I would like to welcome everyone to this special edition of the Ohio Speech and Hearing Professional Board’s eNewsletter. I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy as all of us continue to respond to COVID-19. As many of you know the month of May is recognized nationally as Better Hearing and Speech Month, and the theme for this year is “Communication at Work.” I cannot imagine a more appropriate theme during this challenging time to help raise awareness about communication disorders and how our professions directly impact consumers achieve their maximum vocational and social independence. Now, more than ever, consumers are in need of our expertise for essential speech and hearing services. Through our collaboration, we have had the opportunity to emphasize with state and national stakeholders in the healthcare field how imperative it is for our consumers to be able to communicate their health and wellness needs. We hope these collaborative opportunities will be able to springboard collaborations within your very own environment.

Since March when the Stay-At-Home order was issued for Ohio, the Board has provided information and resources on its website and Facebook page to navigate through this difficult time. Our Board’s collaborations include the Ohio Attorney General’s Office, Governor’s Office, other state agencies such as the Ohio Department of...

(Continued on next page)
Administrative Services, Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Medicaid, Ohio State Medical Board, and the National Council of State Boards of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, to name just a few. Be sure to check out important updates inside this edition about some of the recently enacted emergency rules and executive orders that enable our practitioners to continue to serve consumers during this pandemic. You will also find important information about our state specific guidelines for testing procedures, telehealth, licensure requirements and statistics. I realize many of you are dealing with disruptions, challenges, and situations related to this crisis. On behalf of the Board, I would like to, once again, express our appreciation for everything that each of you are doing to ensure that the health and welfare of your patients, clients, and students are being met. We will continue to work hard each day to provide you and our stakeholders with information and resources. The best way to stay updated with us is through our board website and Facebook page. If you are using social media, please “Like” our Facebook page and accept notifications to ensure you will receive the latest updates. Our board staff continues to work remotely and are available to assist with any questions. We are truly all in this together. As we recognize the month of May as Better Hearing and Speech Month, let us all continue to work together and support each other. I firmly believe we will get through this challenging time and be a stronger community.

Sincerely,
Tammy H. Brown, M.A., CCC-A, FAAA, Board Certified in Audiology
Board President

We are posting regular updates on our website as well as our Facebook page, and this will be the best way to find information and resources. Since March, we have posted information and updates on a daily basis. Important updates previously posted will be featured inside this edition, such as telecommunications and COVID-19 FAQs. Additionally, we are sharing information and links for other state agencies that may impact our professions, such as the Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Health, and Ohio Department of Medicaid.

We invite you to visit our homepage at www.shp.ohio.gov, and also visit us on Facebook to stay updated throughout the year.

If you recently contacted the Board for services or information, please take a moment to complete our customer service survey and let us know your opinion about that experience.

We will come out of this crisis with a renewed focus and strength for those that we serve.

Best Regards,
Gregg B. Thornton, Esq.
Executive Director

Has your contact information changed?
Updating your contact information is now a self service process in the new eLicense Ohio system. See the update inside this edition for details on how to register and access your license through your new eLicense Ohio dashboard.

All licensees are required to update any change of name, place of business, or mailing address within thirty days.
May is Better Hearing and Speech Month

Across the country, the month of May is widely regarded as Better Hearing and Speech Month (BHSM). In 2012, Ohio passed a law officially recognizing this month as BHSM. Now, more than ever, preventing or managing communication disorders at this challenging time is important. While we meet the challenges of COVID-19, this is a great opportunity to promote this year’s BHSM theme, “Communication at Work.” Hopefully through all of this, more people will realize that better hearing and speech means better health and wellness.

The Board encourages everyone to raise awareness about communication disorders and the importance of early intervention in the midst of COVID-19. Many organizations that post BHSM resources are focusing this year’s theme on the impact of the COVID-19 virus. (Note: the information and links below do not constitute an endorsement by the Board.)

The American Academy of Audiology has resources such as posters and fact sheets posted at:
https://www.audiology.org/get-involved/public-awareness/may-is-better-hearing-month.

