

Designing ASHA's Future: Trends for the Association and the Professions

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in collaboration with the

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Background

Starting in January 2009, the ASHA Board of Directors (BOD) initiated a series of discussions related to the 50 key trends identified in the document *Designing Your Future: Key Trends, Challenges, and Choices Facing Association and Nonprofit Leaders* (published in 2008 by the American Society of Association Executives [ASAE] and the Center for Association Leadership) that could have an impact on associations. The 50 trends were categorized by the STEEP categories—Socio-Demographic, Technological, Economic, Environmental, and Political.

During its January meeting, the Board identified the top 10 trends that could have an impact on the Association. During the March 2009 meeting of the ASHA Advisory Councils (ACs), the councils were asked to review and rank the trends identified by the BOD for each profession. Following the meeting they were asked to review all 50 trends and identify those that would have the greatest impact on the Association. Combining the trend information from the BOD and the ACs, 19 societal trends were identified that could have an impact on the Association and the professions. A review of these 19 trends indicated that they could be divided into seven larger themes for ASHA's purpose of identifying societal trends that are expected to impact the future of ASHA and the professions in the near future. These themes are:

1. Generational Impacts
2. A Diverse Future
3. Clinical Population Outlook
4. Technology Marches Forward
5. Financial/Economic Caution
6. Global Directions
7. Expectations for Social Responsibility

During its June and August meetings, the BOD had further discussions related to each of the trends. During these discussions, the Board was asked to indicate:

1. What are specific issues ASHA needs to consider relative to this trend?
2. Where should ASHA be headed over the next few years in relation to this trend?

In addition to the societal trends, the BOD, ACs, and National Office staff identified trends and issues that were specific to the professions of audiology and speech-language pathology.

The information related to these identified societal and professional trends and issues will serve as the basis for reviewing ASHA's Strategic Pathway to Excellence during 2010. As part of the review, the BOD will recommend any necessary modifications that should be made related to the Pathway based on the identified trends.

Format for This Document

Following is a listing of the trends identified by the BOD and the ACs. Several trends have been combined for discussion purposes, based on similarity of interpretation by the BOD and ACs regarding their expected effect on ASHA and the professions. The format used for reporting these trends is as follows:

1. Theme
2. Future Societal Trend(s): Listing of the identified trends
3. Description of Future Societal Trend(s): Synopsis of background information related to the trend as included in the document *Designing Your Future: Key Trends, Challenges, and Choices Facing Association and Nonprofit Leaders* published by ASAE and the Center for Association Leadership.
4. Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions: Listing of the potential impact the trend could have on ASHA and the professions. This information was obtained from *Designing Your Future* and from the BOD and AC discussions related to the trends.
5. Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action: Listing of the recommendations on what the Association needs to do related to the trend as indicated by the Board in response to the following questions:
 - What are specific issues ASHA needs to consider relative to this trend?
 - Where should ASHA be headed over the next few years in relation to this trend?The list also includes recommendations from *Designing Your Future*.
6. Current ASHA Strategic Objectives Related to this Trend: List of any Strategic Objectives and Initiatives included in ASHA's Strategic Pathway to Excellence and other initiatives implemented by National Office staff that are currently related to the trend, or in which future activities could be developed in relation to the trend.

Following the discussion of the societal trends is a listing of various specific professional issues of concern that have been identified by the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology ACs in late 2009, and professional issues identified by ASHA National Office Staff. Many of these issues relate to the future societal trends that have been discussed by the BOD and ACs during 2009. Those that do not may still be important for ASHA's future planning and will be considered by the BOD as it reviews the Strategic Pathway to Excellence during 2010.

Designing ASHA's Future: Trends Identified by the 2009 BOD and Advisory Councils

Theme: Generational Impacts

Future Societal Trend #1

Baby Boomer retirement and unretirement; talent shortages

Description of Future Societal Trend

The aging of the U.S. Baby Boomer (born 1946–1964) workforce could redefine our notions of retirement and workforce demographics as older people choose a wide range of postretirement employment and leisure options to address personal needs and financial pressures. The U.S. population will continue to age, with the annual growth rate of the 55-and-older group projected at 4.1%, nearly four times the rate of growth of the overall population. It is assumed that many potential retirees may continue to work out of financial necessity or for reasons of professional and personal fulfillment. A recent study by the University of Michigan Retirement Research Center found that “nearly one-half of retirees followed a non-traditional retirement path that involved partial retirement and/or unretirement and that the unretirement rate among those observed at least five years after their first retirement is 24 percent. The unretirement rate was even higher among those retiring at younger ages (as high as 36 percent among those retiring at ages 51 to 52).” Although an overwhelming 76% of Baby Boomers intend to continue working past the traditional retirement age of 65, many are looking for second careers as entrepreneurs or temporary employees.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- ASHA could lose a portion of its membership due to early and regular retirement of Baby Boomers.
- There could be an increase in the number of people working beyond retirement age. For individuals working beyond retirement age or re-entering the work force there will be a need to retrain/retool to obtain the knowledge and skills, especially related to use of technology, necessary to provide services.
- Baby Boomer retirements could create shortages in all employment settings and areas, especially in teaching and research.
- Because of personnel shortages, encroachment by other professions could increase.
- The Baby Boomer population could challenge expectations regarding part-time work, leisure, volunteerism, and continuing education and skills development. Employers could increasingly look to retain this generation to counter potential issues of leadership gaps, loss of expertise, and talent shortages.
- The Association may not have trained or prepared staff to fill mid-level manager (Cluster Leaders) or executive (Facilitating Team) positions that become vacant. A talent pool shortage among those with manager/executive potential could affect the quality of service provided to members if qualified candidates for vacant leadership positions are not available.
- The Association and professions may need to rethink recruiting strategies to attract and retain retirees and adapt policies to accommodate aging workers who might delay full retirement for more flexible, part-time schedules.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Consider alternatives for making the credential reinstatement process more accommodating for professionals wanting to re-enter the workforce.
- Anticipate the diversity of retirement preferences among an aging workforce in which many may work past retirement age, requiring Association services and programs tailored and priced to reflect their changing needs and circumstances.
- Promote retention of Baby Boomer retirees in the workforce to counter potential issues of leadership gaps, loss of expertise, and talent shortages. Consider increased focus on lifetime learning, flex-time, part-time, telework, compensation packages, volunteerism, securing knowledge transfer to future generations, and re-affirmation of personal work relationships with partners and clients.
- Increase efforts to get young professionals into ASHA and state volunteer leadership positions as a way of increasing long-term commitment to the professions and the Association.
- Promote members obtaining specialty recognition for employment in specialty areas and increase career longevity and flexibility.
- Develop a career ladder for individuals to follow before and after earning the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC), including use of bachelor's level assistants.
- Increase research and practice in the area of telepractice as a way to counter shortages and allow flexibility/work from home options.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase the Number, Diversity, and Cultural Competence of the Membership.

Initiatives:

- Implement activities to deal with the critical shortage of speech-language pathologists in healthcare and education and facilitate recruitment and retention of speech-language pathologists.
- Implement plan to ameliorate the PhD shortage in higher education.
- Develop a proposal to consider an associate membership category within ASHA that would include speech-language pathology assistants.

2. Strategic Objective: Increase Grassroots Advocacy by Members, Consumers, Stakeholders.

Initiatives:

- Develop and implement activities to promote the use of ASHA's workload/caseload products.
- Develop and implement activities to promote the CCCs.
- Explore options to deal with external threats to scope of practice/encroachment/professional autonomy.

3. Strategic Objective: Enhance Effectiveness Across Professions and Settings.

Initiative:

- Develop and maintain accurate data source to determine availability of an appropriate supply of graduate-level personnel who meet the requirements for entry-level clinical practice and/or who have earned a research doctoral degree.

Future Societal Trend #2

Generation Y (Millennials): digital, “civic,” and connected

Description of Future Societal Trend

The Millennial generation (born 1980–1999) is the most observed and studied generation in U.S. history. Often referred to as “Digital Natives,” they are said to be “always on, always connected”—constantly exchanging messages, surfing the Web, and participating in social networks via their computers, mobile phones, or game consoles. Raised to be active team members in structured recreational and academic activities, Millennials are also expected to be a civically engaged generation focused on institution building and positive social change. Connectivity is a major lifestyle trait for the Millennials. Millennials are often described as confident, having received parenting in a style aimed at building self-esteem at an early age. They are comfortable living more transparent lives on the Web with individual profile pages on social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook and video testimonials on YouTube. Much of their Web use revolves around connecting with friends. Millennials are expected to be a major force for social change as they enter their young adult and family stage of life development.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- The Association and Professions (A/P) will need to relate to Millennials, who are expected to be a major force for social change as they enter their young adult, professional, and family stages of life development.
- The Association may need to consider its advocacy strategy as a result of young peoples’ growing political involvement and the fact that nearly 50% of young people identify most with the Democratic Party, whereas just 35% percent affiliated most with the GOP.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Actions

- Determine if the ASHA governance structure presents limitations for some younger members who want to participate in Association volunteer activities.
- Anticipate that younger professionals may want to be involved in the Association, or state associations, but may have different ideas about how they want to be engaged and involved. Consider ways of encouraging greater involvement.
- Consider establishing a student (NSSLHA) position on the BOD.
- Consider adding designated student positions on committees, boards, and councils to allow for observation, experiential learning, and mentoring.
- Communicate with GenY members and track their participation to find out what they want and need from the Association, how they want to be involved in volunteer/leadership activities, and how they want to communicate with ASHA. Use this information in the development of ASHA programs, products, and services and in promoting involvement and engagement with ASHA.
- Create/present more social activities/ceremonies during Convention that are inspiring/interesting to Gen Y.
- Implement a broader/bigger leadership development program for young professionals.
- Create engagement mechanisms (formal structures, live forums, conference streams, Web tools) that allow Millennials to participate fully and self-organize around issues and topics of greatest interest to them.

