



Protecting, maintaining and improving the health of all Minnesotans

**Speech-Language Pathologist and Audiologist Licensing
Advisory Council Meeting
April 22, 2014**

Attendance

Members

Mark DeRuiter, PhD, CCC-A/SLP
Jill Arvidson, MST, CCC-SLP
Sally Gorski, MA, CCC-SLP
Heidi Hueffmeier, CCC-SLP
Jenne Tunnell, AuD
Josephine Helmbrecht, AuD

Staff

Anne Kukowski
Gloria Rudolph
Barbara Miller
Patti Fuller

Absent Member

Katherine Teece, AuD
Geoff Service, MD
Jerry Meinders, HID

I. Introductions

Done by those in attendance.

Kukowski stated that Gil Acevedo has been hired as the program manager for the Health Occupations Program with the starting date of 5/5/14.

II. Review and Approve Minutes from January 28, 2014

Approved, as written.

III. Review/Adoption of Agenda

Approved, as written.

IV. Staff Reports

A. Credentialing Report

Rudolph presented the Credentialing Activity Report as of December 31, 2013.

- Full Licenses: 1,929 = 1,499 SLPs, 428 Auds, and 2 Dual.
- CFY/DE Licenses: 104 = 96 SLPs and 8 Auds.
- Temporary Licenses: 13 = 9 SLPs and 4 Auds.
- Total Licenses: 2,046.
- Next renewal deadline is 5/31/14; notices were mailed on 3/4/14.

B. Exam Report – February 28, 2014 Exam Results

Fuller presented the 2/28/14 HID Exam Results.

- Results were mailed 3/26/14.
- 11 new examinees for the practical exam:
 - 6 passed (4 audiologists, 2 non-audiologists).
 - 5 failed (3 audiologists, 2 non-audiologists)
 - Audiologist failures consisted of: 2 earmold impressions & 1 audiometry.
- 4 retest examines for the practical exam:
 - 1 audiologist passed.
 - 3 failed (1 audiologist, 2 non-audiologists).
 - Audiologist failure consisted of: 1 audiometry.

C. Investigations and Enforcement Report

Kukowski presented the 7/1/13 to 3/31/14 SLP I&E Report:

- 5 Intakes (all application).
- 1 Investigation Opened (from an allegation).
 - 1 count of failure to perform with reasonable judgment, skill or safety due to use of alcohol or drugs, or physical or mental impairment.
- 5 Investigations Closed:
 - 1 insufficient evidence to show violation.
 - 4 referred to enforcement
- 4 Enforcement Actions Opened.
- 4 Enforcement Actions Closed.
 - Kukowski explained that the report sometimes shows technical violations, so numbers may not be completely accurate.
 - Kukowski presented the 1 enforcement action closed in this quarter, which is a suspended license due to a practitioner dropping out from Health Professionals Services Program (HPSP).

Kukowski presented the 7/1/13 to 3/31/14 Audiology I&E Report:

- 16 Intakes (2 allegations, 1 inquiry for info, 13 applications).
- 1 Investigation Opened (from an allegation).
 - Incompetence or negligence.
- 6 Investigations Closed:
 - 1 dismissed with advisements
 - 4 insufficient evidence to show violation and
 - 1 referred to enforcement.
- 1 Enforcement Opened.
- No Enforcements Closed.

D. Budget and Expenditure Reports

Kukowski explained future budget reports will show a sub-total for the non-payroll budget, but will breakout actual non-payroll expenditures. Finance moves money around between the non-payroll lines as needed, so the relevant amount is what is expended.

Kukowski presented the 7/1/13 to 3/31/14 Speech-Language Pathologist Budget Report.

- Budgeted Expenditures increased by \$6,000 due to the hiring of the new HOP manager and other salary increases, like cost of living and reclassification.
- Total Expenditures were around \$116,000.
- Total Receipts were around \$100,000.
- Program Balance was around -\$16,000.

Kukowski presented the 7/1/13 to 3/31/14 Audiologist Budget Report.

- Budgeted Expenditures increased by \$3,000 due to the salary increases.
- Total Expenditures were around \$79,000.
- Total Receipts were around \$64,000.
- Program Balance was -\$15,000.

V. Old Business

A. Audiology Assistants (ongoing discussion)

Helmbrecht stated there are no updates about audiology assistants.

- This item will be removed from future agendas, but will be revisited when Helmbrecht has an update from MAA.

B. HID Exam Requirement for Audiologist

DeRuiter presented a handout based on the pass/fail data presented at the last advisory council meeting.

- The top graph shows the audiologist examinees who failed across the different years, and the jump in failures in 2008 corresponds to the year that AuD became the mandatory degree for Minnesota audiologist licensure.
 - Some educational programs are pushing students to take the exam during the 3rd year because the exam is offered infrequently, so examinees may not have a great deal of professional experience when they take the exam.
 - A theory is that the failure rates have increased because more students are taking the exam earlier.
- The bottom graph took the 1st time test results by audiologists per year and then aggregated the projected failure rate.
 - For each year, the graph shows the actual number of failures and the confidence interval around that number.
 - This graph demonstrates that it is unknown if audiologists are failing at a higher rate in recent years because if the data are aggregated the confidence interval appears somewhat stable.
- DeRuiter stated that it would be useful to collect data on how many students are taking the exam due to the jump in failures in 2008. That way when we discuss failures, we could distinguish between actual audiologist failures and the students enrolled in audiology program failures.

