

March 3, 2016

PA ODHH E-news

Where does the time go? Yes, it is an old cliché, but it is so true- and it is why this e-news is long overdue. Dee Dee, Denise, Ben and Sharon included a mish-mash of changes, updates, and projects in this e-news edition. We wanted to give you a sampling of what is keeping us busy. If you have any questions, about something you read or if you need assistance, please contact us! You can find our contact information at the end of this e-news.

Take Care,  
Sharon, Dee Dee, Denise & Ben

### **ODHH 2015: Summary**

Yearly, ODHH has seen a steady increase in the number of people and organizations who contact our office. Due to different projects, such as the establishment of the SSP statewide program, or outreach to parents, we have seen an increase in contacts from persons who are deafblind, parents of children who are hard of hearing, and businesses who have employees who are deaf or hard of hearing.

ODHH had:

- 1,894 requests
  - An individual or organization may have multiple requests
- Breakdown of who contacts ODHH:
  - Typical hearing: 375
  - Deaf (use ASL): 571
  - Hard of Hearing: 370
  - Deafblind: 10
  - Interpreters: 100
  - Organizations: 325

## **ODHH Staffing & Office Changes**

As you are aware, Jerry Penna retired in October 2015. Benjamin Moonan replaced Jerry as the representative for western Pennsylvania. Once hired, the new ODHH representative will be located in Harrisburg and covering central Pennsylvania. In the meantime, Benjamin continues to serve central and western Pennsylvania. If you have questions, concerns, issues, or need help with anything, please contact Benjamin at 814-79-2381 phone/videophone, 717-783-4912 tty or [bmoonan@pa.gov](mailto:bmoonan@pa.gov).

## **Changes to the ODHH Website**

- Our new website address is [www.dli.pa.gov/odhh](http://www.dli.pa.gov/odhh)
- ODHH added two new pages: Resources and Videos
  - Go to the ODHH page, then scroll down to the bottom of the home page to see links to the new pages
  - We will continue to add documents and videos

## **ODHH is on Facebook**

ODHH has a FB page! Yes, we finally joined the world of social media. If you haven't yet, please find us and like us on Facebook. We post information, events, and examples of our work.

Our page is "Pennsylvania Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing." You can find us at <https://www.facebook.com/Pennsylvania-Office-for-the-Deaf-Hard-of-Hearing-848959011795621/>

We know that everyone is on FB. To better reach the community, ODHH will post announcements, news, and videos on our FB page and our website.

## **ODHH is on YouTube**

As you can see, ODHH is on FB and is slowly starting a collection of videos! Our videos are posted under the channel Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry. So far we only have announcements; however it is our goal to post information about the Hearing Loss Expo 2016, or informational videos on Act 57. You can find the videos by going to [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), our website, or our FB page. Here is the link to Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry's YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCUyhUCwsv2G8Hzg1Xu3-oNg>

## **Hearing Loss Expo 2016**

ODHH is excited to bring you our biennial expo! It is slated for November 2-3, 2016 at the Radisson Harrisburg Hotel. Watch our website, [www.dli.pa.gov/ODHH](http://www.dli.pa.gov/ODHH) or our FB page, Pennsylvania Office for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing for updates!

## **Video Remote Interpreting**

As you may notice, more and more healthcare providers are utilizing Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) as a means of communication. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), healthcare providers must provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services that are necessary for effective communication.

Under new ADA regulations, <http://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm> , if VRI is utilized, then it must provide:

- Real-time, full-motion video and audio over a dedicated high-speed, wide-bandwidth video connection or wireless connection that delivers high-quality video images that do not produce lags, choppy, blurry, or grainy images, or irregular pauses in communication;
- A sharply delineated image that is large enough to display the interpreter's face, arms, hands, and fingers, and the participating individual's face, arms, hands, and fingers, regardless of his or her body position;
- A clear, audible transmission of voices; and
- Adequate training to users of the technology and other involved individuals so that they may quickly and efficiently set-up and operate the VRI.

Contact ODHH with your questions and to share your VRI experiences with us.

## **ODHH Coordinates Interpreters & Captions for Governor Wolf /PA Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) Press Conferences**

ODHH has been designated to coordinate the interpreters and captions for PEMA press conferences. Sharon Behun has been taking the lead on this and is working with PEMA and Commonwealth Media Services (CMS). The product/process continues to improve. You would think it is easy to accomplish, but it is not. The technology and number of players make it challenging. We are up for it, and we are working on improvements.

### **ODHH, so what do you do, exactly?**

A family whose child has a speech disability has reached out to ODHH for advocacy. The child has excellent receptive skills utilizing their own hearing but their speech disability has made it difficult for the child to express themselves. For a while, the parents have implemented the use of sign language in the household in hopes it would be a tool for their child to express and communicate with others. Prior to requesting assistance from ODHH, the family believed their child would benefit from having a sign language interpreter to be their 'voice' in the classroom and worried that the educational professionals would disagree. After consulting with ODHH, the family increased their understanding of legal obligations the education system would have to provide and how to design an IEP that is reasonably appropriate for their child.

In this instance, the family wants their child to be able to express themselves in the classroom and not be limited because they have struggles with speaking. Using sign language has shown that this student does, indeed, have a voice. ODHH continues to work with the family in hopes that appropriate services can be agreed to, to ensure the child does not experience limitations while interacting with peers and teachers in the classroom.