- Be aware that Millennials make employment and membership decisions based on organizations' corporate social responsibility actions. Consider increasing ASHA's involvement in and visibility of participation in socially responsible activities.
- Maintain and study the implications of emerging civic issues important to different generations as current and potential future members.
- Encourage evaluation of human resource policies and staff development strategies as they relate to different generations while addressing recruitment, development and retention, conflict resolution, attitudes toward work, mentoring, collaboration, and support for innovation.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase Active Involvement of Members

Initiatives:

- Develop programs to engage members in ASHA activities.
- Develop and implement an education and marketing campaign to increase participation in Association activities targeted at those who have been ASHA members for 3–5 years.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve External Communication

Initiative:

- Review ASHA's public relations activities and communication with members and students (e.g., timing, effectiveness, messages).

3. Strategic Objective: Improve Targeted Customization of Programs, Products, and Services

Initiatives:

- Create a programs, products, and services development process that is market/data driven.
- Test the efficacy of personalization in various member contexts to enhance member satisfaction.

4. Strategic Objective: Enhance Effectiveness Across Professions and Settings

Initiative:

- Develop new, or improve existing, programs, products, and services designed to promote member effectiveness and collaboration.

Future Societal Trend #3

Redefining work–life balance

Description of Future Societal Trend

As life expectancy rises and the length of the working day for many of us increases, individuals and organizations are constantly reevaluating what constitutes the right work–life balance or “work–life blend.” The tradeoff between income, consumption, and working hours is becoming an increasing choice point for many adult workers. As concerns over working hours and sustainable consumption increase, nearly a third of U.S. workers recently polled said they would prefer more time off rather than more hours of paid employment. A 2007 Monster.com work–life balance survey found that 89% of polled employees placed importance on work–life balance programs such as flex-time and telecommuting when evaluating new jobs. However, only about half the HR professionals polled considered their companies’ work–life balance initiatives important. Workers’ priorities are changing, and more people are trading long work hours and financial rewards for increased time for themselves, their families, and leisure activities. Some specialists believe that because of “always on, always connected” technology, work–life balance has diminished as employees are continuously available, connected, and expected to work 24/7. Concerns exist that work–life balance may be taking a back seat because of increasing pressures from global economic competition, the economic downturn, and organizations downsizing or freezing hiring.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- Workers’ priorities are changing, and more people are trading long work hours and financial rewards for increased time for themselves, their families, and leisure activities.
- The Association may need to provide more flexibility in work schedules. Some employees may seek work–life balance by seeking nontraditional work arrangements, including freelance work, telecommuting, flex-schedules, job-sharing, and balancing alternative work schedules between parent work schedules.
- The Association will need to consider the impact of using “always on, always connected” technology. Work–life balance may diminish if employees are continuously available and connected.
- Electronic access potentially increases work day to 24/7
- As terminology shifts from talking about “work–life balance” to “work–life blend,” programs, services, coaching solutions, and other solutions may require a higher level of personalization and interactivity.
- Technological advances may allow for alternative, more flexible means of participating in volunteer and governance leadership roles for ASHA members.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Create and encourage use of family-friendly, flexible work models that encourage work–life balance in various workplaces. Highlight various examples, showcasing profession-specific advice, best practices, case studies, and program-impact testimonials.
- Consider how technological advances can allow more flexible participation in volunteer/leadership opportunities.
- Demonstrate the value of volunteer leadership as a part of a professional’s work life, and encourage employers to value the contributions of volunteerism.
- Consider creating continuing education/professional development hours for participation on committees and boards.
- Focus on recruiting the best talent and on securing high-quality volunteer involvement, enabling balance in the lives of employees and volunteers, regardless of generation, and monitoring pressures on staff and volunteer time commitments.
- Consider changing speech-language pathology clock hours in academia to value workload as well as direct contact, valuing the full range of work.
- Encourage review of human resource policy to make adjustments to reflect more flexible scheduling options and a focus on stress management and work–life programs in various workplaces.
- Encourage creation of measureable goals and standards that realize the need for work–life balance and tout productivity gains among less-stressed workers.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase Grassroots Advocacy by Members, Consumers, and Stakeholders

Initiative:

- Develop and implement activities to promote the use of ASHA’s workload/caseload products.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve External Communication

Initiative:

- Develop and implement a program to improve electronic communication among staff and with members.

Future Societal Trend #4

Education falling behind employers' expectations

Description of Future Societal Trend

There is a rising of level of commentary coming from various sectors about the perceived gaps between the capabilities and aptitude of high school and college graduates and the needs of industry, especially in terms of written and verbal communication skills. There is also concern that the initiatives adopted have not closed the gap. For example, despite significant federal support for initiatives such as No Child Left Behind, 6 years later fourth-graders in the United States were doing no better in reading than they were in 2001. Moreover, according to the results of an international reading comparison, fourth-grade students from 10 countries and jurisdictions—including Russia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Italy, Sweden, and Canada—all outperformed those in the United States. In 2001 only 3 countries had done better than the United States on primary-school reading. A 2005 survey for the National Association of Manufacturers found that 84% of employers felt that U.S. K–12 schools were not doing a good job of preparing students for the workplace. Fifty-five percent said schools were deficient in preparing students with basic employability skills such as attendance, timeliness, and work ethic, 51% cited math and science deficiencies, and 38% were concerned about reading and comprehension.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- This will become an increasingly important focus in political debates if it slows down organizations' ability to meet their strategic goals and remain globally competitive.
- It may also drive interest in accelerated (or supplemental) learning programs to address issues for high school and college students and adults with poor basic skills and behavioral issues.
- This could open up opportunities to help close the gap between the capabilities of high school and college graduates and employers' expectations, over time driving up membership numbers in key industry sectors.
- The education function in associations could become more important in a changing world in which life-long learning is seen as critical, and associations have the potential to be one of the main providers of adult professional education.
- This may drive new content or service opportunities for basic-level skills guides and materials aimed at those with poorer reading and mathematical skills.
- How well is the education system serving the needs of associations as employers? Over time, it could be even more difficult for associations to find competent professional staff who are able to communicate accurately and effectively.
- The trend impacts a wide range of industries, from construction to service and health care.
- Educational institutions and systems are facing pressure to change to better prepare students for the world of work.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Increase emphasis on specialization in training and practice.
- Encourage simulation as an avenue for expanded clinical experience.
- Incorporate new technologies into education/student learning.
- Establish summer institutes/prerequisites to fill gaps and build skills.
- Encourage collaboration among training programs to increase capacity/content/faculty access to develop areas of expertise.

- Explore multiple tiers of audiologic service, such as an AuD and an audiologic assistant; utilize expansion of undergraduate opportunities to develop two tiers.
- Recruit the most qualified students into graduate programs.
- Consider building partnerships with junior/community colleges to provide prerequisite skills.
- Consider that this trend means that many high school students/graduates do not have sufficient oral/written language skills or problem-solving skills:
 - Speech-language pathologists should become involved in developing skills with these students, because we have the needed expertise.
 - Encourage speech-language pathologists to become innovative in providing services to this population, including social skills communication abilities.
 - Assist school-based speech-language pathologists in becoming innovative to work with the response to intervention (RTI) process to increase oral/written language as well as critical thinking in elementary, middle, and high school students.
 - Promote inclusion of cognitive strategy instruction, social skills, language for scholars classes, and study skills when working with this population.
 - Increase awareness of the importance of speech-language pathologists being involved in general education curriculum development.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase Grassroots Advocacy by Members, Consumers, and Stakeholders

Initiative:

- Explore options to deal with external threats to scope of practice/encroachment/professional autonomy.

2. Strategic Objective: Enhance Effectiveness Across Professions and Settings

Initiative:

- Develop new, or improve existing, programs, products, and services designed to promote member effectiveness and collaboration.

3. Strategic Objective: Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Initiative:

- Conduct outreach campaigns to develop and enhance alliances with governmental audiences.

Theme: A Diverse Future

Future Societal Trends #1 and #2

Increasing political and economic impact of diversity—minorities now one third of the U.S. population—and future U.S. growth fueled by rising immigration.

Description of Future Societal Trends

An increasingly diverse population will continue to affect every aspect of U.S. society and could have a significant influence on the nation's political and economic outlook. In 2007, the U.S. minority (non-White) population passed the 100 million mark and now makes up one third of the U.S. population. Some forecasts suggest that Hispanics could rise to one of every four members of the U.S. population by 2016. According to U.S. Census Bureau figures published in May 2007, Hispanics remain the largest minority group, with 44.3 million in July 2006, representing one in seven (14.8%) of the total population. African-Americans were the second largest minority group, totaling 40.2 million in 2006. They were followed by Asians (14.9 million), Native Americans and Alaska Natives (4.5 million), and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders (1 million). The United States is moving closer to an era of majority-minority population in which no single ethnic or racial group will hold a majority percentage.

