


# ETHICAL ADVOCACY


Shelly Chabon, PhD, CCC-SLP  
 ASHA Fellow & 2011 President-Elect  
 Professor & Chair  
 Dept. of Speech & Hearing Sciences  
 Portland State University





## Session Goals

Make a case for viewing advocacy as a component of ethical clinical practice by

1. Defining the terms "ethics" and "advocacy"
2. Discussing how ethics and advocacy are linked
3. As advocates, clarifying our ethical responsibilities to clients, the public, those with communication disorders, and the professions
4. Provide examples of ethical questions that arise from these obligations
5. Applying a framework for addressing ethical questions about advocacy
6. Eat and Be Merry!




## Personal Story

The standard for *ethical clinical practice* has changed as our field has matured and expanded

To meet this new standard many SLPs and audiologists include advocacy among their professional services



## Advocacy

Action taken on behalf of someone else



"No matter what accomplishments you make, somebody helped you."  
 -Althea Gibson

## Advocacy

"To be an advocate and to engage in advocacy is to adopt a stance, advance a cause, and attempt to produce a result [on] behalf of an interest of a person, group, or cause."

- Elias S. Cohen (2004)



## Advocacy

Modes of advocacy can include

- various forms of mass communication
- political & community organizing, internet and mass-mail communications
- legislative lobbying
- publications in mass media, trade, and scholarly materials
- formal legal proceedings, representation of individuals & groups, and surrogate decision-making
- personal interactions

Cohen, E. (2004)

## Advocacy



Advocacy is not primarily about regulations or legislation but is about making a connection on a human level

## Ethics

- A branch of philosophy which involves the study of our actions, values and the rules of conduct by which we live
- Describes actions not people



(Scott, 1998)

## Ethics



"Ethics is NOT primarily concerned with getting people to do what they believe to be right, but rather with helping them to decide what is right."

- Jones, Sontag, Beckner, Morton, & Fogelin in Seymour, 2001

## Ethics & Advocacy: How are they linked?

### **ETHICAL (PRINCIPLED) ADVOCACY**

"An approach to advocacy in health and social care settings which lays down a structure for advocates to follow and clarifies their ethical obligations"

Bateman, N. (2000)

## Advocacy: Owing an "Ethical Obligation"

As advocates we:

- assume certain responsibilities/obligations
  - to our clients
  - to the public
  - to our profession
- owe a moral obligation to our beneficiaries, "whether or not [these] have been articulated or made known explicitly" (Cohen, E., 2004)



## Advocacy: Owing an "Ethical Obligation"

Moral obligations reflected in ethical principles:

- **Beneficence** (Principles of Ethics II)
- **Non-maleficence**
- **Autonomy** (Rules of Principle IV, Rules C, C, F, K, J)
- **Justice** (Principle I, Rules A, D, E, F, G; Principle III, Rules B & C)
  - distributive justice (i.e., just distribution of benefits & burdens)
  - fidelity (the keeping of promises)

(Cohen, 2004)

## Ethical Advocacy: Obligations to the *Public*

- Protect confidentiality (Principle I, Rules N & M)
- Stay informed (Principle II, Rule C)
  - on issues and processes
  - about particular positions and reasons to support or not support a decision
- Vow not to mislead (Principle III, Rules A, D, F & G)
- Practice within the appropriate scope of training (Principle II, Rules A & B)
- Avoid conflicts of interest (Principle III, Rule B)
- Promote public understanding of the professions and services available (Principle III, Rules F & G)

ASHA Code of Ethics (2010)

## Ethical Advocacy: Obligations to the *Public*

### CASE STUDY

## Ethical Advocacy: Obligations to Our *Clients*

Strive to be



REFLECTIVE



KNOWING



COMPETENT



OTHER FOCUSED



HONEST



SENSITIVE

Stewart (2006)

