
Editorial/*Editorial*

I am writing this editorial during my trip back to Brazil from the ASHA's IIB (International Issues Board) meeting. And I think it is interesting to share information about some of our activities.

ASHA's interest in international affairs is made clear by the number of groups and people involved with different aspects of international, multicultural, multilingual and global issues. The explicit purpose is to improve human communication and respond to cultural and linguistic demands that will specially include underserved populations.

Therefore, an important step towards increasing communication opportunities was the proposal of guidelines (that will probably be effective in 2013) to international affiliates membership. These guidelines, among other details, suggest that professional credential criteria of each specific country be accepted to international affiliation – as opposed to the present need to meet American criteria. Criteria for countries where there are no credentials for SLP or Audiology practice were also suggested.

A survey aiming to identify ASHA certified professionals that live outside the United States was also proposed. This survey will also verify if they are working or if they have contact with professionals of the field on the country. The purpose is to develop a network of international collaboration that may facilitate communication between active professionals and those that are not working because they don't meet a specific country's credential criteria. We considered that it may be useful to identify the most frequent barriers to eventually work on decreasing them multilaterally.

The intention of continue to participate on the international congresses organized by SBFa was included on the IIB strategic plan for the next years. Another aspect of this plan is to encourage and support the inclusion of other countries in the mutual recognition agreement that already exists but includes only English-language countries.

Ultimately the interest in collaboration and closer relationships became clear. Linguistic barriers can't be dismissed but they deserve a positive and productive approach. We know better than anyone that language is just a part of communication and that communication is fundamental to development.

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