The United Nations estimates that a total of 2.2 million migrants will emigrate from poorer to richer countries every year until 2050. This includes up to 1.2 million Asians and 377,000 Africans migrating to developed economies annually. In 2006, foreign-born workers accounted for 15% of the U.S. labor force. If current trends continue, nearly one in five Americans (19%) could be an immigrant by 2050, compared with one in eight (12%) in 2005. By 2025, the immigrant, or foreign-born, share of the population is expected to surpass the peak reached during the last great wave of immigration a century ago. The most recent U.S. census found that “immigrants accounted for over half the growth in the nation's labor force in the past decade, filling openings in factories and textile mills, restaurants and other blue-collar industries, according to a private analysis of government data.” The study of Census Bureau figures between 1990 and 2001 also found that recent immigrants helped fill openings that required more education, such as those in engineering firms and high-tech industries. Immigration also plays a key role in the overall population growth within the United States. A recent report from the Pew Research Center projected that immigration could push the U.S. population beyond 438 million by 2050 (up from 303 million in 2008). The immigrant influx has been felt throughout the country but was especially vital in the Northeast, where the new U.S. residents made up nearly all of the net increase in the labor force. Over 22% of immigrants who arrived since 1990 worked in service occupations, compared with 19% percent of the total foreign-born population and 13% of native-born workers.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- The United States is moving closer to an era of majority-minority population in which no single ethnic or racial group will hold a majority percentage.
- Members of the Association providing school-based services will need to be prepared to work in the many school systems that will have a majority of students from a variety of ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.

- Rising diversity will continue to shape old and new traditions, testing the attitudes and tolerance of individuals and communities absorbing new populations into neighborhoods, schools, and work environments.
- With the shift in U.S. demographics, there may be significant numbers of people in the United States for whom English is not the first or primary language.
- Entrepreneurial activity is nearly 40% higher for immigrants than for natives.
- Immigration is not without controversy, as issues remain regarding job losses, national security, taxes, and social services, as well as language and cultural barriers.
- Most in-depth studies suggest that immigration is an important driver of economic growth. Immigrants tend to complement (not substitute for) natives, raising natives' productivity and income.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Build awareness that all members have a culture. Many students/members don't recognize their own cultural backgrounds.
- Aim to ensure that all clinicians are culturally competent.
- Market the professions/discipline to audiences that will increase diversity in ASHA membership.
- Market the professions/discipline to young students (elementary/middle school) in addition to high school.
- Increase the diversity of elected and appointed volunteer leaders.
- Place greater emphasis on professional education related to diversity and clinical practicum with a variety of minority groups.
- Advocate for funding for scholarships, cultural interpreters, and more training in cultural competency.
- Consider whether ASHA members holding the CCC should have to speak English and/or Standard English.
- Ensure that systems are in place for measuring and monitoring changes in association membership related to ethnic-racial minority groups, and geographical shift of various populations.
- Address diversity and social inclusion in research, program delivery (conferences, seminars, e-learning, Web site access), volunteer leadership, governance, and communications.
- Recognize the increase in consumers who speak languages other than English and who may have limited English skills.
- Translate ASHA content into other languages.
- Support the proliferation of translation services in medical environments via telecommunications as it pertains to speech-language pathology and audiology.
- Coordinate services from bilingual professionals via telecommunications to reach populations who need bilingual services.
- Increase opportunities to automate screening in multiple languages to reduce cultural bias of screening tools.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase the Number, Diversity, and Cultural Competence of the Membership

Initiatives:

- Develop and disseminate information and resources to academic programs that may facilitate increasing enrollment capacity.
- Provide targeted consultation to National Office staff on the infusion of multicultural issues to increase staff accountability for addressing diverse populations in ASHA programs, products, services, and resources.
- Determine the feasibility of implementing plans to attract males into the communication sciences and disorders professions.

Theme: Clinical Population Outlook

Future Societal Trend #1

Rising life expectancy, aging global populations

Description of Future Societal Trend

Alongside population growth, the world's aging population will be the demographic story of the 21st Century. Since 1945 the life expectancy of citizens living in the wealthier countries around the world has increased by 1 year every 5 years. Expanded access to basic health care, nutrition, and safe water supplies has increased the global life expectancy. The American Life Extension Institute believes that average life expectancy in the United States will reach 100 by 2029. Some scientists, such as Cambridge geneticist Aubrey de Grey, argue that aging is a disease curable in our own lifetimes. As a result, they say that the life expectancy of even mature adults could extend to 500 or even 1,000 years. Aging has wide-ranging implications related to wealth distribution, pensions and social services, health care, financial services, consumer spending, industry sector makeup, labor markets, and political policies.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- There will be increasing numbers of geriatric patients/clients in need of services in future years.
- There could be increasing financial strains placed on the Association, professional employment settings, organizations, governments, and families to meet funding liabilities and expectations for services targeted at aging populations.
- There is the potential for conflict if resources or political policies are diverted to serve older generations at the expense of younger ones.
- Dealing with elderly populations has major implications for the design of products, online tools, events and conferences, and membership categories (e.g., life membership models, benefits, and services for older populations).

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action:

- Promote evidence-based practice development regarding the clinical efficacy of service provision to older generations in both speech-language pathology and audiology.
- Support research in gerontology and its impact on communication disorders and effective treatments.
- Consider how increased life expectancy may change demands for the professions.
- Gather epidemiological data on aging populations with communication disorders and develop a researchable database.
- Promote change in society's attitude toward quality of life and providing services for those who are 90 years of age and above (i.e., extreme elders).
- Include on ASHA's public policy agenda priorities to eliminate legislative, regulatory, and funding policies that are a barrier to long-term service delivery or to providing services across a lifetime.

- Consider multiple methods of service delivery for elderly populations.
 - Incorporate speech-language pathology and audiology services into “wellness concepts”: cognitive skill maintenance, prevention, and provision and engagement in a variety of activities that are mentally and physically stimulating.
 - Identify “maintenance” services for the elderly that support independence and can be affordable.
- Strengthen ASHA’s Special Interest Division in Gerontology.
- Encourage specialty recognition for a gerontology specialty area.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend:

1. Strategic Objective: Improve the Science Base

Initiatives:

- Conduct and disseminate the findings from evidence-based systematic reviews (EBSRs) of clinical topics of importance to the ASHA membership.
- Develop and implement processes to support the generation of high quality, clinically relevant research.

2. Strategic Objective: Increase Research Commitment

Initiatives:

- Facilitate an increase in the generation and dissemination of clinical practice research and evidence-based practice information.
- Facilitate an increase in the number of ASHA-sponsored educational and mentoring programs and resources addressing evidence-based practice, clinical practice research, and funding processes.

3. Strategic Objective: Increase Grassroots Advocacy by Members, Consumers, and Stakeholders.

Initiative:

- Develop and implement activities to increase grassroots advocacy at the federal level.

4. Strategic Objective: Increase Reimbursement and Funding.

Initiatives:

- Establish data sources (e.g., NOMS) that support recognition of speech-language pathology and audiology professional services and increased reimbursement in public and private insurance programs.
- Maintain ASHA networks (STAR, SEAL, SMAC) and convene ASHA-style association networks to advocate for increased public and private insurance coverage and funding of speech-language pathology and audiology programs.

5. Strategic Objective: Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Initiative:

- Conduct outreach campaigns to develop and enhance alliances with governmental audiences.

Future Societal Trend #2

Funding and chronic diseases shaping health care challenges

Description of Future Societal Trend

Health care is likely to remain front-and-center as a priority issue for government, employers, and citizens during the next 10–20 years. Based on current levels of provision, the U.S. Congressional Budget Office's projections suggest that, in the absence of changes in federal law, total spending on health care will rise from 16% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2007 to 25% in 2025, 37% in 2050, and 49% in 2082. Federal spending on Medicare (net of beneficiaries' premiums) and Medicaid will rise from 4% of GDP in 2007 to 7% in 2025, 12% in 2050, and 19% in 2082. At the same time, approximately 89.6 million Americans—more than one out of three people (34.7%) under 65 years of age—were uninsured at some point during 2006–2007. The United States must also deal with a wide range of age- and lifestyle-related diseases. The costs of servicing the overweight and obese are expected to continue rising. The cost of obesity to U.S. business is approximately \$13 billion annually in direct health costs. Combined with the costs of disability, absenteeism, and lost productivity, U.S. companies today pay about 8% more in health claims costs alone because of overweight and obese employees.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- Workers and their families will see more of their income spent on health care or may refuse treatment if they cannot afford it—resulting in potentially greater costs and lost productivity.
- Older workers may choose to work past normal retirement age to maintain health care coverage.
- The Association and employers might become leaders in experimenting with strategies to combat health care costs.
- Health care providers will continue to find themselves stretched beyond capacity in providing services to the uninsured or underinsured.
- Members of health care professions are being adversely impacted by reducing reimbursement rates, declining job satisfaction, and less financial ability to participate in association activities.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Promote interdisciplinary teaming among professionals providing health care and education services.
 - Establish relationships with all physicians and allied health provider groups that facilitate interdisciplinary teaming.
 - Encourage publication of interdisciplinary research.
 - Provide leadership training in interdisciplinary practice.
 - Consider interdisciplinary practicum experiences.
 - Promote team teaching involving related disciplines/health care professions.
- Provide information on the importance of health literacy to consumers and professionals.
- Promote involvement of speech-language pathologists and audiologists in prevention and wellness.
- Promote the value and cost effectiveness of treatments/interventions in audiology and speech-language pathology.

- Change how funding streams for the provision of services in the schools operate (e.g., funding for services provided as part of an Individualized Education Program [IEP] is disorder-based funding, whereas services provided as a part of RTI programs is prevention-based).
- Continue to advocate for reimbursement for services.
 - Ensure that ASHA continues to be at the table when funding issues related to health and education are discussed by CMS, Department of Education, insurance companies, and Congress (e.g., health care reform, IDEA funding).
 - Respond to a decrease in reimbursement for developmental speech and language therapy (i.e., 315 ICD codes).
- Provide information, best practices, and solutions to address budgetary pressures, and advice on health care services and the management of health care budgets.
- Provide data to the government on the effects of health care funding liabilities.
- Investigate new health insurance products; assist in making such products available to consumers as they pertain to speech-language pathology and audiology services.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Improve External Communications

Initiatives:

- Marketing of the professions
- Marketing/branding
- Develop and implement a plan to improve information for consumers in print and on the ASHA Web site.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve the Science Base

Initiatives:

- Conduct and disseminate the findings from evidence-based systematic reviews (EBSRs) of clinical topics of importance to the ASHA membership.
- Develop and implement processes to support the generation of high quality, clinically relevant research.

3. Strategic Objective: Increase Research Commitment

Initiatives:

- Facilitate an increase in the number of ASHA-sponsored educational and mentoring programs and resources addressing evidence-based practice, clinical practice research, and funding processes.
- Provide evidence-based practice information for members based on EBSRs related to identified clinical questions.

4. Strategic Objective: Increase Grassroots Advocacy by Members, Consumers, and Stakeholders

Initiative:

- Develop and implement activities to increase grassroots advocacy at the federal level.

5. Strategic Objective: Increase Reimbursement and Funding

Initiatives:

- Establish data sources (e.g., NOMS) that support recognition of speech-language pathology and audiology professional services and increased reimbursement in public and private insurance programs.
- Maintain ASHA networks (STAR, SEAL, SMAC) and convene ASHA-style association networks to advocate for increased public and private insurance coverage and funding of speech-language pathology and audiology programs.

6. Strategic Objective: Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Initiative:

- Conduct outreach campaigns to develop and enhance alliances with governmental audiences.

Theme: Technology Marches Forward

Future Societal Trend #1

Growing popularity of online education relative to that of classroom-based courses

Description of Future Societal Trend

A growing cross section of the world's population is emerging that is at home with the Web and that fully expects part of its education to be delivered online. The proportion of students taking some element of their courses online is rising in the United States and abroad, especially in Asia. In the United States, on-campus student enrollment with mostly classroom-based education in degree-granting institutions stood at 17.9 million in 2005–2006. Nearly 18% of students were receiving some of their education online. Nationwide, in autumn 2005, nearly 3.2 million students at degree-granting institutions were taking at least one course that had at least 80% of its content delivered online (e.g., Web-enabled, “hybrid” [blended], or online-only). Today more than 96% of the very largest institutions (more than 15,000 total enrollments) have some online offerings—more than double the rate observed for the smallest institutions. Two-year associate's institutions have the highest e-learning growth rates and account for over half of all online enrollments from 2002 to 2007. Baccalaureate institutions began the period with the fewest online enrollments and have had the lowest rates of growth. The shift to online education is growing not only in the formal education system, but also in professional development and continuing education required for certification. Students and instructors are attracted by the ease of use and personalization inherent in asynchronous online instruction.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- The shift to online education is growing not only in the formal education system, but also in professional development and continuing education required for certification. Students and instructors are attracted by the ease of use and personalization inherent in online instruction.
- Online education promises to expand access (by learner life stage, geography, and time commitment) and could eventually reduce the cost of delivering education. A Sloan-C study expects most of the growth to occur within large institutions that already have existing online offerings and experience in the field. Despite quality concerns about student learning and “diploma mills,” a 2003 Sloan survey found that “57 percent of academic leaders rated the learning outcomes in online education as the same or superior to those in face-to-face. That number is now 62 percent, a small but noteworthy increase.”
- Online education could provide a mechanism for rapid and supplemental training to meet talent or labor shortages in certain industries. It also refocuses educational development and delivery to incorporate interactive participation, self-directed learning, and outcomes measurement.
- Online education could supplement (or replace) physical classroom-based courses delivered in traditional settings.
- There could be decreased attendance and/or staggered/reduced attendance at face-to-face ASHA conferences, convention, and other continuing education/professional development activities.
- Provides an opportunity to increase revenue streams by providing online education
- Could see the additional rise of private online education vendors who provide professional development programs

- Could lead to new forms of virtual academic institutions
- Could change the training of college faculty in the education system

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Consider how technology can accelerate dissemination from research to practice and best practices into practice.
- Consider how technology can address professional personnel shortages (e.g., sharing professors).
- Encourage the CAA to consider various aspects of online education.
- Provide those in academia with more teaching resources and resources to train faculty on multiple technologies.
- Consider offering CEUs for learning new technologies for teaching and content-specific resources.
- Consider developing virtual clinical education opportunities.
- Consider aspects of telepractice that could count towards student “clock hours.”
- Develop a consortium of online educational opportunities.
- Assess learning styles for graduate applicants, using behavioral interviews.
- Establish outcomes that ensure competency in specific areas; determine ways to meet these outcomes regardless of method for disseminating information to the learner.
- Shift all CE administration paperwork to electronic format so on-site and online learning can be easily processed. For example, develop an ASHA member card coded like a credit card that can be scanned at courses to upload participant data.
- Consider pros and cons of providing access/purchase of selected Convention sessions online and in real time.
- Become more innovative and responsive in delivering more competitive, market-oriented education services, keeping pace with technological developments. Encourage increased acceptance of new delivery methods, and deliver “just in time,” interactive, and ongoing life-long learning education and training, responding quickly to emerging issues in the professions.
- Explore how to share the costs of developing technologies to support online learning interactions (e.g., video, virtual spaces, mobile, collaborative) that enrich such experiences and make them more effective, also exploring new pricing models (e.g., pay per module, bulk purchase by organizations).

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Enhance Effectiveness Across Professions and Settings

Initiative:

- Develop new, or improve existing, programs, products, and services designed to promote member effectiveness and collaboration.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve External Communication

Initiative:

- Develop and implement a program to improve electronic communication among staff and with members.

Future Societal Trend #2

Internet continues transforming government, governance, and business

Description of Future Societal Trend

The Internet continues to change life as we know it—especially in the areas of governance and commerce. The “Web” is changing our expectations of governance—with citizens expecting greater transparency, heightened accountability, and seamless delivery of services. The Web is also changing commerce by reducing the complexities of business transactions and expanding our channels for media consumption, communication, and engagement. The Web continues to expand globally. The next decade will see tremendous changes in the user base on the Web. The Web continues to evolve as a platform with global reach for organizing our lives, conducting business, influencing political processes, and delivering government services. The next decade will see tremendous changes in the user base on the Web. It was estimated that nearly 1.5 billion of the world’s citizens will have Internet access by the end of 2008, and that a third of those will have access to a high-speed connection.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- The Web continues to evolve as a platform with global reach for organizing our lives, conducting business, influencing political processes, and delivering government services.
- As time and cost pressures on the citizen grow, there will be increasing expectations of the Association to provide content, education, testing, engagement, and events via the Web.
- The growing popularity of Web-based video could facilitate more “face-to-face” interactions over the Web and greatly enhance Association communication and customer service.
- Members will expect to have transactions with the Association online.
- Young members become impatient with those not proficient with computers.
- A growing expectation exists that association services be delivered seamlessly via the Web and evolve in more personalized manner. There will also be increasing demand for Web services to be more open to member input, facilitating two-way engagement in the creation and distribution of content.
- The ease with which new content and applications can be made available on the Web creates a strong imperative to ensure that material is easy to use and navigate. Careful attention needs to be paid to ensure a simple and consistent user experience.
- This creates the opportunity to serve a global audience and to source content from global providers.
- In the face of growing concerns over revenues and budgets in a market turndown, electronic channels offer the potential to reduce costs for delivering services, migrating members from paper to electronic delivery.
- Social media technologies can be leveraged to bring more members into the governance process of membership organizations, increasing the focus on niche communities.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Consider the impact online sale of hearing aids could have on the audiology profession.
- Ensure that the ASHA Web site is user friendly.
- Determine what resources ASHA can/needs to provide electronically versus having links to content provided by other organizations, agencies, and associations.

- Explore providing opportunities to conduct all ASHA-to-member and member-to-ASHA transactions online.
- Provide virtual conferencing capability for exhibits, workshops, and committee/board meetings.
- Provide online video-conferencing for board and committee meetings as a way to decrease meeting costs but still facilitate visual connections.
- Continue to allow staff experts to develop needed Web-based infrastructure to provide information and resources for members.
- Integrally involve younger generations in making decisions about use of technology to conduct ASHA business and interact with members.
- Ensure that adequate qualified staff are available in key areas such as IT, networking, and Web site development.
- Increase e-commerce capability for members to purchase products online.
- Promote converting audiology and speech-language pathology patient records to digital files to increase efficiency and cuts costs.
- Encourage members to keep in touch with patients/clients using social media tools.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Enhance Effectiveness Across Professional Settings

Initiative:

- Develop new, or improve existing, programs, products, and services designed to promote member effectiveness and collaboration.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve External Communication

Initiatives:

- Develop and implement a program to improve effectiveness of ASHA's external communications as perceived by target audiences.
- Develop and implement a program to improve electronic communications among staff and with members.

