

State Recognition of MT-BC Own It!

You may be sitting at home or at work, looking at the computer screen right now and wondering, ***“Why in the world does the ‘AMTA/CBMT State Recognition Operational Plan’ matter to me or need my input? And even if I could help, I already have too much to do!”***

Simple. This plan helps us ensure that consumers have access to music therapy services by personnel who are trained, equipped, held to high standards of ethics and professional practice, and demonstrate competency through board certification and continuing education activity. As it relates directly to you – this plan helps to insure you have a job.

You can view the entire plan originally published in AMTA’s Music therapy Matters, Vol. 8, No.2. (<http://www.musictherapy.org/membersonly/index.html>).

But in a nutshell, here is what will happen when a state participates in the plan -

- 1) A state task force will be formed of about 5 people who represent experience working with different populations.
- 2) They will review the state’s regulations and see where the MT-BC may be included.
- 3) After thorough review, efforts will be made to include the MT-BC where identified.

This is where you come in. It often takes someone, who knows someone, who knows someone. You get the idea. *It will take grassroots efforts to make it happen.* Even if you can’t devote the time to the task force, you can help!

- 1) You may have unique experience with your population, have contact, know the regulations and be able to be a “consultant” to the task force. Let your state government relations representative or myself know.
- 2) This is the most important – know the name of your State Senator and Representative. Get to know what they are interested in, and if it is something that music therapy may plug into (i.e., your congressman/woman is interested in elder care). Contact them, and introduce music therapy as a valuable service if that is also your area of expertise. You can find your State and Federal legislators at www.vote-smart.org/index.htm. If you don’t know what to say or how to write a letter, please visit the following website for suggestions and sample text, remembering you are focusing on state (not federal) officials <http://www.familiesusa.org/resources/tools-for-advocates/tips/index.html>
- 3) Keep me posted. Make sure if you send something out, you’ve had someone else proof it, and send me and/or Judy Simpson at national office a copy. Contacts made now will help us when we are ready to move forward with potential requests for legislative action.

It may seem scary, but our legislators are here for us. Even if you didn’t vote for them, you have the potential to. And they are people. They have families, stress and concerns often very similar to your own. Their job is to serve their communities/districts and they appreciate the opportunity to learn about their constituents. You can be the expert to educate them about the importance of music therapy for residents in their districts.

For more information, or to become more involved in this exciting state recognition activity, please contact Rachel Firchau, WRAMTA, Government Relations Representative at rachelmusictherapy@yahoo.com.