

Summer 2011



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KSHA Communicator

Ponderings From a Veteran Clinician: Remediation Is a Team Sport



It was hard to write “veteran” in the title, but 30 years of professional experience qualifies me. This is my mantra. Remediation is a team sport. Successful treatment cannot be accomplished in isolation. Other veterans are asking, “This is news?” As a friend and colleague would say, “Stay with me.”

This differs from my early days in the profession. My early years were spent largely in providing services in an area designated solely as my own. Unless, of course, the area alias was the stage, furnace room or projection room on the days I was not in the building. I remember dropping by a classroom to wrangle some little people to take them to my “speech room.” We would settle in for our sessions. “Team’s in the huddle, captain’s at the head” kind of scenario. I identified the objectives. I planned the session. I provided the treatment. I documented the outcomes. I reported the progress. All done on my own ... alone ... without input from others. On occasion, I might seek a perspective from a parent or teacher. But, in truth, it was my game. I was the expert.

Thankfully, time has been my friend, offering multiple humbling experiences. Just as toddlers grow out of egocentric thinking, I have developed into a mature clinician who hungers for input from others to gain a functional and personal perspective for my clients. My transformation began when I worked in a home health setting, after I had practiced in a school setting for several years. When going into people’s homes ... onto their turf, I realized that many of the approaches and objectives I so guarded in treatment were not always important, let alone of value. This is not news to the profession or you, I hope. I was taught well in my undergraduate and graduate programs the value of making objectives meaningful for the client. But the truth was, that I often did what was expedient and “clean.” I did what I could do by myself and show progress.

Early in my career, my metamorphosis began purely by accident and initiated via a non-verbal child sent home to die. He was diagnosed with severe cognitive, visual and motor impairments at birth with a prognosis of living for only a few months. But once he began receiving treatment, we recognized he was far from terminal. Did you catch that? I started using a ‘we’ rather than ‘I’ perspective. His mother shared her tortuous story with me, sparing nothing week to week, month to month. I learned from her the heartaches of lost dreams, medical uncertainties and social alienations that often accompany such impairments. But more importantly, she shared the profound joy she felt when her son smiled at her or reached for her or giggled when she kissed him.

I observed it all unfold around me over the course of the two years I was blessed to serve them. The family dynamic that provided such opportunity for therapeutic input and success became embedded in my view of a dynamic therapeutic world. The effect of “neighbors” who could lift the family’s spirits by providing needed respite or kick them in the teeth by complaining about why so much money was spent on keeping a “retard” alive ... the awareness that some days were not the day to give directives for change, but to simply listen for change. The absolute value in seeking input from those most directly involved and attempting to not be judgmental as to the veracity of their comments. It was not a situation they could abandon or disregard whether siblings were disruptive, mom had breast cancer or dad lost his job. Theirs was a lived experience I could only observe, but it was the lived experience that put perspective on my intervention strategies. By the way, their son is now in his twenties.

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2010-2011**

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Message From the President



In my time as president I have had the opportunity to speak with KSHA members from throughout the state and listen to both the problems they encounter as well as the successes they have had. Also, as president, I have represented KSHA as part of the Council of State Speech-Language Hearing Association Presidents (CSAP). In my involvement with CSAP I have been able to hear stories from state associations from across the country and listen to their challenges and triumphs. What I have found at the national level is that there are many similarities with what is occurring at the state level.

Despite the size of the association, some common themes include difficulty attracting new members, lack of funding for proposed legislation, budget problems, a shortage of "active" members who will volunteer and take leadership roles, and most commonly, difficulty with engaging members in advocacy efforts. As I have discussed many times, advocacy is one of the most important things that any of us can do to help improve our profession. Whether it comes in the form of educating the public about what we do, teaching students about the field, fighting for our students or clients, or advancing our legislative agenda, advocacy is a vital component of our professional responsibility.

At CSAP many of us questioned the ASHA leadership in attendance as to what they were doing to help solve our problems. The response they gave from a national perspective parallels what I frequently tell members at the state level. Just as there is no standard state regulation to handle many issues faced by an individual county or district, there is often no national statute to determine how each state should interpret federal regulation. It really falls back on us to advocate for the changes we want to see. As an example, just as ASHA can't enforce a standard universal licensure law for all states, KSHA can't enforce a standard pay scale for all school districts. What ASHA and KSHA can both do is serve to educate and empower their members to help advocate for the changes they want to see.

