



TEXAS ACADEMY of AUDIOLOGY



JUNE 2024

What's new?

**10/17-10/19
MARK YOUR
CALENDARS
NOW FOR
CONFERENCE!**

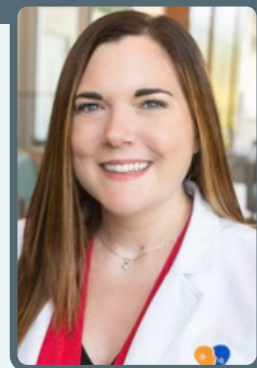
**Check out these
two speakers**

**Update to BCBS
Federal
Employees
Program - Prior
Authorization
Process**

**The Scoop:
The Scott Haug
Foundation**

A Message from your TAA President

**Stephanie Williams, AuD
TAA President**



We're halfway through the year and your TAA board has been hard at work on everything from preparing for conference to Medicaid reimbursement to student engagement. If you haven't done so already, please remember to [renew your membership](#) and encourage a couple of colleagues to join you! Next year is another important legislative year for Texas and the more audiologists we represent in the state, the stronger our voice when we advocate for the profession at the state level. A TAA membership is an investment in the future of audiology in Texas. We work very hard on your behalf in legislative years and need your support to amplify our voice.

Our speaker slate for conference has been set and we are so excited to introduce them to you over the coming months. Please plan to join us October 17-19 for this year's conference. It is a great opportunity to learn and network with other Texas audiologists. Carmen Landry and Shawna Jackson have outdone themselves with our CEU course planning this year. Bring your best two-step and square dance skills to the Hoedown and we will see you in Houston!

Thank you all for the work you do on behalf of your patients and colleagues! Let us know if you have any questions or want to be a part of any of the efforts you see mentioned in this newsletter.

Update: Federal Employee Program (FEP) Hearing Aid Benefits Prior Authorization Process

Hunter Gerhart, Au.D., CCC-A, ABA, FAAA

BCBS FEDERAL PRIOR AUTHORIZATION UPDATE:

On April 8, 2024, Blue Cross Blue Shield released updated medical policy guidelines for hearing aids for their Federal Employee Program (BCBS FEP). The updates make the hearing aid benefit easier to utilize for BCBS FEP subscribers and easier to submit and receive prior authorization approval for professionals.

The changes made to the guideline with the largest impact are:

The degree of hearing loss for qualification is now 26 dB or greater. Under the previous guideline, the degree of hearing loss for qualification was 40 dB or greater. It is recommended that providers construct letters of medical necessity such that narratives clearly state how the 26dB criteria has been met (e.g., frequency specific statements), as well as briefly discuss the impact of the hearing loss.

The following verbiage was added to the guideline to provide clarification on the FDA registration requirement: "...approved, listed/or registered with the FDA as a prescription device". You can access the FDA's database of "Establishment Registration & Device Listing" by clicking [here](#).

The reference to "adult" in the guideline was removed. Previously, the guideline stated that it was applicable to "air conduction hearing aids for adults".

Clarification to dispensing provider qualifications. The guideline previously stated "Dispensed by prescription from a licensed healthcare provider" and has now been updated to "Dispensed by prescription or signed written order from a licensed healthcare provider who is practicing within the scope of their license."

Providers may include AuD, HIS, MD, DO, NP, or PA.

The specific make and model of the recommended devices should be clearly stated in the prescription.

Texas Academy of Audiology (TAA) is in support of these changes and amendments. We will continue to monitor the BCBS FEP requirements and update our members.

Please contact professionalissues@texasaudiology.org or gov@texasaudiology.org if you have any questions!

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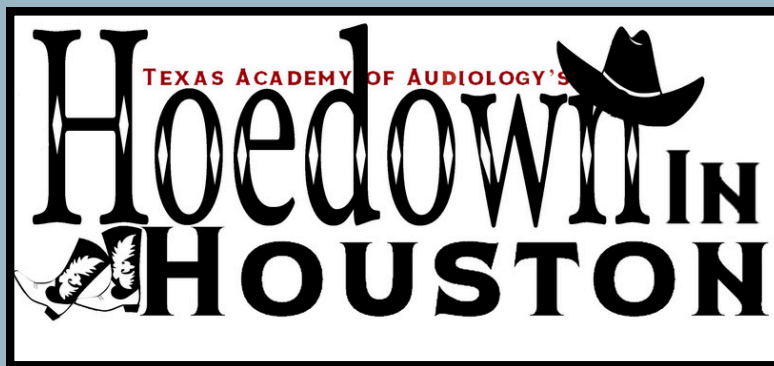
Starkey

Learn more

The advertisement features a black background on the left with white text. On the right, there is a colorful gradient background transitioning from purple to blue. A white hearing aid device is shown in the center, connected to a small black box. The Starkey logo is prominently displayed on the right side.

TAA 25th Annual Conference in Houston

Carmen Landry, AuD
TAA Conference Chair



MARK YOUR CALENDARS TO ATTEND IN HOUSTON OCTOBER 17-19!

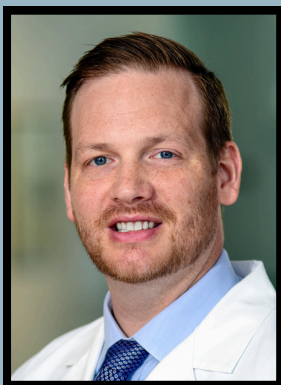
**Marriott Houston South Hobby Airport
9100 Gulf Freeway, Houston, TX 77017**



Anna Jilla, AuD, PhD
Lamar University

The TAA Board is looking forward to seeing so many of you for the 2024 TAA Conference in Houston this year. We are putting together an amazing lineup of speakers including some familiar faces!

