



2009 Public Policy Agenda (PPA)

Presented by:

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ASHA Public Policy Agenda Framework

- ❑ Each issue objective assigned to priority levels:
 - ☑ Highest Priority
 - ☑ Priority
 - ☑ Monitoring
 - ☑ Planning

- ❑ Based on:
 - a) Importance to the ASHA members and those they serve;
 - b) Immediacy and likelihood meaningful action will occur.

- ❑ These priorities are not absolute, and can be adjusted according to opportunity, importance to membership, and resource availability.

ASHA's Public Policy Agenda

2010 Development Process

*Based on ASHA member input to the
Government Relations & Public Policy Board*

March-May:

Request to ASHA
Committee Chairs
& State Presidents

June – August:

Member Input Solicited



input ↑ over 1000 comments
(20% increase over previous year)



Online comments form

September:

GRPP Board Deliberations

October – November:

ASHA Board of Directors
Review & Vote to Accept

2010 PPA – Request for Input



AMERICAN
SPEECH-LANGUAGE
HEARING
ASSOCIATION

March 29, 2009

Dear Colleague:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Government Relations and Public Policy (GRPP) Board to request your assistance in the development of ASHA's 2010 Public Policy Agenda.

One of the goals of the GRPP Board is to ensure member and staff input in the identification and prioritization of issue objectives for the Association's Public Policy Agenda. For ASHA to most effectively advocate before Congress, the Administration, and state governments in 2010, it is important that this agenda be approved by November. This also allows its availability at the 2009 ASHA convention in New Orleans.

Please provide comments or suggested issue-based objectives from your committee or board in writing for consideration by the GRPP Board. Comments may be submitted via our on-line web form at <http://www.asha.org/peer-review/publicpolicy.htm>, or to James Potter, ASHA's Director of Government Relations & Public Policy, by email at jpotter@asha.org or by fax at (301)296-8177, by August 1, 2009.

For your reference, enclosed is the 2009 ASHA Public Policy Agenda that can also be viewed on the peer review website or at <http://www.asha.org/about/legislation-advocacy/briff-agenda-09PPA.htm>. This agenda has been instrumental in focusing ASHA's advocacy efforts that have led to a number of victories and advancements for our professions in both the federal and state legislative and regulatory arenas.

Again, should you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at potter@asha.org, James Potter at jpotter@asha.org, or Thomas Hallahan, ASHA's Vice President for Government Relations & Public Policy, at thallahan@psdsu.edu. Your thoughts and comments to help develop the 2010 ASHA Public Policy Agenda will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Niveah W. Murray, CCC-SLP
Chair, Government Relations and Public Policy Board

2010 PPA – Online Input

Peer Review

2010 Public Policy Agenda

Dear Peer Reviewer:

ASHA's Government Relations and Public Policy (GRPP) Board is requesting your assistance for input in the development of the Association's 2010 Public Policy Agenda. One of the goals of the GRPP Board is to ensure member input to identify and prioritize issue objectives for the association. In order for ASHA to most effectively advocate before a new Congress, Administration, and state governments in 2010, it is the GRPP Board's intention to develop the 2010 Public Policy Agenda so that it is approved and published by the ASHA annual convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, November 19-21, 2009. This agenda has been instrumental in focusing our advocacy efforts which have led to a number of victories and advancements in both the federal and state legislative and regulatory arenas.

Should you have any questions or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact: James Potter, ASHA's Director of Government Relations & Public Policy, at jpotter@asha.org, Ninevah Murray, Chair, Government Relations and Public Policy Board, at speechprof@gmail.com, or Thomas Hallahan, ASHA's Vice President for Governmental and Social Policies, at thallahan@salemstate.edu. Your thoughts and comments to help develop the 2010 ASHA Public Policy Agenda will be greatly appreciated.

Comments must be received **on or before August 1, 2009**.

If you are unable to provide your comments electronically, you may mail or fax a printed copy to the attention of **James Potter** at the ASHA National Office, **2200 Research Boulevard #220, Rockville, MD 20850** (fax 301-296-8577).

The peer review steps:

1. Download and review the [2009 ASHA Public Policy Agenda](#) [PDF].
2. [Enter your feedback comments](#) (**please note:** prepare your comments in a separate word processing program offline, then cut-and-paste your responses to each question on the online form).

2010 PPA – Online Input

Peer Review Comment Form for

2010 Public Policy Agenda

Comments must be received **on or before August 1, 2009.**

If you are unable to provide your comments electronically, you may mail or fax a printed copy to the attention of **James Potter** at the ASHA National Office, **2200 Research Boulevard #220, Rockville, MD 20850** (fax 301-296-8577).

I. Highest Priority - requires immediate federal or state legislative or regulatory attention and requires major resources on the Association's part.

A. Promote state/federal financial aid policies and research funding opportunities, while collaborating with state agencies/CSD programs to support recruitment and retention of 1) master and doctoral students and 2) clinicians in educational and healthcare settings.

Comments:

B. Promote the autonomy of audiologists through direct patient access and comprehensive coverage of audiology services for Medicare beneficiaries.

Comments:

ASHA's Public Policy Agenda

2010 Outreach & Input

Letters to State Presidents & Government Relations chairs

All members solicited via email (at least twice)

Listserves, e-newsletters & *The ASHA Leader*

Question on PPA Outreach:

How can we further encourage state input into 2010 Public Policy Agenda?

