

New England Building  
503 South Kansas Avenue  
Topeka, KS 66603-3404



Phone : (785) 296-4986  
Fax (785) 296-0256  
<http://www.kdads.ks.gov>

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Timothy Keck, Secretary

Sam Brownback, Governor

**Request from Kansas Board of Examiners in the Fitting and Dispensing of Hearing Instruments (KBHAE) Concerning the Intentions of a Prison Health Company to Purchase Hearing Aids and Dispense by a Nurse Without a Hearing Aid Dispenser or Audiologist** Topic brought to KDADS Speech-Language

Pathology and Audiology Advisory Board from Dana Jacobson who serves on the Kansas Board of Examiners in the Fitting and Dispensing of Hearing Instruments. The KBHAE was concerned that a company was intending to purchase hearing aids and have them dispensed in prisons by nurses with no contract with audiologists or hearing aid dispensers to provide the service.

In preparation for the meeting, KDADS' staff contacted KBHAE, for more details and the Executive Director reported that one of the KBHAE members spoke with the Provider Relations staff of the prison health company and was assured that the company will contract with qualified providers for ear mold impressions, fitting and dispensing. It appeared that a miscommunication may have occurred which led to the concern.

**Questions from Retiring Audiologist** KDADS' staff received a telephone inquiry from a Kansas licensed audiologist who is retired but may periodically work with the fitting and dispensing of hearing aids as their Hearing Instrument Specialist (HIS) license remains active. The question was about signatures. If the caller decides to do some HIS work. Would they sign their name followed by M.A., Audiologist, HIS or would they follow their name with MA, HIS or some other combination?

After Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Advisory Board discussion the consensus was that the safest course for signing would be to follow the individual's name with M.A., HIS to assure the public is not inadvertently confused about the license.

**Advertising Concern, Miracle-Ear Eligibility for CaptionCall** involved language that may be misleading to consumers inferring that the public may receive a FREE CaptionCall Phone. However, no specific practice was tied to the advertisement.

**Advertising Concern** . . . concerns received about advertising by a Hearing Aid Center. Specifically, a statement that says: **"All hearing tests are conducted by an audiologist and/or a licensed hearing instrument specialist and are property of the Hearing Aid Center."** KDADS staff investigation confirmed that there are no audiologists on staff at any of the Kansas locations. Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Advisory Board discussion about the implication of the 'either/or' statement followed and it was agreed that the language implies that an audiologist would be on staff and could be confusing to the public. It was the consensus of the Advisory Board that the language in the advertisement should be edited to remove the reference to audiologists and had suggested KDADS staff prepare correspondence to the Hearing Aid Center.

Steve Irwin

Director Health Occupations Credentialing