



Newsletter

A Publication of the Colorado Speech-Language-Hearing Association

Winter 2016

Inside This Issue

- ❖ **CSHA Lobbyist Report**
- ❖ **Updates From the CSHA STAR**
- ❖ **VP for Education Update**
- ❖ **IMASH Convention – October 5-7, 2017**
- ❖ **From the Communications Director**
- ❖ **2016 Conference Photo Gallery**



Scan this QR Code with your smart phone and check out CSHA's website. Get information on upcoming events, renew your membership, find links to important resources, and much more. If you have questions or suggestions on how CSHA can serve your needs better, please send us an email to csha@cshassoc.org or call us at 855-727-2836.



Colorado Speech-Language and Hearing Association

President's Letter



Happy Holidays CSHA Members! This has been a year of great challenges but equally great accomplishments for CSHA. A productive, on-going interaction with Colorado Medicaid has been established and is expected to continue as we work toward improvements in reimbursement rates and clarity in policy and procedures for SLPs. Many thanks go out to those of you who became members, sent comments and questions and responded to our STAR when information was needed. Your support was an encouragement to the CSHA Board to stay the course in representing SLPs well.

Our Fall Conference was a huge success! Your feedback was positive for nearly every aspect and will help guide the planning of future events. CSHA's VP of Education would love to hear your ideas for speakers, activities and exhibitors so conferencing can be tailored to meet as many of your needs as possible.

CSHA's new website is fully operational. Refining the website will be an ongoing process and we welcome your feedback regarding formatting and content.

CSHA remains committed to the recertification process. Our lobbyist will continue guiding us in the coming months and we are optimistic about successful recertification.

A new CSHA Board will be elected soon. Watch your email for notification and be sure to vote! You'll be hearing from your incoming President, Liliana Stagakes, in the next newsletter.

On a personal note, my hope is that whatever holidays you honor this time of year, they will be filled with reflection and joy. It's been a privilege to serve as your President.

Pamela Mayer, MS, CCC-SLP
CSHA President



Updates From the CSHA STAR

This year, the Medicaid/Medicare Fraud Control Unit (MFCU) brought investigations of fraud against more than 30 speech-language pathologists (SLPs) based on billing practices that were communicated as appropriate and allowed by Medicaid employees in 2013-2016. CSHA was able to obtain an extended contract with lobbyist Jennifer Mello with Brandeberry McKenna Public Affairs and cooperated with lawyers who were already involved with some of the affected SLPs to communicate with both the Attorney General's office, MFCU and the Health Care Policy and Finance Department (HCPF: Medicaid). In August, the cases were closed with the MFCU, meaning all fraud investigations were closed. This is an unprecedented outcome and one that we are all proud of accomplishing. The MFCU sent all information to the Medicaid Audit and Compliance Division for review for possible overpayment. We have not received communication on any outcome within the department regarding the status of these cases within the Medicaid Audit and Compliance Division.

Medicaid is currently in the 2nd cycle of the Rate Review Committee and this includes the Outpatient Speech Therapy Benefit. The STAR representative recently attended the November 2016 meeting and presented information regarding speech therapy services and a survey of 77 SLPs in a variety of settings regarding Medicaid Billing. This committee reviews all Medicaid rates and provides a summary and recommendations to the Joint Budget Committee who makes the final rate setting decisions. This process will not affect the rates for speech therapy services until November 2017. The STAR plans to attend the Joint Budget Committee meeting in the spring and hopes to meet with members of the rate review committee again prior to that time. She would like to seek providers who work in specific settings to provide information to the committee members on how the Medicaid rates affect them: early intervention, feeding, home care, clinic based.

If you are interested in sharing your experience with Members of Medicaid and the Joint Budget Committee please contact Jenny Vail-Stencel at jenny@sparktherapy.co.

Jenny Vail-Stencel

CSHA State Advocate for Reimbursement (STAR)

CSHA Lobbyist Report

The law regulating speech-language pathologists is scheduled to sunset in 2017. Under Colorado law, most regulatory structures sunset after a certain number of years. CSHA retained Brandeberry McKenna Public Affairs (BBMK) early in 2016 to assist the Association with retaining, and perhaps even improving, regulation by the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA). Over the last year, BBMK worked closely with Association leadership to manage the first part of the sunset process, which is when the Policy Office at DORA examines the profession and makes a recommendation as to whether regulation should continue. As part of this process, our lobbyists helped set up site visits at locations like Craig Hospital to demonstrate the complexity of services performed by speech-language pathologists (SLPs) and to underscore the vulnerability of some of our patients. We were thrilled when DORA's report came out in mid-October recommending that regulation continue.

In 2017, to complete the process, we must pass legislation. Our lobbyist has been working to get the best possible sponsors for a bill. Additionally, we have identified some specific components of the current regulatory scheme that we will seek to improve. BBMK is exploring how to make it easier for SLPs who have a CDE license to interact with DORA and how to build in a longer amount of time before the law sunsets again. As the legislation works its way through the Colorado legislature in 2017, we will work with BBMK to ensure we present a strong case for why SLPs should continue to be regulated in Colorado.

