

July 2024
President's Notes



Dear Membership,

I hope this message finds you all doing well and gearing up for a busy fall! For new EHDl Coordinators, welcome to the EHDl community. We look forward to working with you in the coming year. Below I have summarized some of the work of EHDl board members since July.

EHDl Connect

The overwhelming majority of EHDl Coordinators said they wanted to continue meeting as a group to learn from one another, share their successes, challenges and problem-solve similar interests. The DSHPSHWA board felt this communication activity fell within the strategic plan and purpose of the board and is an important communication and support tool for EHDl coordinators with many years of success! The information was moved forward, and the board found two EHDl Coordinators willing to facilitate the meetings. A big thank you to EHDl Coordinator's Ashten Yost, Mississippi and Julie Walker, Washington, who have agreed to facilitate the EHDl Connect Meetings and to Tara Carroll, DSHPSHWA Board Secretary for supporting Ashten and Julie in this effort! It truly takes a village!

EHDl Connect held their first online meeting on October 1st and it was a great success. Ashten emailed the notes from the meeting on October 10th. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 29th. We hope you can join us! Karl White with the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management will present the findings from the extensive survey that EHDl Coordinators were asked to do at the end of 2023. The DSHPSHWA board will then use the remaining time to engage the EHDl Coordinators in a survey that DSHPSHWA board members will use with our national partners to prioritize areas of interest for future education, including the EHDl Coordinator meeting at the National EHDl Conference in 2025 and for the DSHPSHWA needs assessment!

National EHDl Meeting

Planning has been underway for the national EHDl meeting being held March 9-11 in Pittsburgh, PA. Plenary speakers have been confirmed, instructional sessions are being finalized and planning committee members just completed abstract reviews for presentations. It is anticipated that registration details will be up on the [EHDl 2025 Conference website](#) mid-November. The hotel information has been posted so please book your hotel rooms as soon as possible. One of the hotels is connected via skybridge to the convention center where the conference will be held. Both hotels are within walking distance of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. As more information becomes available, we will share that with all of you.

DSHPSHWA Annual Membership Meeting

The annual membership meeting for DSHPSHWA members will be held on Sunday, March 9th with breakfast beginning around 7:30 a.m. and the meeting starting at 8 a.m. The meeting will go until 12 Noon. The board planning team is using information obtained from the EHDl survey completed last winter to plan learning opportunities for this meeting. We are excited to come together with all of you to celebrate our success and discuss our collective needs for the future.

For those of you that are new to EHDI, DSHPSHWA is a private, non-profit entity. Over 98% of the DSHPSHWA membership is made up of EHDI coordinators throughout the U.S. and territories. Additional members include speech and language pathology. DSHPSHWA has a board of directors made up of your peers that volunteer their time to give EHDI coordinators a voice on various national committees (see list below) and in meetings with our national partners. Each year new board members are elected based on interest and availability of positions and we hold monthly board meetings addressing the strategic plan activities with input from membership and begin planning for the yearly in person meeting.

There is a yearly fee to attend the membership meeting which only covers the cost of the meal that is provided, interpretation, rental of the location, etc. With that registration fee you also get one free instructional session included which is normally over half the cost of the instructional sessions! Instructional sessions are typically held on Sunday's and Wednesday's each year.

HRSA Required EHDI Coordinator Meeting

As many of you know by now, a group of DSHPSHWA board members and family leaders from across the U.S. have been working with the Beacon Center, Family Leadership in Language and Learning Center (FL3) and HRSA to plan the required EHDI Coordinator Meeting. It has been a while since there has been this much collaboration and we are excited about it. The meeting will be held on Sunday, March 9th from 1-4:30 p.m. The EHDI Coordinator for each state and territory in addition to a family leader is required to attend the meeting. Unlike the last several meetings, there will be much more networking time with your peers to learn from one another. We also hope to build in some time for your own team to synthesize what you have learned together. Again, we are using the findings from the national EHDI coordinator survey, as well as an activity that we plan to do at the next EHDI Connect meeting. Don't worry if you cannot make the chat, we will send you a link to participate later that day!

Also, we know that almost all of you need supporting documentation for your travel requests. The DSHPSHWA Board and National Partners are working to put out DRAFT agendas and a meeting requirement letter by HRSA soon.

DSHPSHWA Website

If you haven't had a chance to check out the website yet, please do so [here](#). You can go there to meet the board officers, review the strategic plan, see president's notes, learn more about the organization and partnerships with other entities, including the various committees where you have representatives working on your behalf. It is a work in progress, but we hope to continue to build on its contents and make this a resource you can add to your arsenal. If you have any past pictures from the DSHPSHWA meetings, please send them to our email address at dshpshwa@hotmail.com so we can get more added.