ASHA's Public Policy Agenda

Changes since Last Year

➤ Access & Coverage -

Issue Triangulation in Medicare Bill:

- SLP supplier status (July 1, 2009 Implementation)
- Direct access to audiologists
(AAO-HNS to drop opposition, add FDA red flags)
- Reversal of a 10% overall cut
in Medicare fee schedule through 2009
- Medicare codes being converted
from practice expense to professional work
- FEHBP Expanded Coverage for SGDs & Hearing Aids

ASHA's Public Policy Agenda

Changes since Last Year

Quality & Utilization –


- Therapy Exceptions Process through 2009
- Therapy Caps Exception Process/Studies
- NOMS as the National SLP Outcomes Tool
National Quality Forum (NQF) Endorsement
- Audiologists Added to Medicare Quality Reporting Initiative (PQRI)
- Audiology Quality Consortium Convened
with 12 Quality Measures Submitted to NQF

ASHA's Public Policy Agenda

Changes since Last Year

Workforce Incentives (Shortages) -

- ❑ Higher Education Act Loan Forgiveness for School-based SLPs & Audiologists (up to \$10,000)
- ❑ \$286,000 congressionally directed grant to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation (ASHF) for doctoral students in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD) programs
- ❑ \$12 million + in state and local salary supplements



2009 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA

Speech-Language Pathology



2009 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

- SLP Education-Related Objectives:
Federal-level strategies
 - Promote state/federal financial aid policies and research funding opportunities, while collaborating with state agencies/CSD programs to support recruitment and retention of
 - 1) masters and doctoral students, and
 - 2) clinicians in educational and health care settings.

2009 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

SLP Education-Related Objectives: Federal-level strategies

- Support increased funding of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the following outcomes:
 - 1) establishment of effective service delivery and manageable workloads to maximize student outcomes;
 - 2) participation in early intervening activities using the Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model (Part B) and increased access to appropriate early intervention services (Part C);
 - 3) increased professional development through dissemination of information about research-based SLP practices; and
 - 4) effectively utilize federal education stimulus funds.

2009 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

SLP Education-Related Objectives: Federal-level strategies

- Promote use of a growth model to assess students with disabilities and meet the requirements of adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, and consider legislative or regulatory remedies for inconsistencies created between NCLB and IDEA.
- Further the adoption of the standards in the Certificates of Clinical Competence (CCCs), including alignment of NCLB and IDEA standards, and to link the CCCs with salary increases.
- Conform federal and state policies that regulate the use of support personnel to be consistent with ASHA's criteria for appropriate training, supervision, and the delineation of job responsibilities to clearly distinguish them from licensed and certified SLPs.

Questions on SLP Federal Education-Related Objectives

- **What elements of the NCLB standards should be changed or aligned with IDEA?**
- **Would you state be interested in promoting state legislation or regulations to increase participation in early intervening activities using the Response-to-Intervention (RTI) model?**
- **How would school-based members like to direct federal stimulus funds next year?**

2009 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

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

2009 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

- SLP Education-Related Objectives
 - **Local-level strategies**
 - Assisting members secure new stimulus, IDEA funds and attributing Medicaid funds to SLP Programs
 - Advancing salary supplements for CCC Holders
 - Reducing IDEA paperwork
 - Promoting caseload size/workload policies

Questions on SLP State & Local Education-Related Objectives

- How are shortages of SLPs impacting the members of your state association?
- What encroachment threats is your state facing from new or other providers?
- How are Medicaid funds being utilized in school districts within your state?

2009 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

SLP Health Care-Related Objectives

– **Federal-level strategies**

- Repealing or implementing an alternative to the Medicare outpatient therapy cap
- Utilizing NOMS outcomes data for new utilization & possible payment methodology
- Increasing EHDI federal grants to states, and reimbursement for early intervention services
- Ensure that appropriate professional work and technical components for audiology and speech-language pathology services are included in Medicare fee schedule payment rates
- Promote access to telepractice services.
- Expanded SGD Benefits in Federal Employee Health Benefit Plans (FEHBP)

2009 Public Policy Agenda: SLP

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

Questions on SLP Federal Healthcare-Related Objectives

- Is the therapy caps exception process providing appropriate care to patients under Medicare Part B outpatient services?
- Are (or could) tele-services for SLPs being utilized in your state?
- How do you believe SLP private practice status will change how services are delivered in your state? Are there any provisions in your state that may restrict SLP private practice?
- What are some of the greatest Medicaid challenges in your state?



**2009 PUBLIC POLICY
AGENDA**

Audiology



2009 Public Policy Agenda: *Audiology*

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

2009 Public Policy Agenda:

Audiology

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

Questions on Federal Audiology-Related Objectives

- What are the greatest challenges for audiologists in your state?
- How will expanded private insurance coverage for hearing aids impact audiologists in your state?
- To what extent do audiologists in your state incorporate rehabilitative services into the delivery of care?
- How effective and uniform are school-based hearing screening programs in your state.

2010 Public Policy Agenda

For more information, please contact:

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- Phone: 508-360-0891

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Go to the ASHA Web site to view ASHA's 2009 PPA:

<http://www.asha.org/about/legislation-advocacy/briefs-agenda/2009PPA.htm>