3. Strategic Objective: Improve Data Collection and Decision-making

Initiative:

- Identify core demographic data, identify and increase opportunities for members to update key profile data, and standardize how key profile data are requested and stored.

4. Strategic Objective: Increase Knowledge and Internal Communication

Initiative:

- Educate staff and members about what knowledge is available and how to access it.

5. Strategic Objective: Improve Technology and Infrastructure

Initiatives:

- Complete NetForum association management modules.
- Implement activities to enhance Web content management, search, and collaboration tools and infrastructure.

Future Societal Trend #3

Social media explosion creating new approaches for engagement, communication, publishing, and marketing

Description of Future Societal Trend

Social media technologies (i.e., blogs, wikis, and social networking sites, smart phones) are increasingly seen as tools for encouraging political engagement and bringing members into the governance process. Organizations are increasingly turning to “crowd sourcing” sites that can bring large communities together for online dialogues with businesses and governments. Blogging is also increasingly seen as a mainstream communications channel for companies. An increasing number of businesses, associations, and even government agencies are also adopting “wiki”-style solutions to engage broader communities in the dissemination and updating of collective knowledge.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- Social media tools are becoming mainstream and are changing expectations as individuals want to be involved in the co-creation, dissemination, and endorsement of information and communication messages.
- The Association will need look at social media and networks as essential tools for engaging members in more genuine and deeper dialogues.
- Use of social networks by the Association can also transform relationships with members by enabling them to share more extensive information about identities than just basic bio-data. They also can extend and strengthen the collaboration processes.
- Social media tools facilitate informal sharing and the development and testing of new ideas among colleagues.
- Social media provide powerful communication and project-management tools that avoid e-mail overload and ensure that everyone knows where to find the latest thinking on an issue or the most recent version of any document.
- The Association will need to overcome a wide range of user behavior challenges to accommodate varying levels of experience and interest in using emerging social media tools to interact with the Association.
- To accommodate students and young professionals, the ways the Association communicates and engages with members may need to become far more distributed rather than centralized and planned. This will affect not only marketing and Web-based products, but also governmental affairs, chapter relations, continuing education, and all member-facing services.
- Increased involvement in use of social media tools could challenge the capability of internal IT departments to balance demands of internal policies and investments with dynamics of changing Web experiences in the marketplace.
- Associations may need to replicate, replace, or even retire some existing means of facilitating community engagement as the nature of human communication changes and the resource challenge and costs of servicing multiple channels become bigger and bigger issues.
- Social media-based platforms could “compete” with existing associations and possibly evolve as more trusted “member-led” alternatives (e.g., Web-only memberships). This raises the issue of whether associations should compete with social networking platforms or leverage those that exist—signing up to all of the main networking sites and creating association member-only forums for networking within each site.

- Use of social media tools offers mechanisms to build stronger relationships and have deeper information exchange among association staff and with members (e.g., collaborative production of content, management of user profiles, etc.).
- Offers the potential for the Association to create new products and services born out of engagement with social media. Tools could be used to facilitate collaborative, team-oriented activities, projects, and experiential learning activities—particularly those involving a large body of knowledge, a broad Web of facilitators, “expert” contributors and moderators, and highly decentralized participants.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Promote research about and development of social media platform use for communicatively challenged individuals that use universal design (voice and print).
- Use social media (YouTube, podcasts) to promote the professions, disseminate FAQs for consumers, and conduct interviews with students and professionals.
- Provide professional consultation/technical assistance to members over the Web using video (e.g., Skype).
- Promote international communication with speech-language pathology and audiology colleagues using social media.
- Consider developing a private social media platform for use by ASHA members, allowing members to control its use.
- Allow members to generate content for ASHA’s social media formats.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase Active Involvement of Members

Initiative:

- Develop and implement an education and marketing campaign to increase participation in Association activities targeted at those who have been ASHA members for 3–5 years or less.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve External Communication

Initiatives:

- Develop and implement a program to improve effectiveness of ASHA’s external communications as perceived by target audiences.
- Develop and implement a program to improve electronic communications among staff and with members.

3. Strategic Objective: Improve Targeted Customization of Programs, Products, and Services

Initiative:

- Test the efficacy of personalization in various member contacts to enhance member satisfaction.

Theme: Financial/Economic Caution

Future Societal Trend #1

Growing financial market risks and uncertainty

Description of Future Societal Trend

The U.S. subprime meltdown has induced a crisis of confidence in credit markets across the globe. The result has been a loss of nerve across the lending sector, higher interest rates, a tightening of lending criteria, and the collapse of institutions that lost market confidence—such as Bear Sterns in the United States and Northern Rock in the United Kingdom. The IMF estimated the “mark-to-market” U.S. subprime-based losses at U.S. \$945 billion. At the start of 2008, Goldman Sachs projected that if U.S. house prices fell a further 10% in 2008, up to 15 million people with prime, near-prime, and subprime mortgages could be in negative equity. Analysts suggest that if large numbers of those in negative equity defaulted on their mortgages, losses to lenders and investors could be between U.S. \$1-2 trillion. U.S. house prices actually declined at an annual rate of 25% in the 3 months prior to January 2008. An April 2008 Credit Suisse research report suggested that up to 6.5 million U.S. home loans (nearly 12.7% of all U.S. residential borrowers) could be foreclosed by the end of 2012 because of falling house prices and a lack of available credit. In addition, total outstanding U.S. credit card debt is estimated at U.S. \$1 trillion.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- Concerns exist that a prolonged credit crisis will lead to associations holding back investment plans and attempting to limit their costs.
- Associations need to anticipate the potential for a fall-off in discretionary spending by individual and corporate members that could impact membership renewals; the sale of products, services, training, and sponsorship; and event attendance. A range of strategic responses will need to be considered, including greater sponsorship, developing lower priced products and services, new bulk discounting models to encourage corporate purchases, and greater focus on emerging markets.
- This trend increases the need to develop contingency business plans to address slowdowns of differing severities.
- This could lead to a dramatic reregulation and restructuring of the banking sector.
- To address short-term revenue problems, a range of temporary measures may need to be explored, such as discounting longer term membership, encouraging prompt renewal by offering dues reductions or additional discounts on other products and services, and reducing the prices of online products, which have virtually zero cost of delivery.
- Associations may see a role in helping their members understand the changing landscape of global financial markets, the risks arising from the liberalization and deregulation of markets, and the impact on their sectors.
- Faced with domestic uncertainty, some associations may choose to innovate, explore new geographic and service markets, and experiment with new revenue and business models, but others may become more risk-averse and less entrepreneurial.
- Major private-sector capital investment projects are at increasing risk because of the rising cost of debt and the growing reluctance of banks to lend.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Recognize that members are unsure of their financial futures—retirements may be at risk.
- Recognize that members have less discretionary income that can be used for membership and purchase of programs and products.
- Consider appropriate strategies for investing Association funds.
- Identify and respond to risks early enough to make optimum decisions.
- Have a diversity of investments to maximize gains and minimize risks.
- Remember the value of “sunsetting” those activities that no longer have a cost-effective advantage.
- Continue investigating member benefits that take advantage of the Association’s membership numbers.
- Develop programs/services that are cost-effective for members.
- Continue vigilant and responsible financial stewardship by engaging and relying on appropriate expertise and through transparency and accountability.
- Offer cafeteria-style member benefits and options to purchase member services in small chunks.
- Expand outreach to international corporations for expanding portfolio for corporate sponsors.
- Be sure we have the best investment managers who recognize opportunities to consider risks in light of opportunities.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Enhance Financial Stewardship

Initiatives:

- Launch a LEAN facilitators group to provide a cadre of staff who can assist National Office Units in reviewing their processes to determine if they can be more efficient.
- Develop activities to maintain a balance/ratio of dues to non-dues revenue of 60:40.

2. Strategic Objective: Expand Revenue Streams

Initiatives:

- Hire an investment advisor to improve long-term investment performance.
- Develop and implement a program to increase revenue from corporate alliances.
- Develop and implement a model and marketing plan to increase revenue from member purchases of ASHA programs, products, and services.

Future Societal Trends #2 and #3

Rising U.S. personal and federal indebtedness; Changing patterns of U.S. income, wealth, and savings

Description of Future Societal Trend

U.S. personal savings rates (defined as a percentage of disposable personal income) have been in steady decline for two decades. This rate has been falling for 20 years, from 10.8% in 1984 to 4.8% by 1994. By 2004 it reached 1.8%, and it hit 0.4% in May 2005. For 2005 as a whole, the personal savings rate in America was negative as consumers spent more than they earned during the year. In 2007 the U.S. personal savings rate averaged less than 1%. At the start of 2008, the U.S. national debt was approximately \$9.1 trillion and equated to almost \$30,000 for every American. It is forecast to rise to \$10 trillion in 2009. U.S. debt is expanding by about \$1.4 billion per day—or nearly \$1 million a minute. Standard and Poor’s estimates that the U.S. national debt will hit 350% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2050 if current fiscal policies are maintained. The level of personal savings has an impact on all aspects of the U.S. and global economy. It is a leading indicator for retail spending, housing markets, and major industry and service sectors.