The American Speech-Language Hearing Association has posted resources to help you recognize all month long at:
https://www.asha.org/bhsm/.

The International Hearing Society has posted BHSM resources at:

The National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders has BHSM information at:

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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Licenses:</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Hearing Test Procedures During COVID-19 - Important Reminder

Ohio’s Stay-At-Home order went into effect on March 23, amended on April 2, and as of the date of the release of this publication set to expire on May 29, 2020, with certain exceptions. One of the exceptions made allows individuals to leave their residence to work for or obtain services through healthcare providers, which includes all individuals licensed under our Board’s Ohio Revised and Administrative Code Chapters 4744, 4747, and 4753, e.g., audiologists, hearing aid fitters, etc. The Board has received inquiries whether in-person testing requirements for the dispensing of hearing aids are waived due to Ohio’s Stay-At-Home order issued in response to the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

In Ohio, for an audiologist, the measurement and testing of human hearing by means of an audiometer or by any other means is a requirement for the purpose of selecting, adapting, and selling a hearing aid to any person. Best practice would include an otoscopic examination. For a hearing aid fitter, the rules specifically state the required hearing tests that shall be completed before recommending, selling or fitting of a hearing aid. A screening for hearing loss does not meet the Board’s rules/requirements for selecting, adapting, and selling of a hearing aid, which includes via telecommunications - see telehealth guidelines below.

Practitioners are permitted to make in-home visits and provide office visits to consumers while maintaining social distancing and complying with local health department recommendations to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Please visit the following link if you need to contact your local health department to verify requirements.

To find your local health department, please visit the following link: https://odh.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odh/find-local-health-districts

Telehealth Guidelines For All Board Licensed Service Providers

The provision of services via telehealth is covered for audiologists and speech-language pathologists under Ohio Administrative Code Chapter Two, entitled “Telehealth Communications” and can be accessed at the following link: http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/4753-2

School-based audiologists and speech-language pathologists should also provide telehealth services in accordance with the Board’s rule on telehealth communication referenced above. In addition, you should review the telehealth guidelines for service providers that were recently issued by the Ohio Department of Education at: http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus/Telehealth-Guidelines-for-Service-Providers.

The Board plans to consider adopting rules allowing telecommunications for hearing aid fitters.
Board Operations During COVID-19

Board Operations
All staff and operations of the licensure board will be available remotely. Licensure applications will continue to be processed as usual and complaints will continue to be investigated. Board staff will be available to answer telephone calls and e-mails during our normal business hours, e.g., Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Board members are accessible when necessary to assist staff with responding to any questions. You can contact the Board at (614) 466-3145 (select option #2) or via e-mail at: board@shp.ohio.gov.

Update for Spring and Summer Graduates

ETS - Praxis Exam
Individuals graduating from the university programs who intend to practice in Ohio should submit their application to the Board approximately 4-6 weeks prior to their graduation date. We are aware that ETS has temporarily discontinued the PRAXIS exam due to COVID-19, but is planning to offer candidates alternative options to take the exam remotely beginning in mid-May. Applicants who have not yet taken their PRAXIS exam should contact ETS directly for further information.

Criminal Background Checks
The Ohio Attorney General’s Office oversees the FBI and BCI criminal background check that is required for initial licensure. Web-check entities, such as police departments, county sheriff's office, and authorized web-check entities are not closed, but operating under greatly reduced hours due to COVID-19. We recommend that applicants visit the Ohio Attorney General's website for information on locating an authorized web-check vendor in their area at:

https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Business/Services-for-Business/WebCheck/Webcheck-Community-Listing

The Attorney General's Office is recommending that applicants call ahead before traveling to any location to verify they are providing fingerprinting services at this time. Many web-check locations are open but observing limited hours and have specific restrictions in order to adhere to social distancing requirements. If you cannot find a location in your county, you may find better results by calling an authorized web-check entity in a surrounding county.

Service Requests
Until further notice, the Board will process service requests in eLicense for wall certificates and license verification letters electronically. Anyone submitting these requests will receive an e-mail with the item(s) attached.

