

## ASHA STARS/SMAC

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### State Advocates for Reimbursement

The State Advocates for Reimbursement (STARs) are ASHA-member audiologists and speech-language pathologists who advocate in their states for improved healthcare coverage and reasonable reimbursement. Their targets are key decision-makers in private corporations, public agencies and the local legislature. Examples are healthcare insurance executives, benefits administrators, state insurance department officials, and state congress members. STARs create advocacy strategies and share skills with the state speech-language-hearing associations that appoint them.

### STAR (cont.)

STARs form a true network. They link states together and to ASHA through monthly conference calls, a STARs-only email discussion group and periodic meetings.

STARs eagerly assist colleagues and others with advice and information. STARs are proactive. They seek solutions when members face challenges to their economic viability. They count on their colleagues-all of you-to help them effectuate positive changes in private health insurance and Medicaid.

### STAR (cont.)

- CSAP Representatives from the following states, please stand:
  - Arizona
  - District of Columbia
  - New Hampshire
  - New Mexico
  - Rhode Island

### STAR (cont.)

- 46 states have a STAR representative.
- Five do not have a STAR rep:
  - Arizona
  - District of Columbia
  - New Hampshire
  - New Mexico
  - Rhode Island

### STAR work

- **Agenda from 9/20/11 meeting:**
  - Medicaid Recovery Audit Contracts
  - Tell us your stories (examples/issues)
  - Ideas for STAR/SMAC meeting @ convention
  - State Reports
- **ASHA Contact: Laurie Alban Havens**

### STAR Concerns

- The biggest concern within the STAR network is the fact that there is a disconnect in many states between the President/Board and the STAR representative.
- Many STAR reps feel that if they had more support from their President/Board, there would be a more comprehensive push for adequate reimbursement for SLP's and Aud's in all settings.
- Huge lack of representation of Audiology in the STAR network.

### State Medicare Administrative Contractors

- The mission of the State Medicare Administrative Contractor (SMAC) Network is to enhance and perpetuate the advocacy, leadership, and communication of ASHA members at the state level to influence administrative and public policy decisions that impact Medicare coverage and reimbursement of audiology and speech-language pathology services.

### SMAC (cont.)

- SMAC Network participants are appointed by ASHA recognized state speech-language-hearing associations. They advocate for Medicare coverage and reimbursement of audiology and speech-language pathology services in the states.
- The SMAC representative is responsible for establishing or enhancing effective links to medical directors, consultants, and key personnel with
  - Medicare administrative contractors (MACs),
  - Medicare regional office officials,
  - state health agencies (certify Medicare facilities)
  - consumer groups,
  - and other related professionals.

### SMAC (cont.)

- **CSAP Representatives from the following states, please stand:**

Alabama	New Hampshire
Colorado	New Mexico
Delaware	North Dakota
District of Columbia	Oregon
Hawaii	Rhode Island
Illinois	Utah
Iowa	West Virginia
Maine	Wyoming

### SMAC (cont.)

- 35 states have a SMAC representative.
- 16 do not have a SMAC:

Alabama	New Hampshire
Colorado	New Mexico
Delaware	North Dakota
District of Columbia	Oregon
Hawaii	Rhode Island
Illinois	Utah
Iowa	West Virginia
Maine	Wyoming

### SMAC Concerns

- Not all states have a SMAC! We need more representation amongst all Medicare Administrative Contractors and Fiscal Intermediaries.
- Having a SMAC represent each state will greatly increase our ability to have our voice heard at the national level with Medicare and implement important changes that are vital to our professions.