The latest data on U.S. citizens shows a massive divergence in wealth, income, and savings across age groups and within cohorts such as the Baby Boomer generation (born 1946–1964). Accounting for nearly 30% of the U.S. population, the Baby Boomer generation is important not only because of its size, but also because it represents the wealthiest generation in the United States, with an estimated annual spending power of over \$2 trillion. There is also growing concern over income gaps and stagnant wages. The personal savings rate in the United States has fallen from an average of 9.1% in the 1980s to an average of 1.7% so far this decade. The U.S. Department of Commerce reports that as of summer 2007, the American personal savings rate was just 0.5%. Opportunities for upward mobility among the poorest in society may become rarer because of a combination of declining average wages, expanding income gaps, rising costs of living, falling housing valuations, spiraling costs of energy, food, and health care, and increasing costs of secondary education. In some cases, these cost rises are outpacing even dual-income working-class families. The result could be a less competitive labor force, creating shortages of domestic workers for knowledge-economy jobs. A growing wealth gap, and failure to lift people out of poverty, could lead to increased social tensions.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- Increasing federal indebtedness is squeezing resources so that only services characterized as essential/necessary will be funded. The determination of necessity will also beg the question of effectiveness, both of which require an increase of high quality research.
- Association members may question with increasing vigor the return on their investment in membership dues.
- The level of personal savings has an impact on all aspects of the U.S. and global economy. It is a leading indicator for retail spending, housing markets, and major industry and service sectors.
- A low personal savings rate also places Americans in a vulnerable position that makes them less likely to absorb smaller shocks or price fluctuations such as higher gasoline or energy prices, food costs, or housing payments.

- As Americans save less, many find themselves in a tighter credit position, making it difficult to borrow or to pay down existing debts.
- In the face of member scrutiny, the Association will need to be more creative about articulating and demonstrating their value-added proposition and identify the risks/opportunity costs of not belonging to the Association.
- A falling dollar may make membership rates more attractive to overseas candidates and lead to an increase in international attendees at U.S. meetings.
- This situation represents a growth opportunity for associations that target international markets while pricing in dollars.
- It may be necessary to assess the membership implications of widening income gaps and stagnant wages among certain labor force segments.
- Associations will need to assess the implications of the changing personal financial landscape.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Recognize that members have fewer discretionary dollars—personal budgets are tight.
- Understand that members may need to delay retirement.
- Recognize that clients have less money to pay for private-pay services.
- Recognize the potential budgetary threats to graduate programs.
- Anticipate that members may leave the professions to pursue more lucrative professional jobs.
- Identify new, innovative ways to deliver member services that give the absolute best bang for the buck.
- Increase PR efforts regarding value of audiology/speech-language pathology services and the value of membership.
- Make ASHA so personalized that members can't live without it.
- Consider how to bundle ASHA services.
- Consider interactive online conferences, meetings, and so on to increase access while limiting travel costs.
- Consider the need to revisit ASHA's business model and assess the robustness of assumptions and strategies.
- Help members develop better environmental scanning and anticipatory skills to spot, assess, and plan for changing trends, possible future shocks, and inevitable surprises that may have an impact on their future financial status.
- Increase creative approaches to graduate study.
- Work with public school speech-language pathologists on advocating for services/funding in schools, particularly strategies for gaining control over the revenue they generate through Medicaid billing.
- Identify ways for members to tap into/capitalize on non-federal resources for research and personnel preparation.
- Help members develop high-level skills for grant preparation.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase Research Commitment

Initiative:

- Facilitate an increase in the number of ASHA sponsored educational and mentoring programs and resources addressing evidence-based practice, clinical practice research, and funding processes.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve Customization of Programs, Products, and Services

Initiative:

- Create a programs, products, and services development process that is market/data driven.

3. Strategic Objective: Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Initiatives:

- Conduct outreach campaigns to develop and enhance alliances with governmental audiences.
- Conduct outreach campaigns to develop and enhance alliances with nongovernmental audiences.

4. Strategic Objective: Increase Reimbursement and Funding

Initiatives:

- Maintain ASHA networks (STAR, SEAL, SMAC) and convene ASHA–state association networks to advocate for increased public and private insurance coverage and funding of speech-language pathology and audiology programs and services.
- Support research and education funding through the ASHFoundation.

Theme: Global Directions

Future Societal Trends #1 and #2

Global talent shortages increasing with economic growth; Uneven economic growth

Description of Future Societal Trend

The pace of development across the globe is placing immense stress on the global talent pool. For some years, economies such as those of China and India have provided a near endless supply of well-educated high school and college graduates who filled key roles in Western businesses in areas such as Research and Development (R&D) and software development. Increasingly, these individuals are being lured back to their home countries by attractive salary levels and wide-ranging opportunities. In developing countries, the rapid development of their industrial base and national infrastructure is driving up demand—and hence salaries for professionals in these sectors, attracting candidates from the global market. A 2007 ManPower survey reveals that 41% of U.S. companies had trouble filling positions in 2007. The figures are higher, at 62% and 61%, respectively, in New Zealand and Australia. France, at 40%; the UK, at 34%; and Germany, at 27%, had high but variable figures. By comparison, India and China had figures of 9% and 19% percent respectively.

Economic growth, often measured as a percentage of aggregated GDP, is the increased value of goods and services produced by an economy. Since the end of the Cold War, global economic growth has been driven largely by an expansion of free-trade agreements, investments to enhance productivity, worker training, and more market-friendly policies in places such as Asia, Europe, and the Americas. The expectation now is that growth patterns will vary across the world, with the developing economies of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America expected to show the greatest growth—partly through rising domestic economic activity and partly through increased international trade—especially between developing nations.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- A shortage of suitably qualified talent domestically could hold back progress and reduce competitiveness—creating openings both domestically and abroad for foreign competitors. This will also create increased competition for a limited pool of talented managerial staff.
- There is a potential for competition to emerge by service providers in/from other countries providing telehealth.
- The HR function in associations may need to become much more global in terms of knowledge, experience, and competencies.
- As they compete with the private sector for a limited supply of high-quality, high-performing talent, associations may find it harder to attract the talent they need to drive their services and operations.
- Growth in the developing world has seen a massive improvement of living standards in many countries. Since 1977, China and India have taken over 400 million and 150 million people, respectively, out of poverty and into a self-sustaining existence.
- Although domestic consumption and trade between developing regions will drive growth, the developing world's economy has not decoupled from the United States and Europe, and any prolonged slowdown could have a significant impact across a number of still-fragile emerging economies.

- Sustaining economic growth will require continued efforts to raise education levels and improve training. It also requires social and political stability, which can be threatened by energy supply and prices, commodity prices, widening income gaps, civil wars, conflicts, restricted access to clean water, costs of pollution, and ecosystem collapse.
- There may be growth in our professions as a result of increasing demand for services in countries such as China, India, and Russia.
- The Association may lose U.S. citizens who are speech-language pathologists and audiologists who go to work in other countries. As a result, personnel shortages in this country may increase.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Encourage academic programs to include elements related to the practice of speech-language pathology and audiology globally.
- Provide opportunities for faculty and students to visit developing countries and provide practicum to facilitate global practices in speech-language pathology and audiology.
- Use international editors in research publications.
- Recruit and retain professionals from other countries and identify ways to keep them here.
- Connect with India and Asia talent, including offering assistance (tuition, faster and simpler application processes).
- Explore funding to attract and support international faculty and students in higher education programs.
- Develop more international credentialing agreements similar to the mutual recognition multinational agreements. Consider an international credential.
- Promote faculty exchange from/to the United States with China and Russia.
- Conduct ongoing outreach to counterpart organizations in other countries.
- Provide collaborative promotion of our knowledge base (ethics, credentialing programs, etc.) to other countries looking to establish the professions and associations. Assist countries in ways that are culturally appropriate and responsive to the countries' present needs.
- Invest in translations of ASHA journals, Web materials, and other resources for countries for which relationships are targeted.
- Promote having professionals with international degrees work in the United States as professionals (perhaps with a special status credential).
- Seek Spanish-speaking clinicians and educate and prepare them.
- Monitor global growth forecasts and the possible impact on the current and future membership base.
- Monitor how prominent the international dimension is in the services, annual events, and resources available to members.
- Develop guides and roadmaps to identify opportunities for work and commerce for members and the Association's marketing efforts for programs, products, and services.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Initiative:

- Conduct outreach campaigns to develop and enhance alliances with targeted nongovernmental audiences.

Future Societal Trends #3 and #4

Diminishing U.S. political influence internationally; Changing patterns of global governance—growing influence of non-state actors.

Description of Future Societal Trend

The Central Intelligence Agency/National Intelligence Council (CIA/NIC) “Mapping the Global Future: Report of the National Intelligence Council’s 2020 Project” suggests that the era of American global dominance could end by 2020. The rise of the increasingly global nature of many of the challenges faced by society—such as climate change, rising food and energy prices, terrorism, and infectious diseases—is increasing the need for more global responses and coordinating mechanisms. Governance and responses to these issues is increasingly being led by pan-national organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU). Global governance and international affairs are also increasingly being influenced by the role of non-state actors who use sophisticated communication methods and organizational structures to advance their issues and agendas for good and bad. Non-state actors include those who operate within established laws, such as globally focused nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); private, membership-only groups that include influential individuals from a wide range of political and business interests who hold private annual meetings to discuss global issues; individuals with extreme wealth able to establish foundations; and those acting outside domestic and international laws, including terrorist organizations and criminal organizations who oversee the global drug trade, human trafficking, black marketeering, and other illicit activities.

