



## **Supervision of Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) Graduate Students in Health Care Settings**

### **What Administrators Need to Know**

#### **What's the importance of graduate student clinicians in health care?**

Graduate clinical experiences are a critical requirement for obtaining the Certificate of Clinical Competence (CCC) from the Council for Clinical Certification (CFCC) of the American Speech-Language Association (ASHA). Students working to become certified speech-language pathologists (SLPs) must be supervised in a variety of settings and have experience with clients across the age span who present with a variety of communication disorders.

Many state licensure boards have similar requirements as those required for the CCC, making obtaining licensure easier. Also, Medicare and other payers require the CCC or equivalent to become a qualified provider.

#### **What benefits does my facility realize from student placements?**

Graduate student clinicians are a potential source of future employees who are knowledgeable about the facility's policies and practices, as well as the types of patients and disorders encountered in the setting. These students have experienced a "real-world" schedule, obtained a variety of clinical experiences, and acquired the clinical education required to treat individuals in health care settings, making them valuable employees. In addition, students who have had a positive experience will speak highly of the facility to other students, faculty, and other SLPs in the area, further improving the facility's reputation and increasing the pool of potential employees.

#### **What do SLPs say about their student supervisory experience?**

SLPs who serve as clinical educators to graduate student clinicians report many benefits derived from the practicum experience including:

- current information that students bring from their coursework
- stimulation of a new role as a supervisor as well as service provider
- professional and educational perks that may come from a relationship with a university
- satisfaction from sharing their expertise with future colleagues and ensuring that students are prepared for employment in health care

The facility then benefits from increased employee motivation and morale, key elements of a good employee retention program.

#### **My SLPs are already too busy! How can I expect them to do more?**

Many facilities have found that the benefits of educating student clinicians justify the supports that they put in place to encourage their SLPs to take on supervisory roles. These supports may include:

- release time for supervisory responsibilities
- professional education in supervision
- recognition for this professional contribution through incentives and other means

Most SLPs see graduate student supervision as having more advantages than disadvantages, and are willing to accept that responsibility because of its many benefits.

#### **How do I find graduate student clinicians?**

A list of graduate programs in speech-language pathology is available at [www.asha.org/gradguide](http://www.asha.org/gradguide). You can speak with the department chair, graduate program director, or clinic director for further information.