Complaints
During this period, the Board requests that complaints not be sent via mail to the board office. Complaints should be submitted through the complaint portal in the eLicesne Ohio license management system at:
https://elicense.ohio.gov/oh_filecomplaint.
Board Operations During COVID-19

Mail
The Board is requesting that any correspondence be sent to the board’s e-mail address at: board@sphp.ohio.gov. If it is necessary to send correspondence to the Board’s mailing address, it should be sent via regular mail and not require a signature. Staff members will not be in the office as frequently to sign for packages and letters which require a signature for delivery.

Licensure Renewal
The Board will have information about licensure renewal for the 2021-2022 practice period in the summer newsletter. Most licenses will expire at midnight on December 31, 2020. The Board will send a renewal notification to licensees. Individuals will be able to renew their license beginning October 1, 2020 and have until December 31, 2020 to submit their renewal application and payment online via eLicense Ohio. The Board urges licensees to login to their user account in eLicense to verify and update all of their contact information, including e-mail address at: https://elicense.ohio.gov/oh_communitieslogin.
COVID-19 - Recent Updates*

*This update is current as of April 27, 2020. Please visit:
https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/ for the latest information and updates about Ohio’s preparedness to COVID-19.

(An excerpt from Governor Mike DeWine’s press release on April 27, 2020)

Governor DeWine Announces Details of Ohio's Responsible RestartOhio Plan

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, and Dr. Amy Acton, MD, MPH, today made several major announcements regarding Ohio’s plan to responsibly restart Ohio’s economy during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

HEALTHCARE:

Beginning May 1, 2020, all medically necessary procedures that do not require an overnight stay in a healthcare facility or do not require inpatient hospital admission and minimizes use of personal protective equipment may move forward. This includes regular doctor visits, well-care checks, well-baby visits, out-patient surgeries, imaging procedures, and diagnostic tests. Dental services and veterinary services may also proceed if a safe environment can be established.

Healthcare providers and facilities that plan to resume providing these services must adhere to infection control practices, have sufficient PPE, and talk with patients about the risk of contracting COVID-19.

Surgeries and procedures that, if not performed, would cause a threat to a patient's life, a threat of the spread of cancer or the permanent dysfunction of a limb or organ, the presence of severe symptoms causing an inability to perform activities of daily living, and/or the risk of rapidly worsening symptoms have always been permitted even if an overnight stay is necessary.

RESPONSIBLE RESTART OHIO:

The guiding principles of the Responsible RestartOhio plan are protecting the health of employees, customers, and their families, supporting community efforts to control the spread of COVID-19, and responsibly getting Ohio back to work.

"We put this plan together based on all the information we have about how dangerous COVID-19 still is right now, balanced with the fact that it's also dangerous to have people not working," said Governor DeWine. "COVID-19 is still out there. It's still killing people. We're asking Ohioans to be reasonable and rational. Please don't take huge chances, and please use common sense when you go out and where you go out."

Beginning on May 4, 2020, manufacturing, distribution, and construction businesses may reopen if these businesses can meet mandatory safety requirements for customers and employees. The full Responsible RestartOhio plan for manufacturing, distribution, and construction can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov/ResponsibleRestartOhio.

(Continued on next page)
COVID-19 - Recent Updates*  
(Continued from previous page)

*This update is current as of April 27, 2020. Please visit:  
https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/ for the latest information and updates about Ohio’s preparedness to COVID-19.

Beginning on May 4, 2020, general office environments may reopen if these businesses can meet mandatory safety requirements for customers and employees. The full Responsible RestartOhio plan for general office environments can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov/ResponsibleRestartOhio.

Beginning on May 12, 2020, consumer, retail and services, may reopen if these businesses can meet mandatory safety requirements for customers and employees. The full Responsible RestartOhio plan for consumer, retail and services can be found at coronavirus.ohio.gov/ResponsibleRestartOhio.

