

International Hearing Society
Position Statement Regarding the use of the Professional/Occupational Title
“Hearing Aid Specialist” in the United States

The hearing aid dispensing profession has evolved over many decades and through this process there have been many titles describing the professional who performs the service of improving hearing and understanding results through properly fitted hearing aids. These include “Hearing Aid Dealer”, “Hearing Aid Fitter”, “Hearing Instrument Specialist”, “Hearing Aid Specialist”, and “Hearing Instrument Practitioner” to name a few. Given the advances in technology and the expanding scope of the hearing aid professional’s duties through national and state statutes as well as the growing skills required to meet the needs of those with hearing loss through hearing aids, it is now time to focus on the use of one title which is clear, consistent and comprehensive in its scope. By taking this action, this will further reduce confusion among consumers, policymakers, payers, and third party administrators.

It is the International Hearing Society’s position the title “Hearing Aid Specialist” is the best description when referring to our profession. This recommendation is further reinforced by the United States federal government Standard Occupational Code, which classifies “Hearing Aid Specialists” as a detailed occupation, 29-2092, under the Major Group Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations.

IHS encourages all government entities to revise their laws/regulations when possible to reference professionals engaged in hearing aid dispensing as “Hearing Aid Specialists.” Taking this action will create uniformity from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and within the profession, as well as ensure consistency between federal laws and regulations, and local and state laws, including those related to insurance coverage. Specifically, the 2010 U.S. Standard Occupational Code states that Hearing Aid Specialists, “Select and fit hearing aids for customers. Administer and interpret tests of hearing. Assess hearing instrument efficacy. Take ear impressions, and prepare, design, and modify ear molds.”

To reiterate; IHS encourages the immediate and ongoing use of the term “Hearing Aid Specialist”. IHS is committed to using this consistent language when describing the modern hearing aid professional. IHS welcomes your enthusiastic support and immediate cooperation.

Approved by the Board of Governors on April 26, 2013.