We are currently at a point where we can put all of this talk into action. As we've mentioned in the past, and as Patrick Jennings addresses in his article on page five, we need your help. This legislative session we will have a chance to pursue funding for the salary supplement legislation which became law last year. It is vital for our members to meet with their legislators and educate them about the importance of this issue. Making a connection now will help us when the session starts this fall. If we don't lay the groundwork now we won't be able to make up for lost time once the session starts. KSHA doesn't vote for your Senator or Representative, you do. That is why your contribution as an individual is so important. If you want to see the salary supplement funded or if you want the State to look at lowering the caseload you need to work to make that happen. It's not what KSHA can do to make this happen for you but what you can do to make this happen. Get informed, get active and advocate for your profession! It's up to you!

Douglas Keefe, MS, CCC-SLP
KSHA President



I am Susan Waters and I hold the State Advocate for Reimbursement (STAR) position for Kentucky. There are two areas of information that may affect private practice clinicians. First, on March 8, 2011, Governor Steve Beshear announced that Kentucky continues to forge ahead with efforts to adopt electronic health records (EHRs), with more hospitals and providers receiving monetary incentives for EHRs and linking to the Kentucky Health Information Exchange (KHIE).

Secondly, during the month of May, OptumHealth and Amerigroup Kentucky, Inc., accepted health plan applications to participate in the Medicaid/state Health Care programs. At this time, both health care groups want it to be known that these letters are only Letters Of Intent (LOI), allowing these groups to demonstrate to Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) a possible commitment to developing a physical medicine network for these Medicaid programs.

Please contact me at susanwaters@fuse.net with any questions regarding reimbursement for private practice services in speech-language pathology and/or audiology. I will do my best to find the answers.

Susan R. Waters, MA, CCC-SLP
KSHA STAR

SMAC Update

The State Medicare Administrative Contractor Network (SMAC) continues to have monthly phone conferences to discuss issues relevant to our members regarding Medicare. Below is a summary of recent issues discussed:

- Supervision requirements for videostroboscopy and nasopharyngoscopy
 - ASHA met with representatives of AAO-HNS and laryngologists on March 31. CMS was concerned that there was no formal certification process for passing the endoscope, however, ASHA presented the Knowledge and Skills document and the fact that SLPs have been performing these procedures since the mid-1980's. After the meeting ASHA attendees were optimistic that CMS would remove the requirement for physician presence in the room. The decision will be published in the July 1 or October 1 CMS quarterly regulatory release according to John Warren, MD, interim director of practitioner services.
- RAC audits
 - Tips for appealing denials from Eli Research, Durham, NC.
 - ◆ Assume the RAC will not deny claims unless it is 90% sure of winning. Unless they win, they will not be paid for the work done to recover funds.
 - ◆ Fight the denial if you think you are right. If you don't fight it, you should change your practice patterns.
 - ◆ Don't appeal every RAC denial in an effort to "clog up the system." Mass appeals are an admission that your current practices are acceptable without changes.
 - ◆ Lack of solid documentation is not necessarily a reason for not appealing. A late-dated entry can be added to the record. There are other ways to validate that a service was provided, such as evidence of a patient sign-in to a therapy room.
 - ◆ Look at other ways to get off the hook guidance from CMS when the services rendered may be clear now but not at the time.
 - ◆ Take your appeal to the administrative law judge – the success rate is high at this level.
- Bilateral cochlear implants
 - ASHA testified before The Medicare Evidence Development Coverage Advisory Committee on May 11.
- Additional Documentation Requests
 - Some members reported that there has been an increase in ADRs.
- TEP Update
 - CMS refuses to make exceptions to DME/prosthetic policy
- Cochlear implant programming for home health patients
 - A Medicare Administrative Contractor in Florida, First Coast, is rejecting independent claims by audiologists, insisting that the services are consolidated with other home health services.
- Medicare's proposed group therapy regulations
 - An informal group of SMAC members are in the process of helping draft a comment letter from ASHA regarding Medicare's proposed regulations on group therapy in skilled nursing facilities. The comments are due June 27 as the proposed regulations will become effective October 1, 2011. I am participating in this group.