- Collecting Data when Audiologist Students take HID Exam

DeRuiter suggested asking audiologist examinees, 'Are you are a student and currently enrolled at the time of signing up for the exam? If so, what year are you?'

- Fuller stated that majority audiologists taking the exam are students or practitioners coming here from other states, and she has observed a high failure rate in practitioners coming from other states because they seem to struggle with earmold impressions.
- DeRuiter stated another concern is how the minutes say 'audiologist failure rate,' but they are not necessarily audiologists yet. It might be more helpful if the website was able to say more clearly, 'if I'm a student, these are my odds of passing,' or, 'if I'm coming in from another state, then these are my odds.'
- Fuller wanted to clarify the terminology. Students first complete their BA, and then are they 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year students to the audiology doctoral program? Also, when do they take their externship?
- DeRuiter confirmed her assessment of the years is correct. The students do have an externship during their 4th year, and the problem is that many students are taking the exam for the first time before their externship because they want to pass it completely by the time they graduate.
- Helmbrecht asked how the protocol for the earmold portion of the exam developed?
- Fuller responded the exam committee met with a psychometrician, which helped with the forms and how to score portions of the exam. In terms of the exam protocols, there were a lot of audiologists involved in that development.
- Fuller encouraged council members to join the exam committee if they want to be more involved in the administration and content of the exam.
- DeRuiter stated he is okay with the exam, but he feels that the examinees should

be told what to expect and what methods are being used. In his opinion, providing that information would not be giving the exam away.

- Fuller and DeRuiter agreed to draft questions to ask the examinees, and then they will distribute those questions to the council for input.
- The timeline is to add those questions for the November exam application, since the Department has already received applications for the June exam.
- Helmbrecht inquired to how the testing centers work for the written portion of the HID exam (which is only for hearing instrument dispenser examinees), and speculated whether a similar format is a possibility for audiologists if there was an acceptable online test.
- Kukowski responded that if there is an acceptable online test, then it potentially could be an option, but it would require a statutory change.
- Kukowski suggested to add 'exam software and testing centers' as an agenda item for the next meeting, after Helmbrecht has time to look into the available online testing options out there.

C. Draft MDH Policy re: Telemedicine

Kukowski presented the draft telepractice statement for the website.

- Kukowski noted that many states already have statements on telepractice.
- The council approved the draft statement for the website with the addition of language reminding practitioners that they must still comply with federal privacy regulations when telepracticing.
- Kukowski asked if this is a topic that the Department should consider statutory changes for?
- Council members agreed that telepractice has been gaining momentum, and so looking into this topic further may be proactive and beneficial.
- Kukowski stated that at the next meeting the council will review ASHA's best practices regarding telepractice and then move forward onto ideas for statutory changes.

VI. New Business

A. Proposed 2015 Legislation

Kukowski presented the proposed 2015 legislation handout.

- Kukowski explained that all of these proposals were from the last legislative session, but none of the proposals moved forward due to the 'unsession.' Since next session is a budget year, these proposals may be tabled again.
- The proposed items are:
 - corrective actions,
 - clarification that audiologists being licensed through reciprocity still need to pass the HID exam, and
 - updating the licensing renewal language to reflect that renewals are now done electronically online.

B. Draft Consumer Brochure

Kukowski asked council members to read the draft hearing aid consumer brochure and to bring those comments to the next meeting.

- Kukowski noted that the intent on this draft brochure is not to change the content but to reduce the reading level because the reading level for the current consumer

brochure is around two years of college.

- The draft brochure has a reading level around 7th grade.
- Kukowski stated a hearing instrument dispenser told her the brochure is out of date, and if that is the case, there will need to be a workgroup to update it.

C. SLP Assistants

Gorski stated that MSHA had brought forward legislation for SLP Assistants.

- The SLP Assistant legislation was tabled because there will be no graduates from Alexandria Tech this year, but MSHA will be bringing the legislative forward again next session.
- Gorski stated a scope of practice issue that came up was from the music therapist group because sometimes they bill under SLP codes with the thought that they can improve across the board communication skills, but that issue did not proceed any further here because it is at the national level where scope of practice is established. ASHA has been monitoring the scope of practice issue closely on a state-by-state level.
- Gorski stated there was another issue with SLP temporary limited licensing, especially in rural school districts where they are hiring someone without an SLP college degree to fill that position. MSHA estimate there are 32-34 people within this category.
- Rudolph asked if that temporary license is issued by the Department of Health or the Department of Education? Gorski responded that it is the Department of Education.

Next Meeting

July 22, 2014, 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm

TIES Event Center

Larpenteur Room

1644 Larpenteur Ave W

Saint Paul, MN 55108