The general safe business practices that all businesses must follow as they reopen are:

- Requiring face coverings for all employees, and recommending them for clients and customers at all times
- Conducting daily health assessments or self-evaluations of employees to determine if they should work
- Maintaining good hygiene at all times such as hand washing and social distancing
- Cleaning and sanitizing workplaces throughout the day and at the close of business or between shifts
- Limiting capacity to meet social distancing guidelines

"I have an obligation as the Governor of Ohio to get people back to work and keep them safe. Opening everything up at once would not be consistent with the obligation to keep people safe," said Governor DeWine. "Our Responsible RestartOhio plan is the best guarantee that Ohioans will feel safe going to stores and employees will feel safe going to work. I'm optimistic about our future, but we can't be reckless."

CONTINUED CLOSURES:

The following types of establishments are ordered to remain closed due to their increased risk of potential COVID-19 exposure:

- Schools and daycares
- Dine-in restaurants and bars (carry-out is still permitted)
- Personal appearance and beauty businesses
- Older adult daycare serveries and senior centers
- Adult day support or vocational rehabilitation services in group settings
- Entertainment, recreation, and gyms

For greater detail on the types of businesses that must stay closed, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov/ResponsibleRestartOhio.
COVID-19 - Recent Updates*
(Continued from previous page)

*This update is current as of April 27, 2020. Please visit:
https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/ for the latest information and updates about Ohio’s preparedness to COVID-19.

STAY AT HOME ORDER / LARGE GATHERINGS:

Because the danger of COVID-19 still exists, Ohio's Stay at Home order will remain in effect to encourage Ohioans to continue making reasonable, rational decisions about leaving home.

Although anyone is susceptible to getting sick with COVID-19, those who are 65 or older are encouraged to be especially careful, as are those with high-risk conditions such as chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma, heart conditions, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, or liver disease, as well as those who are immunocompromised or obese.

Large gatherings of more than 10 people are still prohibited.

MORE INFORMATION:

More detailed information on the Responsible RestartOhio plan can be found at www.coronavirus.ohio.gov/ResponsibleRestartOhio.

CURRENT OHIO DATA:

There are 16,325 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 in Ohio and 753 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 3,232 people have been hospitalized, including 978 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov.

Video of today's full update, including versions with foreign language closed captioning, can be viewed on the Ohio Channel's YouTube page.

For more information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH.

Stay Updated and Informed - Ohio’s Preparedness to COVID-19

In addition to visiting coronavirus.ohio.gov or calling 1-833-4-ASK-ODH, you may also visit the Board’s website and Facebook page to stay updated with the latest information about Ohio’s preparedness to COVID-19, including orders issued by Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Dr. Amy Acton.

- Board website: https://shp.ohio.gov/
- Board’s Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/OhioSpeechandHearingProfessionalsBoard/ (Be sure to “Like” our Facebook page to receive notifications when posted.)
COVID-19 Updates and Resources

Visit: https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/ for the latest information and updates about Ohio’s preparedness to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Resources
The following are great resources for updates about Ohio’s preparedness to COVID-19:

Ohio Speech and Hearing Professionals Board (SHP)
- SHP Website: https://www.shp.ohio.gov (Frequent updates are posted on the Board’s homepage.)
- SHP Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/OhioSpeechandHearingProfessionalsBoard/

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine
- Governor’s COVID-19 updates website: https://governor.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/governor/

Ohio Department of Health (ODH)
- ODH Coronavirus.ohio.gov: https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/
- ODH Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/OHdeptofhealth/
- ODH Twitter: www.twitter.com/OHdeptofhealth

Ohio Department of Education (ODE)
- ODE’s Homepage: https://education.ohio.gov/
- ODE’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information website for Ohio’s Schools and District: http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus
- ODE’s Considerations for Students with Disabilities During Ohio’s Ordered School-Building Closure: https://shp.ohio.gov/Portals/0/Considerations-for-Students-with-Disabilities-During-Ohios-Ordered-School-Building-Closure.pdf
- ODE’s Telehealth Guidelines for Service Providers: http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus/Telehealth-Guidelines-for-Service-Providers

Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD)
- DODD COVID-19 Guidance and Resources: https://ohioearlyintervention.org/covid-19

Ohio Department of Medicaid
- Governor DeWine Signs Order Expanding Telehealth Services for Medicaid Recipients
- Governor's Video Press Conference: Medicaid Director Maureen Corcoran’s Announcement Begins at 32:44
Continuing Education and Ethics Requirement Reminder

Continuing Education & Ethics Resources Available at: http://shp.ohio.gov/ce-ethics

The Board would like to remind all licensees about their respective continuing education requirements.