The rise of China and India as political influences in the developing world, and the emergence and strengthening of alliances in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, are reducing U.S. influence on governments globally. At the same time, the weakening of the dollar, the increasing turbulence in the U.S. financial services sector, and concerns about a domestic recession are threatening to reduce the influence of the United States in global financial markets. There has also been a rise in adverse global reaction to U.S. foreign policy. A 2007 BBC World Service poll of 26,000 people in 25 countries (mostly non-Arab) found that only 29% now feel the United States exerts a mainly positive influence on the world. That compares with 36% who felt that way a year before, and 40% two years earlier. When asked about the U.S. military presence in the Middle East, an average of 68% of respondents across the 25 countries answered that it provokes more conflict than it prevents.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- The shift to a “multi-polar” world is increasingly seeing countries such as China, India, Brazil, and a resurgent Russia, as well as groupings such as the EU and economic powers in the Middle East all seek greater political and economic influence.
- An adverse political climate for the United States could impact the economy, leading to job losses and a decline of key industries.
- Associations that are not already truly global may have to accelerate their globalization plans if they are to meet members’ needs and achieve their ambitions for international service delivery, reach, and influence.
- New association “competitors” could emerge from lower wage economies able to offer similar or better content and services via the Internet at lower prices.
- New skill sets and knowledge will be required by association members to help them perform effectively in diverse geographic markets.

- Associations could be under increasing pressure from their non-U.S. members and companies with globally based teams to ensure that their content, communications, service offerings, organizational structures, and chapter relations models reflect the different languages and cultural norms, reference points, backgrounds, expectations, and experiences of non-U.S. audiences.
- The realignment of global power and wealth opens up significant opportunities for associations to expand their global reach and membership.
- There could be increasing opportunity to provide association members with political, economic, and cultural guidance and risk and opportunity assessments for the diverse geographic markets they are entering.
- Greater demand from members seeking to understand and monitor the influence of non-state actors in key industry sectors and global markets.
- Non-state actors could open up channels for associations to expand into new markets, or they might prevent expansion into certain industry sectors or nations.
- As the range of global issues increases, so does the potential for international institutions to step in to establish governance and coordinate responses. Some nations may fear the loss of national sovereignty to these often unelected bodies.
- Non-state actors will continue to influence the evolution of globalization and international affairs.
- International governing bodies will continue to address the “blurring line” of rights and protection for non-state actors assuming more state-like roles (e.g., private military contractors).
- Terrorist and criminal organizations are expected to consume an increasing proportion of law enforcement and security budgets and drive regulation of everything from travel to Internet usage.
- Could illegal non-state actors initiate events that shut down global opportunities or complicate economic or geopolitical affairs?
- Well-funded charitable organizations such as the Gates Foundation are expected to proliferate and influence unmet needs and the political agenda, as well as the direction of funding strategies.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Maintain and advance our international ties.
- Consider including international representation in our governance structure.
- Strengthen our advocacy for the rights of people with disabilities around the world.
- Elect ASHA leaders who represent ASHA well in the global public arena.
- Promote collaboration with the international research community, focusing on clinical practice research needs.
- Increase international participation directly through education and health entities.
- Publicize our international activities and the contributions of our international affiliates.
- Support ASHA members who are involved in developing services in developing countries. Be actively engaged with facilitating and providing education/research services in countries where they don’t exist.
- Strengthen opportunities for people from different regions of the globe to communicate about ways to meet the needs of individuals with communication disorders.
- Maintain resources of international subject matter experts and research initiatives for members to access.

- Look to the success of other disciplines (nursing, medicine) in bringing global health practices to developing countries to learn how to provide diverse experiences to faculty and students.
- Consider ASHA influence/involvement in encouraging U.S. participation in the UN convention on the rights of people with disabilities.
- Develop ASHA partnerships with in-country agencies including Ministries of Education, Health, etc., as well as NGOs and various international organizations.
- Become involved with the World Health Organization (WHO).
- Provide online courses for developing countries to help them identify best practice models to build on that include providing culturally appropriate service delivery and supervision.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to this Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Strengthen Strategic Relationships

Initiative:

- Conduct outreach campaigns to develop and enhance alliances with targeted non-governmental audiences.

Theme: Expectations for Social Responsibility

Future Societal Trend #1

Global consumption patterns challenge Earth's resource capacity

Description of Future Societal Trend

The UN projects a global population of 8 billion by 2025 and 9.2 billion by 2050, up from 6.6 billion today. Meanwhile, hundreds of millions of people in emerging economies are experiencing rising incomes and longer life spans—driving up food consumption, increasing demand for clean water and energy, and placing increased pressure on all natural resources. The Worldwide Fund for Nature's (WWF) *Living Planet Report* says that human populations are using up Earth's natural resources at a rapid rate. The WWF estimates that if current consumption levels continue, we will require two planets' worth of raw resource supplies in the next 40 years. If global consumption levels rise to match those in Europe, three planets will be required, and if consumption rose to U.S. levels, five. Today, 1 billion people consume two thirds of the world's raw materials; 5.6 billion people consume the other third and they are becoming more successful. Many environmental analysts believe the world economy could be reaching a "limits to growth" threshold in which raw resource supplies cannot meet growing demand—leading to a sharp increase in the cost of living. The potential for geopolitical and domestic conflicts over access to and control of key resources such as oil, water, and agricultural land will increase commensurately.

Potential Impact the Trend Could Have on ASHA and the Professions

- Associations could come under increasing pressure to develop organizational policies to ensure that their sustainability practices match member needs and expectations in an era of rising costs of natural resources.
- It could also create a stronger focus to consider consumption of increasingly expensive basic resources and the environmental impact of all decisions, from selecting event suppliers to travel planning.
- The Association can elevate the debate on issues related to resource management, social responsibility, "going green," and organizational best practices in reducing resource demands and securing resources for future generations.

Recommended Potential Future Directions for Association Action

- Raise awareness and encourage minimization of paper at Convention (no program book or handouts).
- Provide ASHA journals and *The ASHA Leader* online.
- Highlight and provide information to members on green office/record keeping practices by our members.
- Promote use of telepractice and technologies to deliver services remotely to decrease the use of fuel.
- Continue to publicize ASHA's "going green" endeavors.
- Provide training to increase the use of technology to conduct ASHA business. Increase use of collaborative sites.
- Encourage sustainable practices in members by supporting/marketing the use of solar batteries for hearing aids.

Current ASHA Strategic Objective(s) Related to This Trend

1. Strategic Objective: Increase Active Involvement of Members

Initiative:

- Develop and implement an education and marketing campaign to increase participation in Association activities targeted at those who have been ASHA members for 3–5 years.

2. Strategic Objective: Improve External Communication

Initiative:

- Develop and implement a program to improve effectiveness of ASHA's external communications as perceived by target audiences.

Professional Trends/Issues Related to Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology

Note: These items were identified by the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Advisory Councils during collaboration site discussions in 2009.

Professional Issues: Audiology

1. State budget crisis
 - Loss of travel funds in public schools and university setting
 - Conference/meeting attendance is down
 - Staff hiring freezes
 - Cuts in capital equipment purchases
 - CCC level supplement for school-based SLPs and audiologists is at risk of being discontinued
 - Loss of funding for educational audiology
2. ASHA does not have CEU opportunities that are significantly different from local meetings.
 - Professionals can get good CEUs locally
 - The cost–benefit analysis for attending the ASHA Convention is a hard sell when there are CEU opportunities like state conferences that don't have such high travel expenses associated with them
3. AMA's latest position on the Audiology Scope of Practice and the involvement of physicians in it. AMA attempts to govern audiology services.
4. Recognition in some school systems of audiologists as a true professional
5. Third party payment/funding for hearing aids
 - Amount of paperwork needed for reimbursement
 - More insurance companies are covering hearing aids, but set the limit on the price of the aid
 - Insurance companies specify the total amount a person can pay for a hearing aid rather than the amount they will reimburse
6. Medicare—signing up as "non-participatory providers"
 - Medicare regulations are worded in such a confusing way that even our attorneys have found it challenging to give us best advice
7. Autonomy/direct access for audiologists
8. Reimbursement for Medicare and Medicaid
 - Small practices (and larger ones too) are very concerned about reimbursement
 - Don't feel confident about the details of coding for reimbursement; would like more help and direction from ASHA on this topic
9. Collaborations between professional audiology associations
10. "Shady" advertising by hearing aid dispensers
11. Audiologists hold the CCC-A, but still not sure that the value of this is appreciated by the very people that hold it

12. Many audiologists are giving their services away to sell hearing aids
 - Audiologists provide a rehabilitation service, a hearing aid may be part of the service
 - It's time we grow up as a profession. We are more than hearing aid fitters.
13. Attracting and engaging audiologists in ASHA
 - Many are leaving ASHA for other groups they feel better represent audiology
14. Length of time and difficulties encountered by AuD. students who wish to pursue a PhD. And research related career.

