WSR 25-12-078
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
(Board of Hearing and Speech)
[Filed June 2, 2025, 7:06 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: Prescription hearing aids; requirements for initial fitting and hearing tests. The board of hearing and speech (board) is considering amendments to WAC 246-828-025, 246-828-090, 246-828-095, 246-828-100, 246-828-320, 246-828-330, and other sections, including potentially creating new sections in chapter 246-828 WAC related to prescription hearing aids and hearing test requirements. The board is considering addressing telepractice for initial fittings of hearing aids and considering how recent the hearing test must be when fitting prescription hearing aids.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 18.35.161.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: The board is interested in exploring telepractice and its implications for initial fitting of prescription hearing aids. Specific questions regarding physical examination, fit validation, and verification of device efficacy are of interest to the board when initial fittings are completed virtually. The board may amend initial hearing aid fitting requirements to ensure that ear health, device comfort, and optimal amplification are effectively assessed.

The board is also considering requiring that hearing tests for prescription hearing aid fittings should be no older than six months. Amending this time frame requirement to extend to all hearing aid fittings could enhance patient outcomes and ensure that clinicians have up-to-date hearing data for accurate fittings.

Process for Developing New Rule: Collaborative rule making.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting Kim-Boi Shadduck, Program Manager, P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-2912, TTY 711, email kimboi.shadduck@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Interested parties can participate in drafting the proposed rules. The board will be conducting rules workshops with the interested parties and subject matter experts. The board will use the GovDelivery board of hearing and speech list to inform interested parties of opportunities to provide input on proposed rule language. To receive notices, please go to https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOH/subscriber/new. After signing in, please click open the box labeled "Health Systems Quality Assurance." Next, click open the box labeled "Health Professions" and then check "Board of Hearing and Speech." You may also check the box next to one or more of the other professions or facilities listed to receive information related that specific topic.

May 2, 2025
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