A Message from the Chair

Dear Affiliates,

The American Board of Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders (AB-SSD) has enjoyed a productive and innovative year in 2022! This year was one of introspection for the board, stepping back to examine the rich legacy and foundation upon which the AB-SSD was built. Our mission must be our guide as we seek to improve our service to consumers, qualified applicants, and existing affiliates. It is a time-honored tradition for many of you to practice your own annual introspection and establish new year’s resolutions for self-improvement. The AB-SSD has a similar ritual, creating goals to be targeted by each of our committees throughout the year.

In 2022, we welcomed 22 new certified swallowing specialists to our affiliate base, now totaling 377 speech language pathologists. The AB-SSD has a well-established rigorous and systematic process for application review. Our continuing education requirements continue to adapt, now
allowing CE credits from a combination of in-person and/or virtual events (state, regional or national meetings where ASHA or CME credits are awarded). In addition, our Test Committee has updated terminology to align with IDDSI standards. Test questions are analyzed for fairness and clarity on a yearly basis. For those seeking a volunteer opportunity with the AB-SSD, the test committee can be a great chance to contribute. We are especially seeking pediatric expertise to craft questions with a focus on infants and early swallowing development.

Our mission includes a commitment to offering advanced level continuing education on swallowing and swallowing disorders across the lifespan, to serve SLP’s with and without specialty certification. In 2022, our committee delivered five new courses that can be accessed on the AB-SSD website:

· How they do it: Experiences of dysphagia clinicians and researchers in leadership roles

· Neurodegenerative Conditions - Parkinson's Disease and Atypical Parkinsonism

· Craniofacial Disorders & Feeding-Swallowing: A Collaborative Approach Across the Continuum of Care

· Pediatric Gastrointestinal Disorders: Feeding-Swallowing Difficulties and Management

· Ethical and Critical Decisions: The Why/When to Intubate, Extubate, place a Tracheostomy and start Oral Intake in Medically Fragile Patients

Last year also brought about a commitment to low- or no cost educational opportunities, recognizing the importance of high-quality dysphagia CE for clinicians in all settings, regardless of budget or benefits. CE courses offered on the website range in cost from $19-$50 per course dependent on number of CE hours credited.

Our partnership with Bracco Diagnostics was expanded in 2022 with a generous grant allowing Meet the Masters to be offered for continuing education credit at no cost to participants. Below are the current CE offerings within the Bracco Meet the Masters CE program.

· 2022 MTM - From Conflict to Collaborations: Facilitating Conversation with Radiologists during MBSS

· Diagnosis & Management of Swallowing Physiology: Standardized contrast, MBS-ImP, & IDDSI framework

· 2021 MTM - From Physiology to Food: Using the VFSS to Inform Dietary Recommendations Across the Lifespan

· 2020 MTM - COVID, It's Hard to Swallow: Managing Patients with Dysphagia during the Pandemic

· 2019 MTM - From Fluoro to Flourish: Managing the Patient Across the Continuum of Care

· 2018 MTM - Sharing Difficult News: What Needs to be Said and Heard About Dysphagia
Participation in our CE program is greatly appreciated and supports future course development! Please spread the word to those non-affiliates who are seeking advanced on-line continuing education options.

In 2023, we anticipate an AB-SSD invited course at ASHA Convention on pediatric dysphagia. We are targeting four more CE courses to be developed for the AB-SSD CE program, two on pediatrics and two on adults. And we cherish the opportunity to partner once again with Bracco Diagnostics for Meet the Masters 2023.

I am quite convinced that the members of our Public Relations and Communications committee never sleep! This highly creative and industrious committee has kept our social media channels abuzz with information and events. This last year brought the GIANT task of designing our new AB-SSD website. Barring delays in the final stages of the build, we look forward to a much improved website interface. While coordinating this herculean task, the committee also developed a Facebook Live event with Dr. Bonnie Martin-Harris. Finally, in anticipation of needing media to feature on our new website, they initiated an affiliate outreach to gather stories of successful application and certification journeys to help inform and inspire hopeful applicants. We look forward to a new look to our website in 2023!

