

Hearing, Speech, RLD

From: Catherine OShea <closhea@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 19, 2019 1:33 PM
To: Hearing, Speech, RLD
Subject: [EXT] Sharing Information on hearing loops

Congratulations to New Mexico for moving forward with such an important law. Here in New Jersey, we are organizing to do the same. Why? Because audiologists and other hearing-device suppliers sometimes still put working quickly before their clients' needs. Just last week, I invited a friend with brand new hearing aids to a lecture in a room that has a hearing loop. "You do know how to turn on your telecoil; don't you?" I asked.

To my shock, she replied, "What's a telecoil?".

Her audiologist had said NOTHING to her about hearing loops--which are finally popping up with increasing frequency across the Mid-Atlantic states--and my poor friend had purchased very expensive hearing aids from her, without a clue as to whether they could accommodate our current *best assist* for those of us who struggle every day in a hearing world. (My friend returned the hearing aids the next day--they did NOT have telecoils--and told her audiologist to replace them with aids that did.)

Here's the thing: IF NJ had a law requiring the provider AND the client to note that the provider had, indeed, explained the benefits of the telecoil/hearing loop to the client, my friend would have been able to ask for telecoils, and would already be enjoying the many benefits of being able to hear within a hearing loop.

While those of us who are hearing-impaired-volunteers work with providers to give us this invaluable service, we must rely on legislators to help by passing requirements for both the provider AND the client to certify that hearing loops/telecoils were explained to the patient.

We will be eagerly watching from NJ, hoping that NM will become one more state getting this right.

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