If you have questions regarding Medicare, please e-mail me at linda.gregory@familychoicecare.com.

Linda F. Gregory, MA, CCC-SLP
SMAC

Save The Date

2012 KSHA Convention

February 15-18, 2012
Kentucky International Convention Center
Louisville, Kentucky

If you would like to become more involved with the KSHA Convention, join the KSHA Convention Committee today.

Please contact the KSHA Office at kshainfo@ksha.org for more information. Your involvement adds to a successful Convention.

2012 Convention Call For Papers



The Convention will be held on February 15-18 at the Kentucky International Convention Center, Louisville, KY.

Educational programs can be in the form of mini-seminars, short courses or poster presentations.

To submit your Call for Paper, log onto the KSHA website

www.ksha.info

Deadline for submissions is September 1, 2011.

Check the website for details!

If you have any questions, please contact the KSHA Office at 800-837-2446 or kshaoffice@ksha.info.

Message From the President Elect

Hi everyone! My name is Ann Miller and I am KSHA President Elect for 2011. I will be starting my term in office as KSHA President in August of 2011. I just attended the Spring CSAP (Council of State Speech-Language-Hearing Association Presidents) meeting that was held May 20-22 in Charleston, S.C. and came back recharged and excited to start my year as President. There is nothing like fun in the sun to combat some HOT topics this year.

I came back with two BIG HOT issues that seem to be facing every state association: How do we recruit new members and maintain our membership? How do we get our members involved? CSAP offered a new outlook for me on a whole list of issues that state associations face every year. Not only do we put on our Annual Convention, but we take a look at legislative issues that face our professions and also professional issues that face our membership along with many other areas too numerous to list. CSAP helped to bring new areas to my attention that I hope I can learn more about and offer maybe not a solution, but a way to help. KSHA is only as strong as its members, and we as a group need to realize that and embrace it so we can have many more successful years as an organization.

My challenge to everyone is to think of how you can help make a difference in your state association, because it benefits everyone within KSHA and our professions. You might have a different outlook that will help drive one of our committees or offices that hasn't been done before. I never dreamed that I would be asked to be President of KSHA, and I am proud to say that I will be trading my PTO President hat for the KSHA hat in August. Become an "active member" today and "activate" KSHA in a new direction!

Ann Miller, MS, CCC-SLP
KSHA President Elect

SEAL Update

At the end of April, I participated in a conference call for ASHA's State Education Advocacy Leaders (SEAL). The topic discussed was "Value Added Assessments." I wasn't sure what this was all about, but it turned out to be very interesting.

It all has to do with President Obama's "Race to the Top Project" ideas to create a teacher accountability system and link teacher pay to performance. Many states have already adopted, or are in the process of developing laws to develop these systems.

Most states implementing these assessment programs, have begun with Regular Education Classroom Teachers, and are working their way forward to including Special Education Teachers and Related Service Providers. Essentially, this is a Teacher Evaluation System that determines if the teacher's performance in his/her job has resulted in the desired student learning and/or achievement, which will determine IF the teacher keeps his/her job and if the teacher's performance warrants a raise.

Some of the state SEALs on the call were reporting what their states are already doing to use or develop a similar system for speech-language pathologists in the schools. The state SEALs who reported that their states have already begun this process included Texas, Georgia, Wisconsin, Connecticut, Washington state and a few others. As far as I know, Kentucky is nowhere near creating this kind of teacher evaluation system.

ASHA is trying to be proactive and develop some guidelines if and when states plan to use this type of assessment for speech-language pathologists employed in the schools. These guidelines will be formalized soon, and should include:

- Teacher, speech-language pathologist, special education teacher, etc. Evaluations should not be based on standardized student performance tests.
- Speech-language pathologist evaluations should be different than teachers.
- Performance evaluations for speech-language pathologists should be conducted by individuals who have expertise in speech-language pathology.
- Speech-language pathologist professional evaluations in the schools should include multiple measures, such as maintaining and review of a portfolio; feedback from staff and peers; review of individual students' IEP progress and growth; and should be consistent with SLP job descriptions.
- Whatever speech-language pathologist evaluation system is used should result in the same merit pay as teachers.
- Speech-language pathologists should be involved with the development of the speech-language pathologist evaluation process in each state and it should be consistent across the state.