Requirements for Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists

Audiologists and speech-language pathologists are required to complete twenty hours of continuing education, including two hours related to ethics pursuant to Ohio Administrative Code section 4753-4-01. At least ten hours of continuing education must be specific to the clinical practice in the area the person is licensed. A licensee is not required to obtain continuing education for the first renewal. Licensed audiologists and speech-language pathologists required to complete continuing education have until December 31, 2020 to complete their hours.

Requirements for Hearing Aid Fitters

Hearing aid fitters are now required to complete twenty hours of continuing education, including two hours related to ethics pursuant to Ohio Administrative Code section 4747-1-11. Continuing education clock hours must be acquired in subjects related to hearing aid fitting or audiology. A licensee is not required to obtain continuing education for the first renewal. Licensed hearing aid fitters required to complete continuing education have until December 31, 2020 to complete their hours.

CE Broker - Sign-up Today!

Please visit the Board’s website at: http://shp.ohio.gov/continuing-education to sign-up with CE Broker, the licensure board’s official continuing education tracking system and begin the easy process of reporting your CE hours. Several thousand licensees are now signed-up and tracking their continuing education hours. CE Broker is available to licensees on a voluntary basis. Licensees may register for a free basic account. Additional information is also available from CE Broker’s website at: https://cebroker.com/oh/plans.

Benefits of reporting your continuing education to CE Broker

- Track your continuing education hours required to renew your Ohio license
- Know precisely how many hours you’ve completed and how many hours are remaining
- Exemption from a continuing education audit once your 20 hours are reported

OMNIE—UpCycling Speech and Language Guidelines

Just a reminder that topic modules are still maintained and accessible on the Ohio Master’s Network Initiatives in Education (OMNIE) website at: https://omnie.ocali.org/. The topics are maintained and updated by practitioners regarded for their expertise, knowledge and experience over the subject areas addressed. The guidelines and resources support school based practitioners, including intervention specialists, teachers, administrators and parents. Accessing the modules will require you to register for a free account which will only take a few minutes, and is highly encouraged to ensure that funding continues in order to maintain and develop additional modules.
OSHPB SPRING/SUMMER CALENDAR—2020

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>Application Review and Approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>Application Review and Approval</td>
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<tr>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>Board &amp; Committee Meetings</td>
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<td>May 15</td>
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<td>May 25</td>
<td>State Holiday - Memorial Day - Board Office Closed</td>
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<td>August 1</td>
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<td>Board and Committee Meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 15</td>
<td>Application Review and Approval</td>
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Reminder - On December 31, 2020 licenses will expire for aides, audiologists, hearing aid dealers, hearing aid fitters, and speech-language pathologists. The Board will send licensure renewal information to licensees in October 2020.

Note: Board & Committee meeting dates are subject to change. Visit our website to confirm dates.

Please visit the Board’s website at www.shp.ohio.gov for the specific time and location of the Board and committee meetings. In addition, you may also download the Board’s agenda and meeting minutes.

Please note that this calendar is subject to change without notice.

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Ask the Board:

What is the best way to receive information from the Board during this emergency?

The best way to stay informed is to visit our board website at: https://www.shp.ohio.gov or “Like” us on our Facebook page. We are posting updates on Ohio’s preparedness to COVID-19 on a regular basis from Governor Mike DeWine, Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Education, and other state agencies as their information is received.

The Board is on Facebook. Please visit our Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/OhioSpeechandHearingProfessionals-Board/ or by clicking on the icon above and “Like” us to receive our notifications and information.