## Ethical Advocacy: Obligations to Our *Clients*

1. Act in the client's best interest (Principle I, Rule I)
2. Act in accordance with the client's wishes & instructions (Principle I, Rules H & P)
3. Keep the client properly informed (Principle I, Rule H)
4. Carry out instructions with diligence & competence (Principle I, Rule A)
5. Act impartially and offer frank, independent advice (Principle I, Rules C, H & J)
6. Maintain client confidentiality (Principle I, Rules M & N)

Bateman, N. (2000)

## Ethical Advocacy: Obligations to Our *Clients*

### CASE STUDY

## Ethical Advocacy: Obligations to *ASHA* & to other organizations

- To inform (Principle III, Rule F)
  - membership forums
  - InTouch
- To remain informed (Principle II, Rule C)
  - *ASHA Leader*
  - websites
- Vow not to mislead (Principle IV, Rule I)
- Show professional respect to colleagues and their work (Principle IV, Rules G, H & K)
- Accept obligations to each other (Principle IV, Rule A)

ASHA Code of Ethics (2010)

## Ethical Advocacy: Obligations to *ASHA* & to other organizations

### CASE STUDY

## ASHA Advocates for Members & Those We Serve

- ASHFoundation distribution of funds to support Audiology and SLP scientists & students
- Improved coverage of services
- Provided mentoring programs, funded projects through Multicultural Activities program, developed evidence maps/evidence-based systematic reviews
- Distributed info to media markets
- Published 200+ member-written articles
- Marketed member resumes
- Advanced state-level grassroots projects to improve health care coverage, Medicaid reimbursement, access to assistive technology, personnel shortages, caseloads & workloads, and salary supplements

## ASHA's Advocacy Grants

- Support projects that improve private health plans and Medicaid reimbursement for and coverage of speech-language pathology and audiology services
- KSHA's Impact
  - Award of a Reimbursement Grant will address statewide non-coverage of hearing aids and cochlear implants

## An Ethical Base for Advocacy

- Acting in the client's best interest is not as simple as it sounds
- By having a solid ethical base for advocacy, ethical dilemmas are minimized



## An Ethical Base for Advocacy

Acting in the client's best interests means that advocates should remember

- for whom they are acting
- the effects each course of action (especially those desired by the client) will have
  - physically
  - materially
  - psychologically

Ask: "What is the goal? Is there another/better course of action that will achieve the same result?"

(Bateman, N. (2000))

## An Ethical Base for Advocacy

- Consider all relevant facts, values and beliefs
- Consider different perspectives about the issue
- Identify all individuals who have an interest in the outcome



(Morris & Chabon, Rockhurst University, 2005)

## An Ethical Base for Advocacy

***"What possible courses of action are permissible, impermissible or necessary?"***

and

***"What are the effects (benefits and burdens) of each action?"***

(Chabon & Morris, 2006)

**Obligatory – must always be done, regardless of the circumstances**

**Impermissible – must never be done, under any circumstance**

**Permissible – can either be done or, not done – it is good either way**

(Morris & Chabon, Rockhurst University, 2005)

## An Ethical Base for Advocacy

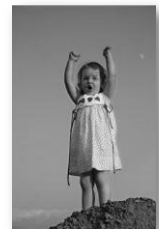


**Each conflict is evaluated in consideration of the ASHA Code of Ethics and of the ethical principles that form the philosophical basis of the Code.**