So, if this Value Added Assessment process is ever started in Kentucky, it looks like another job for the Kentucky Department of Education – hopefully with significant input from the state Speech-Language Pathology Liaison to KDE. Guidelines from ASHA should be available this summer for the ASHA schools conference being held in Washington, DC, in July.

Sherry Hoza, MS, CCC-SLP
KSHA SEAL

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Summer and Fall Meetings With Legislators Key to General Assembly Success

The 2010 General Assembly passed legislation paving the way for speech-language pathologists to be paid a salary stipend that would put them on par with teachers that receive a similar national certification. Due to the economic recession and its effects on Kentucky's budget, the Legislature was unable, at that time, to properly fund the stipend.

KSHA plans to make a hard push when the Legislature reconvenes in January 2012 to get the stipend fully funded. Budget numbers are cautiously looking better as state revenues are coming in each month slightly above previous expectations. Also, through the hard work of KSHA leadership, many more legislators now understand the great work provided by SLPs and the inequity of the current salary structure. All that said, we will need your help.

As state budgets rebound, there will be a long list of program funding requests for legislators to consider. Many popular programs have been underfunded over the past several years and basically no new program funding has been considered since the recession began. As we request funding for the salary stipend, we will be competing with many other associations, professions, industries, etc., who will be knocking on the same doors.

The best thing you can do to ensure legislative success is get to know your legislator over the summer and fall. When the General Assembly is in session, it is extremely difficult to introduce a new topic for discussion if legislators have not already been hearing about it. Keep in mind that legislators typically must analyze more than 1,000 pieces of legislation each session and run on a schedule that affords very little time to digest new and complicated information.

I encourage you to get to know your legislator over the summer and fall. Have coffee or lunch with them and tell them about what you do, the challenges you face and, most importantly, thank them for passing the legislation authorizing a salary stipend and impress upon them the importance of fully funding it during the 2012 legislative session.

These meetings in their home districts with legislators are priceless. It allows you to catch them at a time when their stress level is down and when they can focus on new information. It also will be invaluable for them to have a "face with the name" when our advocacy efforts start during the 2012 session.

If you already know your state senator or representative, give them a call and catch up. If you don't know them, call them, introduce yourself and tell them you'd love to sit down with them sometime over the next few months. I am confident they will be happy to hear from you and gain a better understanding of what you do.

Patrick Jennings
Lobbyist

Ponderings From a Veteran Clinician: Remediation Is a Team Sport

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My point? I have returned to the school setting and am sad to experience the continued isolation that is our profession. Collaboration seems not that much further along than it was decades ago. Comments made to me this year have reinforced that as SLPs we continue to try to do it alone in many educational settings. Why do you want to carry that burden? I challenge those of you in that space to step outside your "speech room." Challenge the status quo. Know your clients as people first. Recognize that the whole influences the parts and vice versa. Make yourself and others a bit uncomfortable. Be creative and open to change. You may discover that it's fun, rewarding and a needed shot in the arm. I am confident you will learn something about yourself. More importantly, you may gain more rapid and sustaining outcomes for your clients.

Say it with me ... remediation is a team sport. Go team!

Tamara B. Cranfill, PhD
KSHA Treasurer

KSHA Convention Speaker Receives Grant

Congratulations to Rita Patel, 2011 KSHA Convention speaker, who received a \$10,000 New Century Scholars research grant from the ASHFoundation.

This initiative, funded by the ASHFoundation's Dreams and Possibilities Campaign, supports both research and doctoral education in communication sciences and disorders. In the past eight years, 63 doctoral candidates and 28 teacher-investigators have received \$910,000 in New Century Program scholarships and grants.

– Information taken from
the ASHA Leader



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Fall KSHA Communicator

Deadline: July 1, 2011

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2012 Convention

February 15-18, 2012

Louisville, Kentucky



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Submissions of articles, manuscripts, reports and letters to the editor are encouraged. The *KSHA Communicator* also welcomes suggestions of editorial coverage. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity.

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Spring	February 1	March 31
Summer	May 1	June 30
Fall	July 1	August 31
Winter	October 1	November 30

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