



Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

CHALLENGES IN ADVOCATING FOR COMMUNICATION ACCESS

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Barriers to Successful Advocacy

- Capacity Building
 - Internal/External
- Informational/Educational Advocacy
 - Various types of barriers
- Legal Advocacy

Types of Barriers to Advocacy

- Provider not willing to listen
- Provider not open to changing policy to reflect ADA
- Difficulty getting past the receptionist
- Provider unwilling to take the time to learn how to locate a sign language interpreter – pushed DSDHH to provide interpreter
- Despite explanation, provider not understanding what it means to have a hearing loss (e.g. “why can’t lipreading be enough?”)
- Perception of on-site sign language interpreting services as “unreasonable” as an accommodation, regardless of actual need

Types of Barriers to Advocacy

- Failure by provider to understand that the accommodation used did not result in “effective communication”
- Difficulty understanding what makes an interpreter “qualified”
- Provider contracts with interpreter service agencies that use only their contracted interpreters (limits availability and quality)
- Having to run the issue up the chain of command, delaying resolution
- “Cold calls” to offer training > resistance

When Advocacy Fails

- If NC DHHS agency/Medicaid, escalate...
 - ADA Coordinators
- Refer to:
 - Disability Rights NC
 - NC Attorney General's Office
 - US DOJ