

**HEARING INSTRUMENT DISPENSER ADVISORY COUNCIL
ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
August 12, 2009**

Attendance

Members

Larry Brennan
Cami Lawless
Dr. Shirley Fors
Joan Gamble
James Olson
Dale Woodard

Staff

Tom Hiendlmayr
Patti Fuller
Grace Rauchwarter

Guests

Maryann Campo

Absent Members

Dale Thorstad

Minutes

I. Introductions

Fuller called the meeting to order.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes from May 13, 2009 Meeting

Olson had questions regarding the definition of hearing instrument dispensing and hearing instrument language. He thought since we had a majority of the committee members in agreement the Department could go forward with the language changes. Hiendlmayr stated that the Department would not want to bring the language before the Legislature if the language would be opposed by any of the professional associations. Lawless stated that the people who disagree with the language should work to create language and then the Work Group can review their suggestions. Brennan suggested that the professional association should be given a deadline to make changes. After this discussion the Minutes were approved as written.

III. Review and Approval of Agenda

Fuller stated that there would be an addition to the Agenda. The Council will discuss editorial changes to the consumer brochure under New Business, Item B. With that change noted the agenda was approved.

IV. Staff Updates

A. Credential Report & Examination Reports

Fuller gave the credential report as of July 30, 2009. Fuller stated that there are currently 188 certified non-audiologist dispensers and four audiologist dispensers for a total of 192 dispensers. She also noted that there are ten trainees. Fuller stated that the hearing instrument dispenser certification renewal applications will be going out next week.

Fuller presented the February 19, 2009 Hearing Instrument Dispenser Examination report. She stated that the results of this examination were mailed to examinees on June 2, 2009. She noted that there were ten new examinees who took the written examination, all ten passed the written examination. Fuller stated that there were two retests for the written examination, both passed the written examination. Fuller stated that there were fourteen new examinees for the practical examination. Four passed the practical portion, three were audiologist trained examinees and one was a non audiologist. Fuller explained that ten examinees failed one or more portions of the practical examination, and all ten were non-audiologist trained. Fuller noted that the non-audiologist trained examinee failures consisted of; one failed audiometry, earmold impressions and Minnesota Law questions; four failed audiometry; two failed hearing aid fitting and servicing; one failed audiometry and ear mold impressions and hearing aid fitting and servicing; one failed audiometry and ear mold impressions; and one failed audiometry and hearing aid fitting and servicing. Fuller informed Council Members that there were ten re-tests for the practical examination. Seven examinees passed their retest, five were audiologist trained and two were non-audiologist trained. Three failed their retest, one was audiologist trained and two were non-audiologist trained. The non-audiologist failures consisted of; one failed audiometry and ear mold impressions; and one failed ear mold impressions. Fuller stated that the Department administered another Hearing Instrument Dispenser Examination on May 7th, 2009. She noted that as of this meeting the results of this examination have not been released.

B. Investigation and Enforcement Report

Hiendlmayr presented the investigation and enforcement report. He discussed the handout which contained investigation and enforcement activity from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009. He stated that there were 445 intakes received. He stated that there were only 16 credential check inquiries. He noted that this number could be lower because consumers can now access this information on line. He stated that there were 27 investigations opened. He noted that there were 25 investigations opened because of allegations and two investigations opened due to application issues. Hiendlmayr stated that there were seven allegations involving failure to comply with repair provision. He stated that there were five allegations involving possible negligence/incompetence. He stated the there were four allegations of engaging in conduct likely to deceive, defraud, or harm the public followed by 4 allegations involving failure to comply with 45 day trial period or having incorrect language on the contract relating to the trial period.

Hiendlmayr stated that from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 there were 45 investigations closed. He stated that nine investigations resulted in the Department sending a letter of advisement to the practitioner. He explained that this letter is a non disciplinary action and may request that the practitioner make changes to their contracts or advertisement in order to correct issues that may be misleading or a technical violation of the law. Hiendlmayr noted that there were five enforcement actions opened and two closed. He stated that the two closed enforcements resulted in a letter of advisement.

C. Budget and Expenditure Report

Hiendlmayr presented the Preliminary 4th Quarter Expenditure Report. He stated the final figures will not be available until September. He noted that the deficit was \$30,000 less than was anticipated in earlier budget estimates. He noted that the exam fees continue to exceed exam revenues so the program continues to add to the deficit.