DSHPSHWA Directory

The DSHPSHWA Directory is so close to being published! Liza Then has been working hard to put some finishing touches on the directory. If she has reached out to you for a picture and your contact information, please get that information to her, liza.then@health.ri.gov, as soon as possible as we would like to post this resource in November. If you are a new EHDI Coordinator, the directory includes a picture of each state or territory EHDI coordinator/director and follow-up coordinator or designee. It has all their contact information. The directory is a great way to connect with other states and learn about their programming or know who to contact to make referrals for families moving to another state. The directory also includes our federal partners and their contact information. It is also a great way to identify your peers at the national conference in March.

EHDI Coordinator Mentoring

As I mentioned in July, we have a small workgroup currently finalizing procedures and content for mentoring new EHDI Coordinators. The average turnover rate for EHDI Coordinators is 20+% each year. There is so much to learn within your state, as well as with each grant or cooperative agreement. A more formal mentoring process started a few years ago to better support new coordinators in an effort to reduce the turnover rates. Suzanne Foley from Indiana has taken the lead in this endeavor. The mentoring will be similar to efforts in the past with outreach and ongoing support as new coordinators navigate grant or cooperative agreement requirements, data sharing agreements, reports, program evaluation, programming, family support, databases and more. We do our best to match coordinators based on region, experience and availability. Active mentors include Tammy O'Hollearn, Marcia Fort, Liza Then, Linda Hazard and Bradley Bakken. Tara Carroll and Mary Whigham also recently volunteered to assist in this important job! If you have been in the position of EHDI coordinator for at least three years, and you would like to mentor new coordinators as they are hired, please reach out to DSHPSHWA Board by emailing dshpshwa@hotmail.com.

The national technical assistance centers for EHDI also have it in their plans to provide mentorship related to their areas of expertise, as well so we will be working with them to avoid duplication of support.

Advisory Committees

Various board members serve on the committees below on behalf of DSHPSHWA membership. You will find a small summary of their work to date. If there is no report, it is noted as such. Keep in mind, that does not mean there is no work being done as some of the work is confidential and is not ready to be shared publicly at this time. Some committees require strict adherence to keeping their work confidential until it is made public. We will update you when there is more that can be shared with all of you.

- **Health Care Economics Committee** – meet quarterly, but no report at this time.
- **Audiology Quality Consortium** – meet quarterly, but no report at this time.
- **Parent Choice Alliance** – meet, as needed, but no report at this time.
- **Deaf and Hearing of Hearing Alliance** – no meetings to date.
- **Family Leadership in Language and Learning Center (FL3)** – meets twice per year, but no report at this time. Next meeting will be in January or February.
- **Provider Education Center (PEC)** – typically will meet quarterly, but the committee has met twice recently due to planned grant activities that were time sensitive. Tammy O'Hollearn sits on this committee as the DSHPSHWA representative. The committee has met to review the PEC goals for the first year of the cooperative agreement with HRSA. One of the first activities was to review the Provider Needs Assessment. The PEC put together a needs assessment survey and key informant interview questionnaire for the following providers: primary care pediatric providers, pediatric subspecialists, audiologists, speech language pathologists, early intervention service coordinators or providers of special instruction. Tammy strongly recommended they include family practice physicians in their notice as many of them see the children we serve, as well as nurse practitioners. The PEC plans to use the findings from the survey for two projects that are in the works that will be in the area of education and training for providers that work with EHDI children. The PEC will share more on their initiatives in the future!
- **Joint Committee on Infant Hearing** – meet monthly. Patricia Burk and Kirsten Coverstone continue to do a remarkable job co-chairing this committee. They have so many things going on, but a couple of things I would like to highlight are included here. JCIH has published a systematic review article on Late Identified Hearing Loss in Childhood by the lead of JCIH ASHA member, Karen Munoz. This was published online this week in the International Journal of Audiology; Here is the link if you would like to see it:

<https://www.tandfonline.com/eprint/9A73EGTTAMB75HWE5INF/full?target=10.1080/14992027.2024.2385550>. As you may recall, one of the biggest concerns our DSHPHWA JCIH co-chairs heard from all of us and others is the length of time it would take for JCIH documents to be published and the need for JCIH to include more detail on various topics. Our representatives and JCIH co-chairs, Patricia and Kirsten, then implemented a new process for shorter documents. This is one of the outcomes of that new process.

The JCIH is also planning an extensive strategic planning project in the next few months to help with the future direction of JCIH. Thank you to Patricia and Kirsten for their wonderful leadership!

Finally, I want to leave you with a similar message to the one in July: please take care of yourselves and each other. Self-care is important as we navigate the challenges of our roles and responsibilities as coordinators. I know several of you have been ill/had surgery or have had family members fall ill, and some have experienced loss. We know this job is difficult as we are often answering to or being pulled in multiple directions with limited resources by our national, state, local partners and sometimes families all while navigating bureaucracy, mergers, and dealing with life events outside the office. Self-care is what sustains our energy and motivation and can be a tool of resilience to help us move through challenging times. Check in with one another if you know a peer has fallen on hard times or is going through a lot. Kindness is key. Thanks for all you do and get out and vote!

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Tammy O'Hollearn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tammy" being more prominent.

Tammy O'Hollearn
DSHPHWA President