Additionally, there was an incredibly unfortunate situation in 2017 where several SLPs who provide services in the Medicaid program came under investigation for fraud. Working with BBMK, CSHA was able to make a strong case to the Governor's Office and to Health Care Policy and Financing (the state's Medicaid agency), that providers had relied on guidance given by the agency. BBMK advocated very strongly that it was incredibly unfair and unreasonable to accuse providers of fraud, even if the guidance provided was not consistent with federal law. A handful of providers hired legal counsel, and those efforts were critical as well. Together, we were able to ensure that all fraud cases opened by the Attorney General's office were dropped.

Jennifer Mello

CSHA Lobbyist

Membership Information

CSHA is pleased to announce that we're ending the year with more than 400 members! We look forward to continuing to find ways to increase the value of CSHA membership for Colorado speech, language and hearing clinicians in 2017. Thank you for your support!

Visit the CSHA website (www.cshassoc.org) and make sure your CSHA membership information is up-to-date. Log on to the Member Center of the website, enter your last name and your member number. Once submitted, you are able to edit your account information, such as mailing address, email address, professional information and more.

The Member Center also gives you access to renew your membership, register for an event, search for a member, access member only resources and print your membership card.

VP for Education Update



The CSHA Board of Directors set an objective in January 2016 to enhance the professional developmental opportunities that we provide to the members we serve. We met that goal in September 2016 when we hosted our first two-day dual-track Conference in Greenwood Village, Colorado. A total of 178 attendees were at the Conference including CSHA Board Members and invited speakers. A dual-track format allowed medical and school-based speech-language pathologists to hear the latest research from our invited speakers and visit with several professional exhibitors. CSHA members were given an overview of the 2016 goals and results from our President-Elect during the CSHA Membership meeting on Saturday. We received several comments and positive feedback from attendees about the speakers and professional topics highlighted at the Conference. Thank you to all of the attendees, exhibitors and volunteers at the Conference. We look forward to continuing to serve our members by providing quality professional developmental opportunities in 2017.

Sadie Panzer, MA, CCC-SLP
VP for Education

See Conference Photo Gallery on Page 4!

IMASH Convention – October 5-7, 2017



Colorado, Idaho, Utah and Wyoming have once again teamed up to bring you a Convention full of fantastic speakers covering a variety of topics, exciting exhibitors with the latest products and developments, along with networking opportunities with

peers. Join us to see all that the **Intermountain Area Speech and Hearing (IMASH) Convention** has to offer in Boise, Idaho on October 5-7, 2017!

IMASH is now accepting Call for Papers. Submission deadline is January 31, 2017. For submissions and attendee information, please visit <http://robertcraven.com/imash.htm>.

2016 CSHA EXECUTIVE BOARD

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From the Communications Director



Seasons Greetings from the CSHA Communications Director! I wanted to take a minute to thank you all for being members and supporting our work on the board. Additionally, thank you to our 100% volunteer-based Board of Directors for donating your time to help serve our peers. If any CSHA members have an interest in becoming more involved with CSHA in 2017, or has content to share via social media or this newsletter, please send an email to CSHA@cshassoc.org.

We hope you have a fantastic holiday season and look forward to serving you in the new year!

Happy holidays,

Darcy Borella, MS, CCC-SLP
Communications Director



CSHA Newsletter General Information

Editor Darcy Borella

CSHA Newsletter is an official publication of the Colorado Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

Deadlines for CSHA Newsletter

Spring	February 15
Summer	May 15
Fall	August 15
Winter	November 15

Material should be typed and double spaced. Articles for general information should not exceed 400 words. Letters to the Editor should be 200 words or less. All articles are subject to stylistic editing. Submit articles to the CSHA Central Office at csha@cshassoc.org

CSHA Newsletter Sponsorship

CSHA offers the following opportunities for newsletter sponsorship:

	Member	Non-Member	Dimensions
Full Page	\$200	\$300	7.75" wide x 10" high
Half Page	\$150	\$200	7.75" wide x 5" high
Quarter Page	\$100	\$150	3.75" wide x 5" high
Business card	\$50	\$75	3.75" wide x 2.5" high

Exclusive sponsorship of **CSHA Newsletter** is also available. Contact the CSHA Central Office at 855-727-2836, for further information. All copy must be submitted typeset and camera ready. Any costs incurred for additional artwork will be billed to the sponsor. Email copy to the CSHA Central Office at csha@cshassoc.org.

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2016 Conference Photo Gallery



Willow Sauermilch, *Bridging the Gap Between Speech Pathology and Emerging Educational Technology*



Pam Mayer, CSHA president, at the luncheon



Jennifer Gray, *Effective Strategies for Improved Communication and Speech Clarity for Children With the Diagnosis of Down Syndrome*

September 30 and October 1, 2016

CSHA Conference

Fall Into Knowledge:
Seasons of Change in
Speech-Language Pathology



Sherri Tennant and Amy Thomas, *Talking, Writing and Learning: Pay Close Attention*



Elizabeth Straka, of Colorado Springs and Straka Speech and Kathy Boada, Children's Hospital Colorado.