

February 3, 2011

To Montana Hearing Society
Montana State Board of Hearing Aid Dispensers

A couple of things I have learned all too well during my experience as an IHS Territorial Governor over 8 states is that; Education does not ensure nor guarantee ethical practice. Example: In the past few years I have seen a decrease in turf battles between Audiologists and Hearing Instrument Specialists. This happens simply because of the fact that each discipline has been faced with their own battles with rogue or dishonest professionals within their ranks. Neither hearing instrument dispensing profession is exempt from those who which to focus on taking all they can at the expense of the hearing impaired.

Additionally, the states I represent which require the same demonstration of knowledge for licensure for the fitting, maintaining and programming of hearing instruments has not proven to be more complete or consistent from either discipline of hearing professional as exhibited by written and/or practical licensing exams. Pass and fail ratios for Hearing Instrument Specialists and Audiologists are very even. The argument of formal education does not hold up under the scrutiny of ethical or best practice standards.

These facts alone should require continued equal licensure standards for all professionals who dispense hearing instruments.

Bruce V. Sharp, BC-HIS, ACA
IHS Territorial Governor

Owner, Sharp Hearing Systems

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give."
Winston Churchill