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Audiology Patient Choice Act: The Professional, Legislative, and Regulatory Landscape

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1. HISTORY/BACKGROUND
2. OVERVIEW OF APCA
3. COMMON QUESTIONS & CONCERNS
4. SO, WHERE DO WE GO & HOW DO WE GET THERE?
5. OPEN DISCUSSION

AUDs AS CLINICAL DOCTORS
PARITY OR PARODY?

TRUE or FALSE? THE IDEA TO ACHIEVE PROFESSIONAL PARITY FOR AUDIOLOGY AS A CLINICAL DOCTORING PROFESSION DATES BACK TO 1949.

TRUE CORRECT!
FALSE INCORRECT
The Timeline

1 HISTORY/BACKGROUND

- 1949: Doctoral degree in audiology first proposed
- 1976: Academy of Dispensing Audiologists is formed
- 1977: ADA convenes landmark CPE conference in Chicago
- 1987: ADA and AAA petition HCFA for LLP status
- 1988: AAA Born with a charge to achieve LLP Status and direct access
- 1994: AFA provides Baylor a grant to house the first AuD program
- 2000:
Audiologists are responsible for medical necessity under Medicare. ADA and experts analyze healthcare landscape.

Masters degree programs in audiology are retired. Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act signed into law.

ADA convenes stakeholders to discuss 18x18.

Dr. George Osborne releases “The Current State of Audiology.”

Every state requires licensure to practice audiology.

ADA, ASHA, and AAA leaders discuss legislative initiatives.

APCA is reintroduced in U.S. House.

ADA leaders meet with CMS regarding Direct Access.

FDA voluntarily stops enforcing medical clearance requirement.

Landmark NASEM report released on accessible, affordable hearing care for adults.

APCA introduced in Congress.

ADA retains Prime Policy Group.

“Direct Access” bill introduced in Congress.

“Direct Access” bill introduced in Congress.
**TRUE or FALSE? APCA WILL EXPAND THE SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR AUDIOLOGISTS IN STATES WHERE CERUMEN MANAGEMENT IS NOT CURRENTLY SPECIFIED.**

- **TRUE**
- **INCORRECT**
- **FALSE**
- **CORRECT**
What is audiology patient choice and why does it take an act of Congress?

2 OVERVIEW OF APCA

Audiology Care is Complicated

Counting the Internet and phone apps, you can choose from among 7 types of “providers” for audiology care.

Not to mention numerous “miracle” and “alternative” treatments for auditory and vestibular conditions!
Outdated Medicare Rules Impede Patient Access

Only Congress can allow Medicare to cover Medicare-covered audiology services when they are provided by an audiologist!

Medicare Part B patients must jump through hoops, pay out of pocket or forgo care.

Medicare Red Tape is forcing patients into a fragmented system of care.

The physician order is out of order!

Archaic requirements make navigating the Medicare system difficult for audiologists.

I just want to help my patients.
The Audiology Patient Choice Act is the Solution

Direct Access

Reimbursement for Medicare-Covered Services that the audiologist is licensed to provide

Limited License Physician Status under Medicare

IMPORTANT APCA FACTS

Professional Parity for All Audiologists

Assurance of Autonomy—Other Payers Follow Medicare

Inclusion in Outcome-based Payment Models

No New Services into Medicare

No Expansion of Scope
TRUE or FALSE? AUDIOLOGISTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING MEDICAL NECESSITY FOR COVERED SERVICES FOR MEDICARE PATIENTS, REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE PHYSICIAN ORDER STATES.

JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED ...OR IS IT?

TRUE CORRECT!
FALSE INCORRECT

What are some frequently held beliefs, questions, concerns, and misperceptions about the Audiology Patient Choice Act?

3 COMMON QUESTIONS & CONCERNS
Common Questions and Concerns about APCA

What does LLP mean?

What if Medicare decides to cover hearing aids?

What’s the impact of the OTC Hearing Aid Act on APCA?

What about E/M codes?

What if I have a Masters Degree?

What is opt out and why doesn’t APCA include it?

Will there be increased AuD requirements under APCA?

What are the implications for me in my state?

A DEEPER LOOK AT LIMITED LICENSE PHYSICIAN STATUS

Medicare physicians include the following professions: medical doctors, doctors of osteopathy, dentists, optometrists, podiatrists, and chiropractors.

This is the correct taxonomy for audiology given its training and educational requirements.

Different from Limited License Practitioner

No impact on state scope of practice

Will subject audiologists to Medicare physician requirements

Will provide leverage for future opportunities
APCA makes important improvements.

Pros and Cons

PROS

CONS

APCA is not a panacea.

TRUE or FALSE? IF MEDICARE LLP STATUS IS ACHIEVED, FLORIDA AUDIOLOGISTS WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE EMPLOYED BY NON-PROFIT, 501 C-3 ENTITIES.
Navigating Congress and the regulatory environment to achieve the Audiology Patient Choice Act.

WHERE DO WE GO AND HOW DO WE GET THERE?
Partisanship

NEWS ALERT

BREAKING NEWS
Senators Warren and Paul believe that audiologists can do more than “diagnostic other.” They urge Congress to pass the Audiol

A conservative physician and a liberal consumer advocate have come together to support a policy that delivers a win for patients, audiologists, and taxpayers.

Building a coalition centered on grassroots advocacy is the most effective way that we can influence Congress.
To have faith in the power of dialogue is to believe in the promise of humanity.

Daisaku Ikeda

4 OPEN DISCUSSION
References