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3 Title: Use Term "Deaf and Hard of Hearing" in lieu of "Hearing Impaired"

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5 Introduced by: Laura Carravallah, MD

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7 Original Authors: Irene Lieu and Laura Carravallah, MD

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9 Referred To:

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11 House Action:

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14 Whereas, 7.4 percent of the population in Michigan identify as deaf, deafblind, or hard of  
15 hearing, representing a growing community that has been drastically underestimated in the state  
16 census, and

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18 Whereas, the terms deaf and hard of hearing not only describe individuals with the  
19 audiological condition of not hearing or mild-to-moderate hearing loss, but more importantly  
20 embody the knowledge, beliefs, identity and cultural practices of deaf people, and

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22 Whereas, the term "impaired" is defined as "being in less than perfect or whole condition; as  
23 disabled or functionally defective," by Merriam-Webster, and

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25 Whereas, the term "hearing impaired" inherently demeans and labels patients as their  
26 disability, focuses on what they cannot do, and establishes "hearing" as the standard and anything  
27 different as less than or "impaired," and

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29 Whereas, the World Federation of the Deaf and National Association of the Deaf has taken  
30 a stance that the term "hearing impaired" is no longer accepted by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
31 community as they do not see themselves as "less" or "broken," and

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33 Whereas, fear, mistrust, and frustration toward health care providers are commonly  
34 experienced by deaf and hard of hearing individuals due to lack of provider knowledge regarding  
35 sociocultural aspects of deafness, and

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37 Whereas, other states (Utah, New Hampshire, New York, and Virginia) have adopted a more  
38 sensitive and accepted term "Deaf and Hard of Hearing" in lieu of "hearing impaired" in their state  
39 laws despite having a smaller deaf population compared to Michigan; therefore be it

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41 RESOLVED: That MSMS recommends that physicians adopt the term, "deaf and hard of  
42 hearing" and/or "persons with hearing loss" instead of "hearing impairment" in clinical settings; and  
43 be it further

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45 RESOLVED: That the Michigan Delegation to the American Medical Association (AMA) ask  
46 our AMA to recommend that physicians adopt the term "deaf and hard of hearing" and/or "persons  
47 with hearing loss" instead of "hearing impairment" in clinical settings.  
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49 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: Resolutions only requesting new or revised MSMS  
50 or AMA policy - \$500

**Relevant MSMS Policy:**

None

**Relevant AMA Policy:**

None

**Sources:**

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2. Community and Culture - Frequently Asked Questions. National Association of the Deaf - NAD. Accessed February 11, 2021. <https://www.nad.org/resources/american-sign-language/community-and-culture-frequently-asked-questions/>
3. Steinberg AG, Barnett S, Meador HE, Wiggins EA, Zazove P. Health care system accessibility: Experiences and perceptions of deaf people. J Gen Intern Med. 2006;21(3):260-266. doi:10.1111/j.1525-1497.2006.00340.x
4. Bennett R. Time for Change: Rethinking the Term "Hearing Impaired." The Hearing Journal. 2019;72(5):16. doi:10.1097/01.HJ.0000559500.67179.7d