Professional Issues: Speech-Language Pathology

1. Workload/caseload burdens
 - School caseloads and the difficulties of getting funding for kids through RTI
2. Personnel shortages; lack of licensed, certified SLPs; recruitment and retention of highly qualified providers
 - Hiring bachelor's level personnel who do not have their master's degree
 - Hiring students who have completed bachelor's requirements in speech, often minus practicum and yet they secure emergency certificates to work in schools
 - Do not have an SLP/Aud training program in the state adding to the shortage of professionals
3. Overwhelmingly divergent clinical responsibilities associated with the broadening scope of practice
 - Changing service delivery paradigms in the educational setting (RTI, inclusion, etc.)
 - Continued additions to the list of roles and responsibilities for school-based SLPs
4. Reimbursement issues in medical and school settings
 - Medicaid reimbursement
 - Insurance reimbursement
 - American Medical Association's hold on CPT codes and subsequent reimbursement of services. Reimbursement inequity among types of providers (agencies vs. private practice)
5. The balance between supporting collaboration and guarding against encroachment
6. Volunteerism... the lack of it due to "work" taking up so much time and energy
7. Licensure changes that require vigilant monitoring to make sure we maintain our entry level of education
8. Lack of PhDs in our field
 - Limited growth in the number of doctoral candidates graduating
 - Lack of flexibility in PhD programs, in terms of encouraging/allowing experienced professionals to work toward a PhD over time, contributes to this problem
 - A serious look at other methods of preparation for teaching and research seems to be necessary
9. Difficulty recruiting individuals to fill state association volunteer positions
10. Budgets cuts for school and health care services

11. Speech-language pathology assistants (SLPAs)
 - Use of aides in the school system
 - Increasing reliance on SLPAs
 - Assistants are taking on more and more responsibilities
 - Doing little to ameliorate the SLP shortage (not increasing enrollments in graduate programs) so they have no alternative but to employ assistants
 - Use of unlicensed, unqualified paraprofessionals in the schools
 - Need a standardized training program. There is a vast difference in the SLPAs who have AA degrees versus BA degrees.
12. Salaries
13. Telehealth/telepractice service delivery
 - More policies and procedures needed to cover for SLPs so it is (or is not) recognized and/or reimbursed
 - Potential to be utilized as a method of service delivery in place of more appropriate face-to-face intervention
 - Push for increasing use of telepractice
 - What can we do to ensure that it will not be used by school systems simply because it is a less expensive and easier alternative to face-to-face intervention? One might fear school systems beginning to use Internet delivery of services for the same reason.
14. Lack of funding opportunities for carrying out authentic research to inform SLP practice.
15. Lack of interdisciplinary training programs to facilitate coordination of care for children with multiple disabilities.
16. Habilitative and rehabilitative services should be included in the current health care reform discussions.
17. Development of distance learning programs
 - Expanding the number of training programs and distance education programs may provide an opportunity for the addition of SLPs to the profession as well as reduce the unfortunate response of many state legislatures and licensing entities that attempt to reduce qualifications for SLP licensure as a “fix” for the critical shortage.
 - Online courses replacing face-to-face teaching
18. How we are involved in the National Health Care Act (healthcare reform)
19. How to consistently implement RTI services
20. Consider lowering the CE requirements for retired individuals for CCC maintenance.
21. Increase in the number of students with severe/multiple disabilities now being educated in their neighborhood public schools instead of in private programs
 - Many SLPs working in the schools do not feel they are properly trained to provide services for these students, (i.e., they do not feel adequately trained in feeding therapy or AAC in their graduate school programs).

PROFESSIONAL TRENDS/ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF

Note: These items were identified by National Office staff as professional trends/issues that could have an impact on the Association and the professions in the next 3–5 years.

Higher Education/Professional Development

1. Need for a clinical doctorate degree in speech-language pathology.
2. More people are looking for graduate education that fits better into their existing busy schedule. Given the costs of higher education, it seems less and less reasonable to expect that people will drop everything and work on a degree full-time.
3. Length of postsecondary education required to enter CSD professions (currently 6 years for SLP and 8 years for audiology) impacts access, motivation, and perceived return on investment for a career in SLP or audiology.
4. Consider offering ASHA online CEU programs (without the CE attached) to CCC faculty members to use in their curriculum.
5. Lack of higher education funding impacts access to and sustainability of CSD programs for personnel preparation.
6. Changes that are occurring in how people are educated (e.g., the rise of the Internet as a channel for information-sharing and education and the interest in convenient and accessible education).
7. Virtual meetings and experiences will gain greater functionality and prominence in business. Use of tele-meetings will grow.

Ethics

8. Some states require continuing education in ethics for licensure renewal. ASHA may need to require it for certification maintenance.

Private Practice

9. More speech-language pathologists are starting private practices.

Hearing Aids/Devices

10. Changes in technology (smaller sizes [nanotechnology], much more powerful, lower cost) may drive things like the sale of hearing aids to mass vendors and could have an impact on the testing equipment both professions use.
11. Increased use of wireless Bluetooth technology in devices used by individuals who are hearing impaired.
12. Price and service transparency could impact current bundling of hearing aids with services.
13. The impact of Internet hearing aid sales on audiologists' practice.

Technology/Social Media/Web

14. Changes in communication technology, such as social media, that can be used to more efficiently and effectively communicate messages to members and consumers.
15. Increased use of handheld technology due to the convenience and cost factor (laptops plus cell phone cost more than the iPhone).

16. The Web is moving to more of a two-way model. People expect transparency, the ability to provide feedback, and the assurance that they can have direct conversations with people at all levels of an organization.
17. Technology expectations of our members and practitioners will continue to increase. Members expect information instantly. They want openness and don't want to pay or log in to get information.
18. Delivery of information/research/evidence to the point of care via a PDA or other communication device.
19. The media revolution that is taking place--things like social media becoming ever more popular, while traditional media, notably newspapers, are rapidly passing away. The increasing cultural diversity of the population.
20. Changes in how consumers search for information, especially on the Web, will impact the way ASHA needs to approach making resources available to consumers.

Audiology

21. The number of Americans with hearing loss has doubled in the past 30 years. As Americans live longer we can expect this group to grow larger.
22. Further research is needed to study the effectiveness of antioxidants and vitamin supplements such as folic acid on the hearing mechanism and preservation of hearing and on the recovery of the hearing mechanism following a noise insult or head injury.

Reimbursement/Salaries

23. Payment based on evidence-based practice.
24. Value-based purchasing.
25. Scope of coverage of SLP and audiology services. Payment decisions by public and private payers are increasingly being affected by the weak economy and by calls for documentation of the effectiveness of proposed treatments.
26. Insufficient reimbursement for services.
27. Unsatisfactory salaries for speech-language pathologists and audiologists.

Public Relations

28. Need to increase the general knowledge about the value of the professions.

Health Care/Health Care Costs/Healthcare Reform

29. The government will have more involvement and more regulations over health care and education systems that will in turn impact our professions.
30. Health disparities/inequities. Increased attention from the federal government and other stakeholders to issues of disparate and/or inequitable services or outcomes of services to different social, economic, and cultural groups.
31. Lack of coordinated health care and centralized records.
32. Escalating health care costs for employers.

Retirement/Aging Population

33. Baby Boomers starting to retire will affect the professions.
34. Aging of the population.
35. More strokes, age-related health issues, and hearing problems.

Personnel Shortages

36. Shortage of SLPs, especially in the schools, which affects caseload size.
37. Shortage of speech-language pathologists in early intervention and school settings.
38. Continuing shortage of doctoral level faculty for graduate education programs.
39. Challenges to SLP credentials. Shortages of SLPs and financial pressures within institutions may continue to give rise to other professionals or nonprofessionals treating disorders that fall within the scope of speech-language pathology.

Professional Practice/Roles/Scope of Practice

40. High amount of paperwork.
41. Evidence-based decision-making will be in the forefront.
42. There is an increasing need for speech-language pathologists to play an active role on assessment and intervention teams and to be integrally involved in research programs for individuals with autism spectrum disorders.
43. Role of speech-language pathologists with RTI involving preschool and school age children.
44. Expanding role of speech-language pathologists in the area of literacy.
45. Expanding scope of practice and specialization: Speech-language pathologists need ways to obtain advanced training and to gain recognition for specializing.
46. Role ambiguity: As the scopes of practice evolve and overlap with other professions, and as more types of providers (e.g., assistants) are recognized, SLPs' and audiologists' roles will be increasingly open for redefinition.
47. Telepractice will increasingly change the way the professions are practiced.
48. Continuing need to improve and expand our outcome measurement systems to address all of our members' services is an increasingly critical mission for the Association.
49. Need for health literate resources that are accessible to diverse individuals.

Diversity/Multicultural/Immigration/Changing Demographics/Globalization

50. Immigration.
51. Demographic diversity and increased immigration will contribute to a growing multilingual country.
52. Changing demographics of U.S. population impacting client populations and services provided (e.g., aging and increasingly diverse population) as well as the future workforce for our professions.
53. Diversity of the population: With the increasing diversity of the U.S. population, speech-language pathologists will need to continue their training and build skills in cultural competence to ensure that they are prepared to meet the needs of children and adults with communication and swallowing disorders from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
54. Globalization.

Communication/Publications

55. The decline of the hard copy publishing business. This is having a negative effect on advertising and, to some degree, product development as the "free" Internet has changed business expectations.
56. Generational differences evolving in communication styles will impact ASHA's communication plan.

57. Open access in scientific publishing: The push from the government to make all research articles available for free to the American public who pays for the research (by and large) is increasing the pressure to make our journals open access resources.

Economy

58. U.S. economic trends impact access to speech-language pathology and audiology services, reimbursement for services, and support for higher education and research in our field.

Research

59. Diffusion research: Research regarding methods of diffusion (how to get empirically tested treatments [ETTs] to be used in clinical service delivery) is practically nonexistent in our field, but the need is looming large.