opposing a bill that has been introduced.
- Ensuring that a bill is enacted into law.

Regulatory Advocacy is aimed at:

- Influencing governmental agencies that are responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring, and enforcing regulations (federal or state levels).
Ex. Federal Legislative & Regulatory Activities
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- SLP Medicare Provider Status
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

Federal vs State Issues
- Federal Issue
  - Medicare Reimbursement and Coverage Policies
- Federal and State Issues
  - Loan Forgiveness as a Recruitment and Retention Tool
  - Medicaid Reimbursement and Coverage Policies
- State Issue
  - Comprehensive (Universal) Licensure

How Can ASHA Support You?
- Prepare and disseminate materials.
- Facilitate congressional visits.
- Analyze federal legislation that affects the professions of speech-language pathology and audiology and prepare “talking points” to facilitate knowledgeable dialogue with legislators and their staff.
- Coordinate grassroots advocacy initiatives for members of NSSHLA and ASHA.
How Can ASHA Support You?

- Lobby Congress on behalf of the professions.
- Participate in other political activities:
  - Ex: coalition building on mutual legislative objectives.
- Increase visibility of the professions to Congress.
- Provide key contact information.

Effective Meetings with Legislators

- Lay the groundwork.
- Contact your Representative and Senators.
- Explain who you are and why you want to meet.
- Confirm your appointment.
- Be prepared for your visit.
- Be prompt in arriving and patient if you must wait for your visit.

With Whom are You Meeting?

- Member of Congress
- Paid Legislative Staff
  - Chief of Staff
  - Legislative Director
  - Legislative Assistant
  - Legislative Correspondent
- Unpaid Staff
  - Interns
  - Fellows
Effective legislative meetings

- Identify yourself - YOU are the constituent
- Bring business cards and relevant materials
- Identify your subject
- Focus on one or two points - facts and figures help!
- State your position clearly and concisely: stay "on message"
- Make a clear, actionable request

Effective legislative meetings

- Express your views reasonably - do not argue
- Keep your visit to 15 minutes or less
- Thank the member or staff for their time and consideration of your position
- If you have met with helpful staff, let your legislator know
- Follow-up with a thank you letter and ask to be kept informed about the issue

Building and maintaining good relationships

- Schedule a face-to-face appointment
- Follow-up with a thank you note
- Maintain contact through e-mail or phone at least 2x/year
- Attend local political fundraisers and events sponsored by the legislator
- Write a letter of support to your local newspaper describing your legislator's efforts; cc: the legislator's office
Current ASHA Advocacy Efforts

- Medicare Outpatient Therapy Caps
- Protect IDEA from Sequestration
- Medicare Coverage of Audiology/Services
- Hearing Aid Assistance Tax Credit
- Literacy and Reading Programs
- Congressional Hearing Health Caucus
- Paperwork Stifles Services to Children With Disabilities

Learn More:
- Issues: http://www.asha.org/Advocacy/federal/
- Issue briefs: http://www.asha.org/advocacy/briefs-agenda/

ASHA's 2013 Public Policy Agenda

11 Issue Objectives

Federal Level
- Medicare Reimbursement and Coverage Policies

Federal and State Level
- Federal and State Funding for Services - School Based Members
- Hearing Health Care
- Loan Forgiveness as a Recruitment and Retention Tool
- Medicaid Reimbursement and Coverage Policies
- Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
- Private Health Plans Reimbursement and Coverage Policies
- Telepractice

State Level
- Comprehensive (Universal) Licensure
- Service Continuum
- State Consultants

Advocacy involves being familiar with the issues

- Possible areas of confusion seen in members' comments:
  - Medicare vs. Medicaid
  - Use of public and private insurance for IDEA services
  - Provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
  - Others?
What is the role of the ASHA PAC in advocacy efforts?

PAC = Political Action Committee

- Influencing the election of individuals to public office
  who can affect policy changes that impact our
  professions
- Raising funds to distribute to legislators to promote
  current professional issues
- Facilitating the understanding of the necessity for PAC
  funds among ASHA members

How do states and ASHA work together on advocacy efforts?

- Monitoring state legislative activities that may affect the
  professions and the consumers we serve
- Facilitating communication among states regarding
  legislative trends
- Identifying legislative objectives for a state association
- Developing and maintaining a grassroots advocacy
  network of ASHA members
- Educating members about grassroots advocacy

How can students be involved in grassroots advocacy efforts?

- Understanding the importance of being an on-going
  advocate for the professions
- Participating in opportunities to learn about and engage
  in professional grassroots advocacy efforts
- Coordinating a student group at your University to
  engage in grassroots advocacy
- Using the ASHA resources available to student groups
Public Policy Agenda

Federal Issue Briefs
- http://www.asha.org/Advocacy/Issue-Briefs/
- Examples:
  - Paperwork Burden
  - Protect IDEA Funding
  - Protecting Student Athletes from Concussions Act
  - Hearing Aid Tax Credit

Advocacy in action state model
  - Step 1: Analyzing a State's Potential for Advocacy Success
  - Step 2: Developing a State Action Plan
  - Step 3: Developing Roles for Advocacy Partners
  - Step 4: Establishing a Grassroots Network
  - Step 5: Creating a Media Plan
  - Step 6: Developing Communication Strategies Between Advocacy Partners
  - Step 7: Considering Key Strategies From Targeted States
Example Relating to Licensure in South Dakota

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QVyxv5AehE
Advocating for our professions
module

- [http://cohere-presents.com/presentations/ASHA2010/07-ModuleSeven/player.html](http://cohere-presents.com/presentations/ASHA2010/07-ModuleSeven/player.html)

- 15 minutes
- Reimbursement modules available

Stay connected through Headlines


- Government relations
- Summaries of councils, boards, and committees
Questions

References

Additional Credit
Sharon Ringwalt and Tori Gustafson are credited with portions of the information.
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