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To Those Concerned:

I am a practicing audiologist in the State of New York. In addition, I am a dispenser of hearing aids. I am writing to express my professional opinion about the importance of certain verbiage that should be included in every hearing aid purchase agreement.

It is important that consumers of hearing aids be audiologically evaluated prior to the fitting of any hearing device in order to rule out the necessity of medical or surgical intervention and then determine that the individual can benefit from amplification.

Consumers rely on our professional advice which should be honest and with integrity. Therefore, the consumer should be informed about what features would be most beneficial in any hearing aid that is considered for them. Since hearing aids are just that, an aid, they may not provide sufficient benefit in every situation, such as in background noise. Therefore, the consumer should be provided with options that will be used in conjunction with their hearing devices such as a simple telecoil that will connect the consumer to a venue that offers an induction loop system. Assistive Listening Systems are mandated under the The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and therefore, this information is imperative to the consumer in helping them decide which hearing device to purchase.

Hence, every Hearing Aid Purchase Agreement should include statements regarding that the consumer was provided with options about assistive listening devices that may assist with their hearing aids, one feature that was explained by the provider is the telecoil.

The purchase agreement should then be signed by both the Dispenser and the Consumer so that it is clearly indicated that both parties were involved in the decision making or which device was in the consumer's best interest.

Based on the aforementioned, I suggest that the New Mexico Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Practices Board make a requirement that a written statement must be contained in the purchase contract that full disclosure has occurred about the benefits of assistive listening technology being provided at the time of purchase and that both the Dispenser and Consumer be required to initial that statement.

Sincerely,



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