

# Threading the Access Needle:

Supporting Disability  
Inclusion in Professional  
Programs





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CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

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# In-depth Understanding of Program Competencies



- Be Curious!
- Ask program administration to show their curriculum so it is not hidden
- Develop a deep familiarity with curriculum!
- Read the handbooks, invite conversations with program staff and faculty to understand the program specifics

# Professionalism Norms

- Educate the educators that disability-related exacerbations are not unprofessional; no-call, no-show is unprofessional
- Give students feedback along the way, providing opportunities for learning (students do not have to enter the program on day one knowing everything; they are learning to and becoming these professionals)
- DRPs should be familiar with program technical standards and professionalism expectations so they can assist the program in ruling out the need for accommodations/different accommodations, or other student affairs support mechanisms *before* moving to professionalism intervention/issue



# Licensure Requirements



These requirements are often used to deny accommodations in clinical/practical settings (important for DRPs to be knowledgeable about the requirements)

Make it Make Sense:

- Write accommodation letters that reflect a knowledge of understanding the context of different programs
- Invite your professional programs to make their materials make sense - no need to have military like fitness forms with outdated language for programs in which those are not relevant issues for students of
- Identify legacy documents - if there are outdated policies or syllabi students have access to update it!
- If we read a program handbook and something is confusing, students will also probably find it confusing!

# High stakes relationships between students and their evaluators

- Make rapport building and communication a priority when working with programs - this is important, no matter what stage in your DS career
- Shift the lens: When determining accommodations in a professional school (clinical accommodations, student teaching, internships, experiential learning) always apply the same framework (functional limitations, essential requirements) and remember our responsibility is the same
- Interactive process now includes student-DRP-program and site leadership(access is a shared responsibility!)
- Promote a sense of belonging for disabled learners among professional program educators



# Case Studies

- When do you actually need to record? (USF PsyD program)
- MSW program and communication protocols (Danny); essential guidelines and principles
- Advanced notice for case presentations
- Addressing the cold-call
- ASL interpreters in clinical settings (USF)
- ASL interpreters in Legal Externship settings (USF)



# Guardrails and Lessons Learned

- “Never go it alone” : The importance of boundaries and fostering a shared responsibility mindset among stakeholders
- Rely on each other as advanced disability service practitioners to be a network of trusted thought partners, and how we can also leverage referencing our non-DS colleagues to one another, for example building connections among faculty leadership for institution-to-institution support.





## Resources

**AHEAD Health Science Knowledge and Practice Community** - <https://www.ahead.org/about-ahead/about-overview/knowledge-and-practice-communities/health-science-kpc>

**Access in Medicine (AIM)** - <https://www.docswithdisabilities.org/aim>

**Access in Nursing (AIN)** - <https://www.docswithdisabilities.org/ain>

**Docs with Disabilities Initiative(Check out the podcast!)** - <https://www.docswithdisabilities.org/>

**Equal Access for Students with Disabilities: *A Guide for Health Science and Professional Education* (free download!)** - <https://www.docswithdisabilities.org/equal-access-guide>

**DRP academy (20 month program to develop expertise in medical education)** - <https://www.docswithdisabilities.org/drp-academy>

**Exceptional Nurse** - <https://www.exceptionalnurse.com/>

**JAN Job Accommodations Network** - <https://askjan.org>

**Associations of Medical Professionals with Hearing Loss – AMPHL.org**

# Session Evaluation



[tinyurl.com/AHEADFeedback](https://tinyurl.com/AHEADFeedback)

Your feedback helps shape future programming.

Thank you for attending!