Top Ten Accomplishments and Future Plans
Top Ten Initiatives

- Unique / Timely
- There are more but we will focus on these 10 initiatives today
- Needed *right now* to advance cochlear implantation in US
- Issues we think ACI Alliance can impact
- We welcome your thoughts and involvement
#1 Website Enhancement

- Growth of website as an information resource
- 48% increase in traffic—most from Google or other search engines
- Over 70% website traffic is “organic” (from Search)
- Key pages
  - CI2019 + Future conferences
  - Find a Cochlear Implant Clinic (aka the yellow map)
  - Steps to a CI
  - Adult Candidacy + Rehab for Adults
  - Insurance
  - Single-Sided Deafness

- **Top positions:** insurance, steps, outcomes adults/children, candidacy, older adults, listening fatigue, advances
Website Enhancement (continued)

- Continue to add content
- New videos to supplement content
- Focus on those outside CI seeking information
  - Insurance (Donna Sorkin MA)
  - Adult Candidacy AuD (Meredith Holcomb)
  - Facilitating Listening and Spoken Language in Children (Amy McConkey Robbins MA, LSLS Cert AVT)
  - Surgery (Oliver Adunka MD)
New Video on Adult Candidacy
#2: 101 Organizational Members: Why does that matter?
#3 Expansion of State Champion Network

- State Level Efforts Increasingly Important
- 42 states (including DC) with 101 Champs
- Led by Nichole Westin
- Addressing state and national issues
  - Parent Choice
  - Medicaid Concerns
  - State CMV screening laws
  - Veterans access to CI
Meetings in DC last October with CMS and Congressional staff
Follow-Up continues
Key Issues
- Equipment replacement and processor upgrades
- Very low reimbursement
- Move to greater use of MCOs creates access concerns
- Caps on therapy (initially)—addressed when noted to state Medicaid

CMS staff open to discussing specific state issues during reviews
#5 Greater involvement/recognition of CI in Hearing & General Disability Community

- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Alliance
- ITEM Coalition + Habilitation Coalition
- Friends of the Congressional Hearing Health Caucus
- Outreach to non-CI audiologists with AudiologyOnline and American Academy of Audiology
- Participation in consumer/parent conference/events
  - Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)

Recipient Richard Reed at RI Commission f/t Deaf & HoH
#6 Primary Care Connections: Referral Tool

Available on website under Cochlear Implants/Clinical Guidance

**Adult Candidacy for Cochlear Implantation: Clinical Guidance**

Hearing aids provide important benefit for the majority of people with hearing loss. Cochlear implants provide meaningful access to sound for those with more severe hearing loss. Only 5% of US adults who could benefit from CIs have them. The average primary care medical practice includes 8 adult patients who would benefit from a cochlear implant.

**Background**
- Adults who could benefit from CIs typically do not know they are candidates nor what the expected outcomes are.
- Age is not a contraindication for CI in otherwise healthy people.
- Hearing loss is often progressive.
- Hearing acuity declines may be due to noise exposure, genetics, disease, trauma, or ototoxic medications.

**Impacts of Untreated Hearing Loss**
- Impairs communication at work, in social settings, and with family.
- Interferes with medical treatment and in carrying out activities of daily living.
- Associated with social isolation, depression, all-cause dementia, and declines in mental flexibility in older adults.
Cochlear implants have evolved: Which patients in your practice are now candidates?

- Will continue w/ contact to AAFP at state level
- Try for Nurses, Internal Medicine, Pediatricians
- We can help if you want to present at state conferences
#7 Clinical Practice Guidelines

- Two working groups assembled and working on best practices in cochlear implant candidacy evaluation and provision for:
  - Pediatric and Adult populations
  - What ACI Alliance believes is BEST PRACTICE
- Designed to summarize where we are in the field rather than what FDA guidelines indicate
- Once ready, papers will be available for comment from membership ➔ then adopted by the Board
#8 Parent Choice Initiative

- Urged by State Champions to oppose LEAD-K Processes
- Simplistic point in time evaluations of “language acquisition”
- Initiated collaborative effort with major organizations
- Have defeated (or improved) new LEAD-K initiatives this year
Position Paper:
Supporting Parent Choice for Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

ABOUT US
The American Cochlear Implant Alliance (ACI Alliance) is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to advance the gift of hearing provided by cochlear implants through research, advocacy and awareness. Members include those who provide the intervention (e.g., ENT surgeons, audiologists, speech-language pathologists), other professionals on implant teams (e.g., psychologists, social workers), teachers and therapists in educational settings, researchers in clinical and academic settings, parents of children using cochlear implants and other hearing assistive technologies, adult recipients, and other advocates. For more information: [www.acialliance.org](http://www.acialliance.org)

Widespread early identification of hearing loss and provision of advanced hearing technology—hearing aids, cochlear implants, and other 21st century auditory technologies—affords children with all levels of hearing loss the opportunity to function in whatever communication model families wish to pursue while being supported by their chosen medical, language development and educational teams. A body of federal law emphasizes a family’s right to pursue a communication program that respects the unique needs of their child through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, P.L. 101-46) and the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Act of 2017 (H.R. 1539, S. 652).

American Cochlear Implant Alliance opposes state LEAD-K laws that may: