include a portable wheelchair lift to the president's rostrum. The rostrum also was widened to allow space for a

PUBLIC SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

Indefective communication, when accessing public safety and emergency services, can have outcomes ranging from confusion to loss of life. Emergency management should be trained in effective communication for people with hearing loss in general population shelters. Other emergency situations would include law enforcement, 911 calls, and hotlines.

Only 6 out of 67 Florida counties have text-to-911 capabilities. Please follow the link below to learn more.

https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/what-you-need-know-about-text-911

911 calls, and hotlines.

Ineffective communication, when accessing public safety and emergency services, can have outcomes ranging from confusion to loss of life. Emergency management should be trained in effective communication for people with communication needs and access for immediate information or emergency safety.

Some problems faced by this population include:

1. Personal technology is not affordable (Assistive Listening Devices [ALDs], cell phones, hearing aids)
2. A need for captioning for local broadcasts, in public venues, and utilizing technology to provide sign language interpreters properly through video remote interpreting as appropriate.
3. Visual fire/smoke alarms for all as well as enough volumes/65/wr/mm6515a2.htm
4. Limited direct access to 911 services in emergency situations via texting

Technological inadequate communication technology increases barriers for persons with hearing loss and reduces opportunities for equal, effective communication in daily life. A person with hearing loss often goes through a day without available technology that can make a difference in, vocational/professional advancement, the ability to join friends in social interactions and awareness of potential threats in the environment such as a fire alarm.

Jan. 28, 2017 The Florida Senate celebrated the opening of November of the newly renovated Senate chamber along with the new desks, carpet, paint and stained glass, a hearing loop system was installed. Other upgrades include:

- a portable wheelchair lift to the president’s catwalk. The catwalk was also relocated to allow space for a wheelchair. Please follow the link below for more information. http://www.ncsl.org/blog/2017/01/24/keeping-legislative-and-citizens-with-disabilities.html

Among adults aged 70 and older with hearing loss who could benefit from hearing aids, fewer than one in three (30 percent) have used them. Even fewer (approximately 10 percent) who could benefit from hearing aids have ever used them. Based on calculations by NIDCD Epidemiology and Statistics Program staff and latest data collected by the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) annually for number of persons who have ever used a hearing aid (manufactured), and (2) periods: NHANES hearing exams for representative samples of the U.S. adult and older population [deaf/blinds], these statistics are also used for tracking Healthy People 2010 and 2020 objectives.

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Some possible solutions include:

1. Personal technology is not affordable (Assistive Listening Devices [ALDs], cell phones, hearing aids)
2. A need for captioning for local broadcasts, in public venues, and utilizing technology to provide sign language interpreters properly through video remote interpreting as appropriate.
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Hearing Aid Specialist
Sara

Persons who are Deaf-Blind
Darlene Bailey; Christy Friel
Deaf-Blind Center Association
Julie Church
Alexander Graham Bell Association
Dolores Fyfe
Andover
Annapolis
Cecil F. Bradley
Dane

Florida Department of Children and Families
Bill M. Jankowski
Florida Department of Education
Sherry Ziesing
Florida Department of Elder Affairs
Gary Hodges
Florida Department of Health
Dr. Clay Chapman
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Public Service Announcement (PSA) advising Floridians to see a licensed hearing healthcare professional is finally coming to fruition.

We have continued engagement with other government departments and agencies, such as Emergency Management, to be responsible for communication access in all aspects of state and county activities, particularly in broadcasting and following up with community assistance after Hurricane Hurricane Irma and Matthew.

“The hearing is the third most common chronic health condition in the U.S.”

The Council needs significant and consistent funding, staffing positions, and state law, regulations and rules to effectively follow best practices and provide appropriate representation.

We have listed our accomplishments in previous reports so the following is an update of what we have done since the last report:

A Public Service Announcement (PSA) advising Floridians to see a licensed hearing healthcare professional is finally coming to fruition.

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“The hearing is the third most common chronic health condition in the U.S.”

The Council is composed of 17 members appointed by the Governor. Appointments of members representing organizations is made by the Governor in consultation with the organizations.

Overview
1 Education 2 Employment 3 Healthcare 4 Public Safety & Emergency Services 5 Technology 6 Council Members

The Council
4 Council Members

The Florida Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing hereinafter referred to as “The Council”, was initially mandated by F.S. Statute 413.271 in 2004 to serve as an advisory and coordinating body which recommends strategies to the federal and state agencies for the deaf, hard of hearing, late deafened, or Deaf-blind (hereinafter referred to as “hearing loss”) and continues to do so today. The Council is a resource for persons with hearing loss training in emergency assistance with everyday needs including education, employment, healthcare, legal, public safety and emergencies, communication technology and public accommodations and other areas where communication access is needed and accommodations.

2017 FCCDHH Biennial Report to Govenor Rick Scott, the Florida Legislature & The Supreme Court

The Florida Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Inadequate access to technology increases barriers for persons with hearing loss and reduces opportunities for equal, effective communication in daily living.

**In school year 2015-16, the Florida Department of Education reported serving 4,332 students who are either deaf or hard of hearing and 82 students who are Deaf-Blind**

**Some possible solutions include:**
1. Ensure all medical settings have access to reasonable accommodations to implement in the workplace.
2. Train vocational, technical, and post-secondary programs on reasonable accommodations and resources.
3. Encourage Vocational Rehabilitation to expand programs for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-Blind including interpreting staff.

**Some problems faced by this population include:**
1. Poor communication in medical settings leading to poor understanding of instructions and other potential life-threatening medical errors by individuals with hearing loss.
2. Lack of access to mental health programs and professionals able to address issues unique to individuals with hearing loss.

**HEALTHCARE**

Inadequate training of medical/healthcare professionals often leads to ineffective healthcare treatments and services for persons with hearing loss from birth throughout the lifespan. Ineffective communication, when accessing medical services, can lead to incorrect diagnoses by physicians, can cause delayed or improper medical treatment, and can create poor patient understanding of physician instructions. This can result in potentially fatal outcomes as well as decreased business and litigation expenses for the medical provider. This includes doctors’ offices, pharmacies, laboratories, urgent care centers, emergency rooms, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and other medical settings.

Despite the size of this population, there is limited information regarding the health services utilization of its constituents. Understanding the health care needs of people with hearing loss has gained legal implications since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please follow this link for more information: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1430352/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1430352/)

Inadequate access to technology can have outcomes ranging from confusion to loss of life.

Some problems faced by this population include:
1. Shortage of qualified teachers, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), interpreters, and other support personnel.
2. Nonfunctional hearing aids or FM/infrared systems for classrooms impede student educational success.
3. A lack of educational facilitators, including those trained in American Sign Language (ASL), tactile signs, and Listening and Spoken language, thus leading to poor educational and vocational outcomes.
4. Lack of compliance by businesses/employers/agencies that often don’t comply with ADA requirements.
5. Employment transition for trained support personnel and technology that reduces barriers to education and increases opportunities for equal communication and success for students needs to be addressed. Failure to provide such accommodations can limit educational success, and affect vocational goals and future job options. Due to a lack of resources, funding, and professional training these students often don’t get the opportunity for appropriate education needed or deserved.

In 2015, the percentage of adults 18-64 with a hearing disability that were employed was only 47.2%. 4

According to disability statistics.org, the percentage of Florida adults with a hearing disability is 5.8%. Among these adults, the amount who receive SS is 15.3%.

**Some possible solutions include:**
1. Provide training to employers & employment agencies on reasonable accommodations to implement in the workplace.
2. Train vocational, technical, and post-secondary programs on reasonable accommodations and resources.
3. Encourage Vocational Rehabilitation to expand programs for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-Blind including interpreting staff.

**Some problems faced by this population include:**
1. Lack of accommodation policy with employers & employment agencies for those with hearing loss.
2. Lack of a source of assistance/resources needed for people who are deaf & hard of hearing who have personal assistive devices.
3. Lack of training for mental health providers to expand programs for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-Blind including interpreting staff.

**Some possible solutions include:**
1. Ensure all medical settings have access to communication training and policies with resources for communication access for patients & caregivers.
2. Have educational institutions provide training programs to mental health professionals so services may be provided in the preferred mode of communication of individual with hearing loss.

Some problems faced by this population include:
1. Nonfunctional hearing aids or FM/infrared systems to attain effective communication for all.
2. "Best practices" established for teachers, CART, interpreters and other support personnel.
3. Provide and train for FM/infrared systems to provide accommodations for classrooms.

**Some possible solutions include:**
1. Strengthen early childhood education for children with hearing loss and teach their parents
2. "Best practices" established for teachers, CART, interpreters and other support personnel.
3. Provide and train for FM/infrared systems to provide accommodations for classrooms.
4. Establish funded positions for trained support personnel to improve educational achievement.

Ineffective communication, when accessing public safety and emergency services, can have outcomes ranging from confusion to loss of life.

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3. Lack of a source of assistance/resources needed for people who are deaf & hard of hearing who have personal assistive devices.
4. Lack of compliance by businesses/employers/agencies that often don’t comply with ADA requirements.

In 2014, only 34.5% of adults with a hearing disability were employed full-time. 4

In 2014, the percentage of adults 18-64 with a hearing disability that were employed was only 47.2%. 4

Despite the size of this population, there is limited information regarding the health services utilization of its constituents. Understanding the health care needs of people with hearing loss has gained legal implications since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please follow this link for more information: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1430352/](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1430352/)

**Some possible solutions include:**
1. Provide training to employers & employment agencies on reasonable accommodations to implement in the workplace.
2. Train vocational, technical, and post-secondary programs on reasonable accommodations and resources.
3. Encourage Vocational Rehabilitation to expand programs for individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, and Deaf-Blind including interpreting staff.

Some problems faced by this population include:
1. Poverty in medical settings leading to poor understanding of instructions and other potential life-threatening medical errors by individuals with hearing loss.
2. Lack of access to mental health programs and professionals able to address issues unique to persons with hearing loss.

Some possible solutions include:
1. Ensure all medical settings have access to communication training and policies with resources for communication access for patients & caregivers.
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