### **Reminder for Registered Interpreters**

- All state registrations expire December 31, 2016. An email notification will be sent when the process to renew begins
- Provisional registration – Remember to renew your registration before it expires as to avoid a lapse resulting in cancellation of your registration

### **Sign Language Interpreter & Transliterators State Registration Act (Act 57): Updated Forms in 2015**

- There are three forms:
  - To request the use of a non-registered interpreter
  - For interpreters who do not reside in Pennsylvania, and work in the commonwealth up to 14 times per calendar year
  - Revocation Form
- The changes were minor, such as signature line for a parent/guardian, or edits to language to improve the readability

## **PA Transition Team for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

pepnet 2's goal is to improve post-secondary educational outcomes for individuals who are deaf, or hard of hearing, including those with co-occurring disabilities. pepnet 2 received a five year federal grant to build states' capacity to serve students who are deaf, or hard of hearing; this is the final grant year. Each state created a team and the teams participate in an annual summit.

Pennsylvania's team consisted of five members:

- Denise Brown, ODHH representative
- Erin Campion, Pennsylvania parent
- Russell Goddard, statewide coordinator for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, & Deafblind, OVR
- Nan Wood, co-chair of the Educational Resources for Children with Hearing Loss (ERCHL)
- Jane Freeman, educational consultant with the PA Training and Technical Assistance Network (PATTAN)

Recently, the team attended the annual summit in Atlanta. The theme of this summit was *Building State Capacity to Address Critical Issues in Deaf Education: Transition from Secondary Education to Postsecondary Options*. Denise found some sessions very interesting. For example, one of the highlights was the "State Team Poster Session." Each state team created "poster" that described their work over the past five years and displayed for all state teams to view/discuss. It was AWESOME! Another highlight was a working breakfast, "Coffee and Conversation." For this, some states were selected to present for 30 minutes on their project and gave the rest of the teams the opportunity to learn from each other. There were many more fascinating sessions during the summit which included two keynote speakers. Needless to say, we managed to get some work done for our state project. We definitely will be sharing our state project with all of you soon. Stay tuned!



The PA Team: (L to R) Denise Brown, Jane Freeman, Russell Goddard, Nan Wood, Erin Campion

Check out pepnet's website here: <http://www.pepnet.org/>

## **Interpreters: What is going on?**

For those who don't know, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, beginning January 1, 2016, placed a moratorium on certification testing. The moratorium was announced in August 2015. Since then, Pennsylvania and every other state have been trying to determine next steps. In Pennsylvania, the moratorium spurred discussion on amending Act 57, and what options Pennsylvania has, if the moratorium is not lifted in a timely manner. ODHH has had discussions with Labor & Industry's Legislative Affairs office, Policy office, PA Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (PARID), and PA Society for the Advancement of the Deaf (PSAD). Now, ODHH is gathering data to formulate a plan to move us forward. As soon as ODHH has a plan, we will share it with you.

Until then, just like every other interpreter and ODHH out there, we are anxiously waiting to hear from RID's Board of Directors. Their next meeting is scheduled for March 2016 and the moratorium is an agenda item.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact ODHH.

## **Deaf, Hard of Hearing, & Interpreter Resource Collection: New Additions**

- Directions to access the library collection:  
<http://www.dli.pa.gov/Individuals/Disability-Services/odhh/resources/Pages/Printable-Documents.aspx#.VtR2GXIo670>
- Additions:
  - *Meeting the Needs of Students Who are Deaf or Hard of hearing*; Lawrence Siegel
  - *The Complete IEP Guide: How to Advocate for Your Special educational Child* ; Lawrence Siegel
  - *The Human Right to Language: Communication Access for Deaf Children*; Lawrence Siegel
  - *The Argument for a Constitutional Right to Communication & Language*; Lawrence Siegel
  - *The Educational & Communication Needs of deaf & Hard of Hearing Children*; Lawrence Siegel
  
  - *Thirty Million Words* by Dana Suskind, MD.
  
  - *Guidelines for working & Socializing with Deaf-Blind People*; Theresa Smith
  - *SSPs: What Are They & Why Are They Necessary?* (DVD) ; Diane Lane Chambers

- The Gold Book/ 2010: *Understanding the Office of Developmental Programs in PA: Mental Retardation & Autism Services*
- “Green Books” for interpreters
- Fingerspelled Word Recognition through Rapid Serial Visual Presentation (RSVP)
- *Educational Interpreting: A Collection of Articles from VIEWS*
- CDI Sample Written Test Package
- NIC Practice DVD, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition
- Sample Generalist Written Test

### **Support Service Program (SSP) for Persons who are Deafblind**

ODHH partnered with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to write a grant for SSP services. The Center for Independent Living of Central PA (CILCP) was awarded the grant.

This new statewide program coordinates SSP services for people who are deafblind. SSPs provide environmental information to a person who is deafblind, or they may assist the person in reading their mail, or accompany them to a holiday party. For more information about SSP services, visit <http://www.aadb.org/information/ssp/ssp.html>

A person who is deafblind may receive 14 hours of service per month. If you have questions, are interested in becoming a SSP, or know someone who may benefit from these services, send an email to [DBLWS@cilcp.org](mailto:DBLWS@cilcp.org) or visit [www.cilcp.org](http://www.cilcp.org)

Even though the program is up and running, ODHH continues to play an active role as the service continues to grow. For example, Sharon Behun is a member of the advisory committee, ODHH funded “business 101” training for the SSPs, and ODHH and the Deaf Blind Living Well Services manager, Marsha Drenth, are presenting at the 2016 PARID/BU conference.

#### **Contact ODHH**

Phone 800-233-3008 v/tty (PA only)  
717-783-4912 v/tty

Videophone 717-831-1928

Email [odhh@pa.gov](mailto:odhh@pa.gov)

Website [www.dli.pa.gov/ODHH](http://www.dli.pa.gov/ODHH)