

Georgia Commission on Hearing Impaired and Deaf Persons
Tuesday, November 13, 2012
9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Atlanta Speech School
3160 Northside Parkway, NW
Atlanta, GA 30327

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Ms. Mary Reed, Ms. Laura Sarsfield, Dr. Helena Solodar, Mr. Comer Yates

Members Absent: Mr. Chuck Leavell, Ms. Lee Ann Meadows

Staff Present: Ms. Katherine Cadena, Ms. Jackie Tate

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Solodar at 9:10 a.m.

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the August 14, 2012 meeting. The motion was seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Solodar welcomed guests to the meeting and introduced guest speakers to the Commission. Ms. Cadena made the announcement that Ms. Jackie Tate would be the Department of Human Services staff to the Commission at the next meeting scheduled for February 12, 2013; however, Ms. Cadena is expected to return for the May 14, 2013 meeting.

Dr. Tammy Uehlin, AuD. and Dr. Kelly Hermanns spoke about updates to the Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Intervention, UNHSI, program through the Georgia Department of Health, DPH. Dr. Uehlin discussed that the Commission could encourage help in the request to improve information: Georgia only has aggregate numbers of screenings. Hearing screening information on all babies to be required to report to Public Health would be beneficial. For example, Dr. Uehlin received a call from another state on a baby, but didn't have any information because the baby may not have been referred and that only babies that are referred would show in the system. Dr. Uehlin stated the hospital report form has been revised and has opened communication with hospitals and increased rapport. The form also provides assistance with determining how many babies referred and gives an opportunity for cross reference with the district coordinators. She stated an area of opportunity to educate mothers on the importance of screenings is to educate OB/GYNs in addition to already educating pediatricians. A free training curriculum for screeners is available. The policy and procedures manual has been updated. District coordinators are in place to facilitate training to hospital staff. There is a system in place for limited English speaking parents to speak with staff. However, there might be gaps in the process, as sometimes parents do not complete all information on forms. The database may or may not capture the preferred language of the family. Mr. Yates speculated that there might be a disproportionate number of limited English proficient (LEP) speaking families being impacted because of the disproportionate

number of LEP children coming to the speech school much later than their counterparts. The cost of the screening varies, and can depend on contracts hospitals have with companies. It may be bundled or separated. Some parents decline screening because of the cost, but this is not a major issue. UNHI staff continues to meet with the stakeholders for review of promotional materials and meet with pediatricians regularly. The loaner hearing aid bank is in place and assists babies with amplification while waiting for permanent amplification. The resource guide is being reviewed; letters to parents and pediatricians have been updated and revised.

Dr. Solodar discussed the AuD program implementation from Nova Southeastern University. The opening of the school has been delayed a year, from fall of 2013 until fall of 2014.

Ms. Sarsfield discussed the Loop Across America public awareness campaign. A demonstration will be given in two places of worship shortly after the meeting. The ASHA conference is next week and there will be a speaker on loops.

Dr. Solodar discussed the Adopt – A- Band initiative in partnership with the Georgia Lions Lighthouse Foundation. All Commission members are invited to participate and can volunteer to adopt a band by offering ear plugs and give presentations to local programs. An audiologist will be asked to chair the initiative.

Ms. Cadena discussed the Commission bank account and plans to have it set up shortly.

Dr. Solodar reminded members about the Let Georgia Hear campaign and said a letter of support was sent to Ms. Kelly Jenkins on behalf of the Commission. Ms. Jenkins was advised to wait until the next legislative session to move the agenda forward.

Dr. Solodar discussed Georgia Pines, and there was conversation about packets to parents being introduced through follow-up coordinators earlier in the process.

Ms. Cadena stated Commission members terms expire in 2014, but the chairperson's term expires in June 2013 and the vice-chair expires June of 2013. Names of potential members should be forwarded to Dr. Solodar.

A motion was placed to adjourn the meeting by Ms. Sarsfield. Ms. Reed seconded the motion. The motion passed. Meeting was adjourned.

Action items were discussed for follow up.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 P.M.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, February 12, 2012 at the Auditory Verbal Center from 9:00 A.M. until 12:30 P.M.