Finally, I would like to highlight two critical initiatives that will drive our program development in 2023.

1. Mentorship initiative: The AB-SSD has recognized and examined a concerning gap between our applications processes and our mentorship service to aspiring applicants. Our mentors are affiliates who generously volunteer their time to guide prospective applicants through the process of grooming toward application. The board will be reorganizing mentor training and improving transparency in certification requirements. It is our mission that all qualified speech pathologists can visualize and follow the required steps to becoming a certified swallowing specialist.

2. Membership initiative: The AB-SSD has received many inquiries over the years about whether BCS-S certification or renewal can be more inclusive of SLP’s in administrative and academic roles. We have committed to closer examination of how certification may be possible in both of these realms.

With each year we celebrate new additions to the board, while at the same time must extend our gratitude to those who have completed their service. In January 2023, we welcome Karen Sheffler as our newest board member. Gina Palma completed her term in December 2022, we extend our gratitude to Gina for her service to the AB-SSD! Joe Murray, AB-SSD historian submitted his resignation in late 2022. Joe’s knowledge of the foundations of the AB-SSD have served as a valuable resource in guiding the board year after year. We are so grateful for your service to the AB-SSD! And finally, Phil Hartzler submitted his resignation as Consumer Board Member in December 2022. The board has benefitted from Phil’s vision for the Consumer Board Member role, and we will move forward with several of his valuable ideas for incorporating our Consumer member more actively.

Molly A. Knigge, AB-SSD Chair
New Continuing Education Course Alert

Jump into 2023 with motivation from leaders in the field of dysphagia! Gather some sage advice from leaders in swallowing and swallowing disorders across many settings. In this inspirational panel presentation, dysphagia experts with different training levels working in a variety of settings will discuss how they got involved in leadership within the field. Practical suggestions will be proposed for those interested in finding ways to step into leadership roles.

Visit https://www.swallowingdisorders.org/page/courses to register!

New BCS-S Affiliate Provides 5 Tips: How to Obtain Your Board Certification
by Aaron Padilla, MS, CCC-SLP, BCS-S

1. Define your inspiration
There is a significant need for clinicians who have expertise in dysphagia. My desire to provide patients with thoughtful clinical care is driven by the reality that dysphagia is linked to increased morbidity and mortality. It is the weight of these risks that inspired me to become board certified and delve deeper into understanding clinical care through implementation science. As the American Board of Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders exists to safeguard and advance the care of individuals with feeding and swallowing disorders across the lifespan, I was inspired to apply to become an affiliate.

2. Reach out to mentors
Early in my scholastic journey, I was mentored by my now current research partner Phyllis M. Palmer, Ph.D. It was through this experience that I found a desire for implementation science. By obtaining the BCS-S credential, my search for evidence-based approaches continues in order to bridge the gap between clinical care and the lab as a clinician researcher.

As a Hispanic clinician, practicing in a majority-minority state, I sought certification, to give back to my community. It was through this desire, that Luis F. Riquelme, Ph.D., BCS-S, F-ASHA, served as a mentor for me. The molding that Dr. Riquelme provided has helped me to grow in numerous ways, and that mentorship was one of the most joyous parts of the board application process. I am grateful for him paving the way.

3. Tips on gathering CEUs
The CEUs offered by the American Board of Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders and the Dysphagia Research Society (especially the monthly webinars through the DRS Institute for Education/DRSIE) were extremely helpful in identifying clinically relevant courses to improve patient care. Additionally, the ASHA Learning Pass had an extensive catalog that includes dysphagia courses.
4. **Show how you excel in the field**
Implementing the most up-to-date clinical research into daily practice is a privilege. I am extremely grateful to be a part of the Swallowing Disorders Lab at the University of New Mexico (UNM) under the direction of Phyllis M. Palmer, Ph.D. Through this unique experience, I have had the privilege and opportunity to investigate current clinically relevant questions. We synthesize data from the current evidence base in the literature and quickly translate findings into clinical practice. Further, as an acute care speech pathologist at a large multi-site healthcare system, Presbyterian Healthcare Services (Rust Medical Center), I feel extremely fortunate to have the opportunity to share these findings with clinicians across the institution.