## SMAC work

### • Agenda topics for 03/06/12

- Hospital Physician Orders – After the early February meeting with CMS and hospital and therapy association
- Healthcare Landscape Summit
- SMAC Convention seminar proposal -- "Medical Necessity and Coding"
- SMAC-STAR meeting at ASHA Business Institute -
- ZPIC Auditors (Zone Program Integrity Contractors)
- ICD-10-CM postponement of effective date.
- Co-treatment guidelines submitted to CMS.
- ASHA request for removal of 97532/92526 from CCI edits.
- Therapy cap as applied to the hospital outpatient departments October 1 – December 31, 2012.
- Videostroboscopy with required physician present
- Home health evaluations by SLPs
- Outdated LCD regarding certain ICD-9 codes
- Direct demand letters from RACs and MACs
- **ASHA contact: Mark Kander**

## State Association Grants:

### • Personnel Grants

- In **California**, the grant will be used to improve the association's web-based information on the professions for consumers, related and allied professionals, legislators and other government leaders, and association members. Plans also include development of videos on the professions to post on the association website and YouTube, and to use at featured media events. The association will also use social media to promote the professions.
- **Colorado**, the only state that does not license speech-language pathologists, will use its funds to promote certification legislation via grassroots networking, website postings, and a lobbyist.
- **Connecticut** will address the shortage of SLPs by marketing the professions to non-CSD undergraduate college students. Plans include development of a Sacred Heart University undergraduate film class on communication disorders as they are portrayed in the popular media; a movie night for families of children with disabilities hosted by undergraduate students; and opportunities for students interested in the professions to meet with state association members and faculty from the speech-language pathology program.
- **Florida's** state association will offer work sessions with speech-language pathology leaders for leadership, professional, and communication skills development to support grassroots efforts on workload issues.

## State Association Grants (cont.):

- **Illinois** leaders plan to work with the state education department to develop an online program to train SLPs to supervise speech-language pathology assistants as required by state law, as well as an ad campaign for the program.
- **Minnesota's** grant will be used to gather data on the shortage of SLPs and audiologists in the state. The association will hold a town hall meeting and establish a coalition of stakeholders to address the issue.
- To increase consumers', legislators', and other stakeholders' awareness of the credentials needed for SLPs and audiologists, the **New York** association will launch a public awareness campaign that will include social media use, an ad campaign for specific target groups, and a video public service announcement.
- **South Carolina** plans to build a coalition of stakeholders that will focus on recruitment and retention issues to address the shortages of school-based SLPs.
- The **South Dakota** grant will be used to develop radio and television public service announcements to increase awareness of the professions and help reduce the personnel shortage. Efforts include developing a website for consumers and professionals that posts job listings, promotes mentoring opportunities, and educates policy-makers on the need for highly qualified professionals.

## State Association Grants (cont.):

### • Reimbursement Grants

- Reimbursement grants support projects that improve private health plans and Medicaid reimbursement for and coverage of speech-language pathology and audiology services.
- **Georgia** will hire legal counsel to review Medicaid HMO contracts and manuals and communicate concerns on their clarity, uniformity, and fairness with Medicaid officials. State leaders also will arrange meetings with key legislators to discuss the problems with Medicaid HMOs and keep them informed of efforts to resolve them.

## State Association Grants (cont.):

- In **Kansas**, grant funds will be used to advocate for non-physician Medicaid provider status for private-practice SLPs, who may not, under current law, bill Medicaid directly. The association will reach out to legislators and key decision-makers and coordinate with other groups, such as occupational therapists, that do not have provider status.
- **Idaho** and **Massachusetts** will use grant funds to improve technology, giving them new ways to support reimbursement advocacy efforts and engage members. The Idaho association will establish a listserv that will allow members to network with one another and allow association leaders to communicate more effectively with members on reimbursement advocacy issues. The Massachusetts association will create a web portal on advocacy and legislation that will provide an effective way to disseminate reimbursement information and promote member participation in advocacy efforts.

## Look up your STAR/SMAC on the ASHA website at:

<http://www.asha.org/advocacy/state/networks/>

### Grant information :

<http://www.asha.org/Publications/leader/2012/120424/State-Associations-Receive-Advocacy-Grants.htm>

(Crowe, E. & Swanson, N. (2012, April 24).

*State Associations Receive Advocacy Grants. The ASHA Leader.*)

**Thank you CSAP!!!**

