



May 15, 2003

Dear Director of Special Education:

On behalf of all school speech-language pathologists (SLPs), I am writing to request your assistance with an issue that could seriously impact speech and language program funding. The Wisconsin Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Association (WSHA) is collecting credential and experience information on all school SLPs to help resolve a problem that is important to all of us—that is, Medicaid billing and reimbursement. We need data from all SLPs employed in Wisconsin schools to complete the picture of this issue and its potential impact, and we anticipate that you can help.

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have requested an equivalency ruling from the Wisconsin Attorney General regarding Medicaid payments to schools for school-based services provided by DPI 820-licensed SLPs. These professionals may or may not meet the Medicaid-required ASHA certification or equivalency. If the equivalency ruling is not met, Wisconsin schools could lose future funding for these services. This loss would likely trickle down to the local level. Additionally, Wisconsin and its schools could be required to repay CMS for those services previously provided and reimbursed—a potentially substantial cost to schools.

This is certainly a concern of which you may or may not be aware at this time. WSHA represents more than 1,100 speech-language pathologists and audiologists in the state and strives to help our members protect their funding sources. To assist our members in school-based practice, the WSHA Board is currently conducting a survey to gather accurate data regarding the status of each 820 licensee's credentials and professional experiences. By surveying all school SLPs, we hope to show that a large percentage of school SLPs have the equivalency of ASHA certification if not the actual certification.

We would like your help in gathering this information by **May 27, 2003**. Anything you can do to expedite the process would be to our mutual benefit. Please contact all the SLPs under your leadership and ask them to fill out the survey (copy enclosed and available on the WSHA website) and return to the WSHA office by mail (330 E. Lakeside, Madison, WI 53701), email (wsha@wismed.org), or fax (608-283-5424). We have mailed the survey to our school-based members under separate cover. Your assistance with this important survey of credentials and professional experiences is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact me at wsha@wismed.org or through Shawn Sornson, WSHA Administrative Director, at (800) 545-0640.

Sincerely,

Tina J. Radichel, MS, CCC-SLP
WSHA President, 2002-2004
www.wisha.org

enclosure: survey