Texas' very own Anna Jilla will be bringing in the latest on Billing and Coding Updates and Barriers to Medicaid Audiology.



Nathan Lindquist, MD
Baylor College of Medicine

We are also very excited to have Dr. Nate Lindquist joining us from Baylor College of Medicine to discuss Anatomy and Pathology of Chronic Ear Disease.



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The Scoop from The Scott Haug Foundation

Scott Marquardt
Scott Haug Foundation President

Greetings from the Scott Haug Foundation! It's my pleasure to give an update on what the foundation is working on this year to both support students and to promote fun at the TAA conference in Houston.

This year is the Foundation's 40th Birthday!!!! Our goal is to raise \$40,000 this year to support our scholarship program. Get ready for some fun at the opening session. Lets see if we can hit this goal!

The Foundation will once again be organizing a golf tournament but not your average golf tournament. This year we are planning on having our event at Top Golf and it will be held Thursday evening. This will surely be a great event with lots of fun. The money we raise goes directly towards student scholarships. The more money we can raise the more we can put towards our deserving students.

Work has begun collecting nominations for the student scholar awards. Each year we recognize outstanding third-year students from each of our five Texas universities.

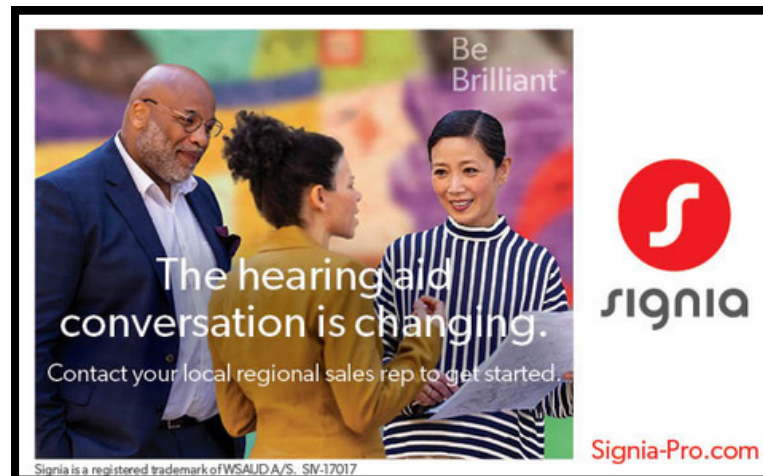
Every year the Foundation recognizes the Outstanding Audiologist. In Texas we have many amazing audiologists that deserve to be recognized for their contributions to the profession and to the communities we serve. To learn more about the process of nominating an audiologist go to:
<https://scotthaug.org/outstanding-texas-audiologist/>

We can't wait to see you in Houston!!!

Donations can be made all year round using Venmo:
<https://account.venmo.com/u/ScottHaug84>

Or by mailing checks to: Scott Haug Foundation
1671 Stallion Springs Dr.
Fischer, TX 78623

Please set yourself a reminder to join us in Houston
October 17-19, 2024.
You won't want to miss out!



Membership Update

2024 Membership RENEW NOW!

Still time to renew your 2024 membership!
The Texas Academy of Audiology relies on annual membership dues to support Texas audiologists in every facet. 2024 membership is still available! Please renew your membership and if you have never joined- please join today!

Membership not only enables TAA to advocate on your behalf, but also grants you access to exclusive timely webinars, our annual in-person conference and renewed access to our TAA Facebook Page. Each year, we review and update Facebook members to include new members and roll off anyone who is not currently a member.

We have seen over half our membership attend our past two conferences but would love to see even more this year in Houston! Mark your calendars for October 17-19, 2024.

Please renew TODAY and SAVE on conference registration- see more conference details at www.texasaudiology.org!

Feel free to reach out with any membership questions:
Holly Pavlicek, Au.D.
hdpavlicek@hotmail.com



TAA Political action committee (@taa-PAC)

ATTN: TEXAS AUDIOLOGISTS



Kimberly DeBona

@TAA-PAC

venmo



Scan QR code for payment

Attention Texas Audiologists!!

As we all know, an election is upon us, and the PAC needs your help. We have distributed \$9000 for the Primary election to candidates who help us champion our cause in the legislature. Now our coffers are very low so we need your contributions to have more funds for the General election. Please consider donated to the TAA PAC today!

You may go online to the TAA website
https://texasaudiology.org/PAC_Donation
Or you may Venmo with the QR code below or
@TAA-PAC last 4 of cell: 7091

Finally, you can mail a check payable to TAA PAC
to:

Kimberly DeBona
4016 Tiffany Trl
College Station, TX. 77845

Please consider supporting your TAA PAC before
the end of the year. We can't do it without your
support!



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WHO IS HIRING?

SEE ALL OF THE CURRENT JOB LISTINGS:
[HTTPS://TEXASAUDIOLOGY.ORG/CLASSIFIEDS.PHP](https://texasaudiology.org/classifieds.php)

Looking to hire a Texas Audiologist? Looking for a new position?
Post your job listing and view current jobs available.
Contact us at website@texasaudiology.org with any questions.

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