

2014 WSLHA BOARD REPORT

BOARD POSITION: *WSLHA Lobbyist*

LIAISON TO: *President*

BOARD MEMBER NAME: *Melissa Johnson*

BOARD MEETING DATE: *June 21, 2014*

HB 2108 (hearing aid specialist) update:

The Board of Hearing & Speech is now working on the implementation of HB 2108. First, the Board must conduct rule-making regarding the 9 month certification program. The discussion has centered around whether a two-year degree is sufficient to enter into a 9 month certification program or whether a four-year degree is necessary. This topic has been assigned to a subcommittee for further work.

Second, the Board is discussing the rules regarding the hearing aid specialist practical exam. The International Hearing Society (HIS) has an exam, but it is not proctored and it is going through a revision. The Board also has the option of doing their own exam, like Oregon. This topic was also assigned to the subcommittee that was created for the 9 month certification program.

Finally, the Board is discussing the legislative recommendations that are required under HB 2108 regarding the work-based licensure pathway for hearing aid specialists. My impression is that the community colleges will work hard to make sure they are a part of any work-based learning program.

The two subcommittees will meet on 6/24 and 7/1. The legislative recommendations must be ready by August 1st.

2015 Legislative Session:

Last session, SB 6123 was introduced by Senator Bruce Dammeier to begin the conversation about patient cost-sharing/copayments. SB 6123 was specific to physical therapy and it prohibited insurers from charging PT copays that are higher than primary care copays. The Physical Therapy Association of Washington (PTWA) and the Washington Occupational Therapy Association (WOTA) are interested in pursuing legislation in 2015 on this topic.

BOARD MEETING DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS:

Cost-sharing legislation: Does WSHLA want to partner with PTWA and WOTA (and perhaps other health provider associations) on this legislation in 2015?

Other Legislative Agenda items: Are there other legislative issues that WSHLA would like to pursue in 2015?
Medicaid reimbursement?

OTHER ACTIVITIES OR ANNOUNCEMENTS: None