



Protecting, maintaining and improving the health of all Minnesotans

Hearing Instrument Dispenser
Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
February 19, 2014

Attendance

Members

Dale Thorstad
Cami Lawless
Sarah Kahley

MDH Staff

Anne Kukowski
Grace Rauchwarter
Bridget Woitas

Absent

Maxwell Hall
Richard Caruso

Minutes

I. Introductions

II. Review and Approve Minutes from August 7, 2013

Approved as written.

III. Review and Approve Agenda

Approved as written.

IV. Staff Updates

A. Credentialing and Exam Discussion

Grace Rauchwarter presented the Credentialing report as of January 31, 2014

- Audiologist Dispensers: 3
Non Audiologist Dispensers: 194
Total Dispensers: 197
Trainees: 14

Grace presented the November 14, 2013, Hearing Instrument Dispenser Exam Report

- Exam results were mailed to examinees December 4, 2013
Written Exam Results:
7 new examinees took the written exam: 5 passed, 2 failed
1 retest for written exam: 1 failed
Practical Exam Results:
13 new examinees took the practical exam: 8 passed (4 audiologists, 4 non-audiologists)
5 failed one or more portions of the practical (2 audiologists, 3 non-audiologists)

NOTE: The non-audiologists failures consisted of: 1 ear mold impressions and audiometry, 1 audiometry, 1 audiometry and MN Law Questions

- Practical Exam Retest Results:
7 retests: 6 passed (4 audiologists, 2 non-audiologists)
1 failed (1 non-audiologist)

NOTE: The non-audiologist failure consisted of: 1 ear mold impression.

NOTE: For purposes of this report, the term “audiologists” means persons who stated that they were in an audiology program or had completed an audiology master’s or doctoral training program on their exam application, and they are not authorized to practice audiology or to dispense hearing instruments until licensed.

- MDH announced that February would be the last time that MDH administered the International Hearing Society (IHS) written exam, and that future applicants will take the exam through electronic media.
- MDH noted that the number of examinees who are not passing the IHS written exam has increased with the new exam.
- A council member questioned whether the written exam fee would continue
- MDH stated that a statutory change will be necessary to modify the written exam fee.
- Applicants will be required to pass the written test before they sit for the practical test.

## **B. Investigation and Enforcement Report**

MDH presented the most recent I&E Report:

- 3 Investigations opened (3 allegation intakes, 1-Incompetence or negligence, 1-Failure to comply with repair provisions/Financial and 1-Illegal practice/use of protected titles)
- 2 Investigations closed (1-Dismissed with advisements and 1-Referred for enforcement)
- 1 Enforcement Opened
- 1 Enforcement Closed
- 36 Pending Investigations (22 Practitioners)
- 11 Pending Enforcements
- 47 Total number of pending investigations and pending enforcements

Members received a disciplinary action: the Matter of the Application for Certification as a Hearing Instrument Dispenser by David R. Oswald.

A council member questioned a statement made at the previous meeting that penalties and are not retained by program to cover cost. MDH will report at next meeting.

## **C. Budget and Expenditure Report**

MDH presented the 2nd quarter Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Report.

- We are at 37% of our total expenditures.
- MDH will still seek a statutory fee to cover MDH’s costs for its work with applicants who take the written exam.

## **V. Old Business**

### **A. 2014 Legislation**

- The governor declared 2014 the “Unsession” and our legislation was not moved forward

## **VI. New Business**

- State of the HID program:

- The group discussed the graphs that were handed out regarding “Projected Growth of Minnesota population by age groups”, “Number of Certified HIDs”, “Ages of HIDs”, “Hearing Instrument Dispensers – Age Distribution”, “Ages when Initially Credentialed” and “Median Age when Initially Credentialed, by Year Issued.”
- A council member pointed out that fee reimbursements are difficult as a HID and this is prohibiting people coming into the profession. It was said that “HIDs can only bill for \$23.00 and very few insurances pay for their time.”
- Medical assistance payments are determined by Medicaid.
- A council member brought up recruiting options she has seen on television.
- There was a discussion about VA Hospital regulations.
- MDH presented Regulatory Requirements for personal sound amplification.

## **VI. Meeting Adjourned**

### **Next Meeting**

August 20, 2014