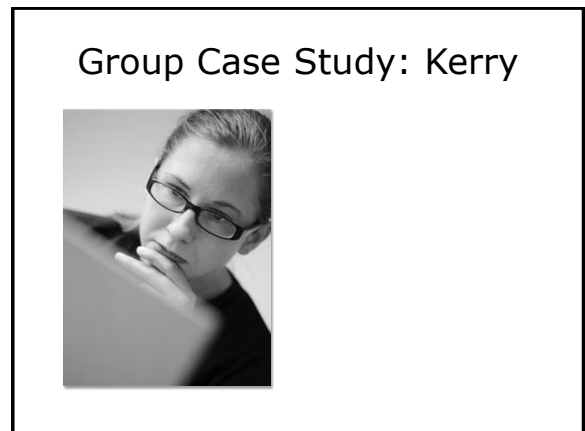
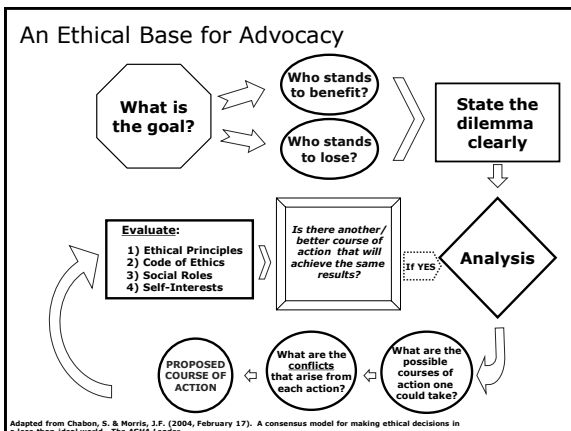
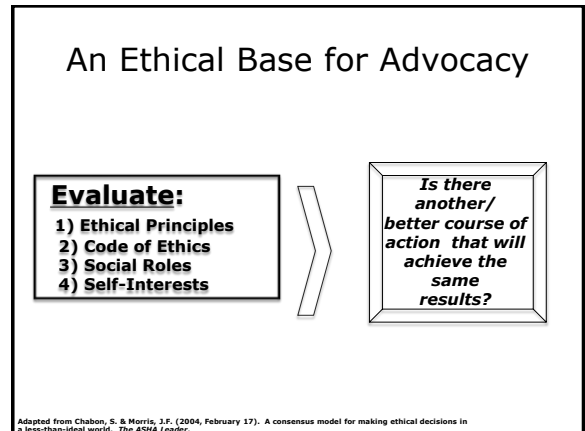
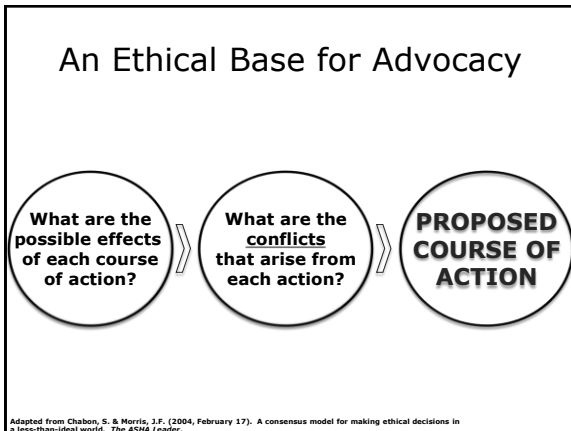
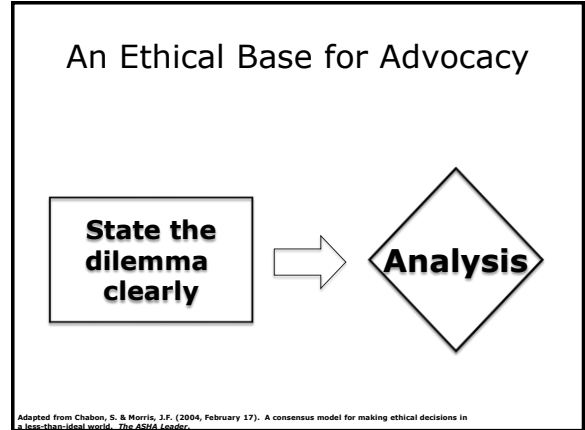
(Chabon & Morris, 2006)

## An Ethical Base for Advocacy

**The final step – has consensus been reached?**



(Chabon & Morris, 2006)



## Ethics & Advocacy: Where to Look for Help

- ASHA
  - Director of Ethics:  
Heather Bupp-Habuda, Esq.: [hbupp@asha.org](mailto:hbupp@asha.org)
- State licensure boards
- Colleagues
- Employers
- Unions