Highlighting implementation, below are three recent examples of how the research from the UNM Swallow Disorders Lab impacted my clinical practice.

- First, a recent survey of clinicians across New Mexico found videofluoroscopy rate of acquisition of 4 frames per second for adult and pediatric patients (Tibbetts & Palmer, 2020). This inspired us to investigate the impact of frame rate on measures of safety, efficiency, and kinematics for adult and pediatric patients (Palmer, Padilla, Winter, Murray, & Martinez-Fisher 2022).

- Second, to assist clinicians in making evidence-based clinical decision we created the **BOLUS** framework (Palmer & Padilla, 2021, Palmer & Padilla, 2022a, Palmer & Padilla 2022b, Padilla, Palmer, Ray & Graves 2022c), a framework that provides the dysphagia clinician with evidence-based methods for assessing the whole person who has dysphagia, looking beyond the bolus and aspiration.

- Third, in order to create improved access to videofluoroscopy for dysphagia research, student clinicians, and providers, we created the **DysphagiaBank** (Palmer, Padilla, MacWhinney, et al., 2022) in collaboration with **Talkbank**.

5. **Encouragement to prepare for the exam**
The examination guide provided by AB-SSD and the graduate school curriculum on the ASHA website were excellent starting points. Attending CEUs provided by the Dysphagia Research Society and the AB-SSD assisted with keeping the most current data at the top of my mind. The examination was consistent with what I have learned from years of daily clinical practice.
Additionally, brushing up on neuroanatomy was helpful.

In closing, I am grateful for the privilege of being an affiliate of the American Board of Swallowing and Swallowing Disorders. I am thankful to all of the dysphagia clinicians who have paved the way before me, mentored me, and have helped me grow, especially Drs. Palmer and Riquelme. I feel privileged to be a part of the care of those living with dysphagia. I look forward to being a part of the group who advances the science of swallowing and swallowing disorders, all the while inspiring the next generation of dysphagia clinicians for a lifetime.

**References:**

**B-O-L-U-S presentation:**
Part 1 [https://youtu.be/IVq0iQJrbp4](https://youtu.be/IVq0iQJrbp4)
Part 2 [https://youtu.be/BzisjH7xqi8](https://youtu.be/BzisjH7xqi8)
Part 3
https://youtu.be/C0lUHjSJ1uw


**Congratulations to Our New Affiliates**
Glory Dhanaraj
Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital
Mentor: LaShonda Allen

Aaron Padilla
Presbyterian Healthcare Services
Mentor: Luis Riquelme

Stephanie Dodson Mataya
BayCare Health System

Sarah Cutshall
Barnes-Jewish West County Hospital
Mentor: Heather Lazarides

Rejane Wittman
UC Davis Medical Center
Mentor: Cheryl Wagoner
February 13th-19th, 2023 is Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy Awareness Week

Duchenne muscular dystrophy is a rare inherited myogenic disorder that affects male patients. Respiratory muscle weakness may result in pneumonia, acute respiratory failure and necessitate the need for mechanical ventilation. Furthermore, swallowing dysfunction can result in malnutrition and gastrostomy tube dependence. Patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy and swallowing impairments are more likely to have respiratory morbidity than patients without swallowing dysfunction. A multidisciplinary approach focusing on nutrition, swallowing function and pulmonary health is necessary for optimal management of patients with Duchenne muscular dystrophy (1).


March 13th-19th, 2023 is Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week

Multiple sclerosis affects 2.2 million people worldwide. As a chronic, demyelinating and inflammatory disease of the central nervous system, multiple sclerosis can result in swallowing difficulties that lead to aspiration, malnutrition, dehydration and airway obstruction. While the cause of multiple sclerosis is not completely known, lesions in the corticobulbar tracts, paresis of the cranial nerves and disorders of the cerebellum and brainstem are observed. Patients with multiple sclerosis may experience difficulties swallowing in either or all phases of the swallow. Both patient-reported outcome measures and objective clinical assessments are necessary in identifying swallowing impairments and development of a plan of care (1).