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2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

EB Office: Advocacy

Vice-President: Kelli Pierce MA, CCC/SLP

1. Primary Accomplishments/Legislation in the year 2018 - 2019:
 - HB 5158 & 5159
 - Letters of opposition provided to the House Health Policy Committee
 - These bills are the result of a movement to require universal access to ASL for all deaf and hard-of-hearing children
 - Reasons for opposition of 5158: supports legislative efforts to ensure children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing (DHH) have early access to ASL (with no consideration of other language modalities); prescriptive for IEP and IFSP teams; no consideration for parents' natural language, as 95% of children who are DHH are born to hearing parents; EHDI programs are already in place with resources for parents
 - Reasons for opposition of 5159: many proposed changes are already federal law; some proposed requirements are highly prescriptive of the IEP and IFSP teams
 - CURRENT STATUS: bill was referred to the Committee on Health Policy in 2017; died at the end of 2018
 - LEAD-K and AG Bell are working together to create a new version of the bill that takes into account all communication modalities
 - CHAMPS Medicaid registration
 - SLPs are now able to enroll in CHAMPS and be directly reimbursed by Medicaid
 - Successful Day at the Capitol event on May 9, 2018. SLPs and SLP students from around the state met with legislator to advocate for our profession, clients, and issues directly impacting our ability to help those with communication and swallowing disorders.
 - Survey regarding insurance coverage and denials went out to all SLPs in the state through ASHA. We are continuing to gather information to use in meetings with insurers to advocate for better coverage, decrease denials and potentially improve reimbursement.

2. Major Challenges:
 - Reported increase in number of insurance denials for speech services, including speech/language services, cognitive treatment, aural rehabilitation, and pediatric dysphagia.

3. Plans/Directions for 2019-2020:
 - Compile information gathered re: insurance and meet with providers to improve coverage and services to our consumers.
 - Upcoming meeting at Capitol Services to introduce and meet the new MDHHS director.
 - Continue advocating for our profession and scope of practice.
 - Continued monitoring of legislation.
 - Increase involvement in ASHA initiatives at the state level.

Respectfully Submitted,

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VP for Advocacy, Michigan Speech-Language-Hearing Association