

ASHA

STAR Network

Goals and Strategies: 2003-2004

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ASHA Public Forum on Reimbursement:
<http://forums.asha.org/discussion/general/professional/privatehealth>

ASHA STAR Network
California Representative: Linda K. Pippert, MA, CCC-SLP, MBA

The State Advocates for Reimbursement (STAR network) is an outgrowth of ASHA's Strategic Plan Healthcare Initiative. ASHA invited each state association to provide a member to participate in this network. Thirty-five states have to date appointed a member. In May, 2003 just prior to the Council of State Association Presidents (CSAP) and the ASHA Public Policy annual meeting, a one-day boot camp was held in Omaha, Nebraska to kick-off the STAR Network and set goals for the coming year. This meeting was the initiation the network. Issues were brought to the forefront, a name was chosen for the network, and objectives and strategies were developed.

Since that meeting, the following activities are among many which ASHA and the STAR Network are carrying out.

- The STAR Network has held four teleconference calls to refine the objectives and strategies and begin to delegate the strategies to Network members.
- Each state representative is in the process of developing an action plan for their state.
- ASHA has established a public forum on reimbursement issues that is available to all ASHA members at <http://forums.asha.org/discussion?50@148.hO5Za7nChPF^0@.ef33ed410>.
- The ASHA Leader published an article on the STAR network in the July 22, 2003 edition.
- The state associations have established a mechanism for communication between the state board and the STAR Network representative.
- The STAR network list serve has been established and actively used by the network members.

Here in California the STAR representative reports to the Commissioner on Professional Services for Speech-Language Pathology, Kim Gully. The STAR representative has been invited to meet with the CSHA Board of Directors for at least two of the four board meetings each year and to provide a written report at meetings which she is unable to attend. The STAR Network Goals and Strategies for 2003-2004 have been posted on the CSHA Web site. In addition, we will be developing and posting our plan for California. If you or someone you know is interested in networking on private payor reimbursement issues, you can contact me at linda@pippert.com. Since this topic impacts many practitioners in private practice and clinic settings, we would like to make available resources and networking opportunities to all interested members. We hope to have a forum or round table meeting at the CSHA Annual Convention in Long Beach. Look for time and place to join in the discussion.

STAR Network

2003 Short-Term Goals

The Network will:

1. Serve as a conduit to their state association for all information related to ASHA's Focused Initiative on Health Care Reimbursement.
 - **Strategy #1:** Establish an e-mail listserv to facilitate communication among network members. The address is statereimbursement@lists.asha.org. Network members have posting rights. (Status: completed)
 - **Strategy #2:** Establish a member community forum for private health plan reimbursement issues. The address is http://forums.asha.org/discussion/general/professional/private_health (Status: completed)
 - **Strategy #3:** Hold quarterly Network conference calls. Next call scheduled for the first week in September. (Status: Ongoing)
 - **Strategy #4:** Regular feature from a different network state in *The ASHA Leader*.
 - **Strategy #5:** Incorporate a STAR "presence" (e.g., presentation, report, recruitment activity) into annual convention of state association. For state association meetings, the STAR will provide a report for state association leadership.
2. Develop strategies for successful private insurance advocacy across the states
 - **Strategy #1:** Establish/revive/expand committee within your state to work on private health plan reimbursement issues.
 - **Strategy #2:** Prioritize obstacles to coverage (e.g., ICD-9-CM codes, coverage limitation) that were defined in Omaha.

- **Strategy #3:** Share anecdotal information on advocacy successes/failures as a resource for other network members.
 - **Strategy #4:** Compile and disseminate current resource (ASHA's and Network's) to assist one another with advocacy efforts.
 - **Strategy #5:** Create disorder-specific advocacy tools (e.g., apraxia, autism, hearing aids for children).
3. Promote the importance of and need for comprehensive coverage of and reimbursement for speech-language pathology and audiology services to legislators, consumers, health plans, and related professionals.
- **Strategy #1:** Arrange to meet with state legislator(s) when they are in their home office. Initiate grassroots activities on the state level (letter writing campaign, phone calls, visits).
 - **Strategy #2:** Initiate contact with human resource trade journals (SHRM, IFEBC, World at Work). Outcome could be an article, a meeting a posting on their website, a session at their convention. (Status: initiated by ASHA)
 - **Strategy #3:** Initiate contact with trade associations that have health plans as their members (American Association of Health Plans, Health Insurance Association of America). Outcome could be an article, a meeting, a posting on their website, a session at their convention. (Status: Initiated by ASHA).
 - **Strategy #4:** Initial contact with your state insurance commissioner. They are historically consumer-friendly. Focus of message should be your desire to assist consumers in obtaining more comprehensive coverage per their request. (Status: Initiated by ASHA).
 - **Strategy #5:** Initiate contact with unions that are familiar with ASHA (American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, United Autoworkers). Outcome could be an article, a meeting a posting on their website, a session at their convention.

- **Strategy #6:** Provide patients with an ASHA Employer Insurance Packet and ask that they set up a meeting with their benefits manager.