Hiendlmayr presented the Fiscal Year 2010 Proposed Budget report. He noted that the salary/fringe line item is the largest expense. He stated he anticipates an increase in the Professional Services line item due to the development of the on-line renewal system. On the receipt side he stated that based on current number of practitioners, the certification fees collected will be approximately \$114,000 because of the increase in application and renewal fees. Hiendlmayr also stated that if the number of people taking the Hearing Instrument Dispenser Examination continues at the current rate it will contribute to ending the deficit. Hiendlmayr stated that he would bring the long-range proposed budget report to the November 19, 2009 meeting.

V. Old Business

A. Apprenticeship Program – Update next step

Hiendlmayr informed Council Members that he would like to schedule a Special Apprenticeship Meeting during the month of September. He stated he has invited Richard Davy from the Department of Labor and Industry to discuss the possibility of an Apprenticeship program for Hearing Instrument Dispensers. Hiendlmayr provided the Council Members with a list of possible dates for the meeting and requested that each member indicate which dates they would be able to attend the Special Apprenticeship Meeting. Woodard suggested that Council Members should be given a deadline to return this form so members can schedule time away from their office. Hiendlmayr stated that Council Members should return this form by Monday, August 24, 2009. Hiendlmayr stated that on the afternoon of August 24th the Department would send an email informing Council Members of the Special Apprenticeship Meeting date that a majority of Council Members could attend.

B. Skill and Subject matter Area for Pre-Certification Exam Training

Council Members received an updated version of a handout that was distributed at the May 13, 2009 Advisory Council Meeting. Hiendlmayr stated that this updated form contains the recommended additions from the May 13th Advisory Council Meeting. He also provided Council Members with NBC-IHS Competency Model and a course description from the Hearing Aid Academy in Atlanta Texas. He asked Council Members to review this information and contact him by email with comments, concerns or additions that could be added to improve the consumer outcomes and practitioners' training. The Council Members briefly discussed the apprenticeship program and trainers that could be involved in the apprenticeship program. Lawless suggested that there could be some kind of a certificate for the people who train the people in the apprenticeship program. She noted that we need competent people providing the training so the people are able to pass the practical examination and practice competently. Gamble asked what kinds of coursework was involved in the Anoka Hennepin Community College program. Hiendlmayr stated he would try to locate a copy of the program and bring this

information to the next Advisory Council meeting. Fors asked if Department staff had the information sent from the MAA recommending coursework. Hiendlmayr said he had it but did not bring it to the meeting. Hiendlmayr will prepare a table showing the three or four education training options the Council has considered/discussed to the next Advisory Council Meeting.

Lawless mentioned the possibility of having the written examination separate from the practical examination. She thought it might be helpful to pass the written part of the examination before a person can sit for the practical exam. Hiendlmayr stated that could be a possibility but would depend on whether the written and practical training was given at the same time. Hiendlmayr stated that maybe Mr. Davy could address more specifics of the apprenticeship program. Fuller stated that currently there is a time requirement to take an pass both portions of the exam. She stated that changes to this would have to be brought before the legislature.

VI. New Business

A. Consumer Information Webpage

Council Members were given a copy of the current Hearing Instrument Dispenser Certification website. Hiendlmayr stated that he would like to make changes to the web site. He suggested that there should be a link from the current page to a Consumer Information Center page. He stated he would like to expand the information and links available for consumers.

B. Editorial Changes to Hearing Instrument Dispenser Consumer Brochure

Hiendlmayr informed Council Members that the Communications Office of the Minnesota Department of Health reviewed all the Department of Health brochures that will be available at the Department's Booth at the 2009 Minnesota State Fair. The First change would essentially make the subject "Hearing Instruments" instead of "Legal Rights and Consumer Information. The Council unanimously approved the first change. The second change "Direct your questions or complaints regarding your hearing instrument or the services you received; to your practitioner. If your practitioner does not respond you may contact our Consumer Information Center, Minnesota Department of Health, Health Occupations Program, PO Box 64882, Saint Paul, MN 55164-0882. The second change was supported by two public members and a dispenser, and perceived by another public member as unnecessary. Hiendlmayr stated he would email the proposed changes to audiologist members of the Speech Language Pathologist/Audiologist Advisory Council. He stated unless both Councils unanimously agree to the changes the Department not go forward with the changes and will distribute the current brochure at the Minnesota State Fair. Woodard stated he would not be able to attend the November 19, 2009 Hearing Instrument Dispenser Certification Advisory Council Meeting

VII. Next Meeting Date

November 19, 2009

Snelling Office Park

Minnesota Room

1:00-3:00 p.m.

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