

“Making the Case”

on Behalf of Individuals with Complex Communication Needs:

Advocacy in Augmentative and Alternative Communication

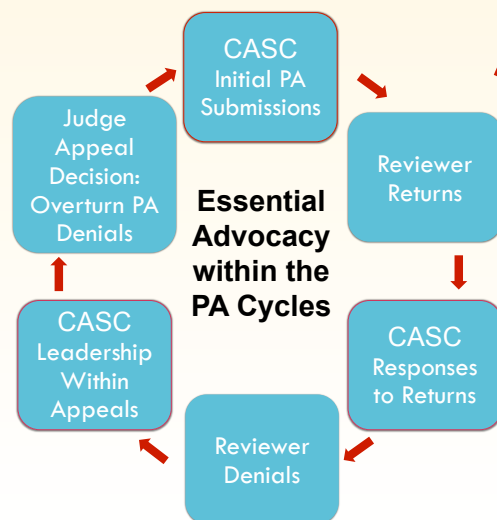


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Funding Crisis: Defining the Problem

- Increase in Medicaid prior authorizations (PA) challenges and denials for essential communication service and equipment
- Decrease in individuals' basic right to communicate due to PA funding barriers
- Between January to November 2012 the percentage of PA approvals dropped from 95% to 35% of CASC submissions
- Denials increased from 3% of submissions to 26% in that same timeframe
- PA returns for additional information escalated to over 70%
- Therapists diverted time from patient care to responding to PA returns and denials



Addressing the Crisis: “Making the Case”

- Advocacy both in the PA Cycle (see chart to the left) and outside the PA cycle (see “Toolkit” to the right)
- Clarifying SLP standards of practice
- Clarifying relevant policy requirements
- Empowering families and self-advocates
- Practice & Preparation for appeals
- Learn from successes

Advocacy Toolkit:

Essential Advocacy outside of the PA Cycles

- Garnering administrative support & agency resources
- Networking with stakeholders: families, providers, advocacy agencies
- Connecting with individuals and agencies involved in PA review, relevant policy, and oversight of PA process
 - MA Staff
 - Lobbyists
 - Legislators
 - Professional organizations



Moving Forward

- Build awareness of the needs & potentials of individuals who have complex communication needs
- Define barriers & identify solutions
- Diversify funding support
 - Broaden appeal to other insurances
- Pursue steps to influence and strengthen relevant policy
 - Activity in state and national professional organizations

CASC is affiliated with the Rehabilitation Department of the UW Hospital & Clinics (UWHC). CASC provides comprehensive AAC services for communicators of all ages and abilities. CASC is located within the UCEDD of the Waisman Center and staff include Occupational Therapists and Speech-Language Pathologists.

LEND training provides a foundation for professionals to effectively “Make the Case” through:

- Advocacy through policy
- Family & personal perspective
- Case based learning
- Interdisciplinary training
- Leadership skill building
- Experiential learning

Special thanks to the clients and families, Waisman Center/UCEDD and UWHC administrators, and other Wisconsin stakeholders who took the time to advocate for the basic human right to communicate.