This Issues in Ethics statement is a revision of *Supervision of Student Clinicians* (2003). The Board of Ethics reviews Issues in Ethics statements periodically to ensure that they meet the needs of the professions and are consistent with ASHA policies.

From time to time, the Board of Ethics determines that members and certificate holders can benefit from additional analysis and instruction concerning a specific issue of ethical conduct. Issues in Ethics statements are intended to heighten sensitivity and increase awareness. They are illustrative of the Code of Ethics and intended to promote thoughtful consideration of ethical issues. They may assist members and certificate holders in engaging in self-guided ethical decision-making. These statements do not absolutely prohibit or require specified activity. The facts and circumstances surrounding a matter of concern will determine whether the activity is ethical.

This Issues in Ethics statement is presented for the guidance of American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) members and certificate holders in matters relating to supervision of students engaged in the provision of clinical services during practicum experiences. ASHA members and certificate holders are employed in a variety of work settings and are required by their employers, by their states, and by governmental agencies, as well as by ASHA, to comply with prescribed personnel standards related to certification and licensure. Although the specific standards of these groups can and do differ, under the Code of Ethics, members and certificate holders delivering or supervising clinical services must hold ASHA certification in the area of their clinical or supervisory work regardless of the work setting, state, or jurisdiction in which they are employed. Further, ASHA-certified individuals engaged in supervision of student clinicians are bound to honor their responsibility to hold paramount the welfare of persons they serve professionally and to ensure that services are provided competently by students under their supervision.

The Board of Ethics cites and interprets the following sections of the Code of Ethics (2010) that pertain to the supervision of student clinicians:

- **Principle of Ethics I:** Individuals shall honor their responsibility to hold paramount the welfare of persons they serve professionally or who are participants in research and scholarly activities and they shall treat animals involved in research in a humane manner.
- **Principle of Ethics I, Rule A:** Individuals shall provide all services competently.
- **Principle of Ethics I, Rule D:** Individuals shall not misrepresent the credentials of assistants, technicians, support personnel, students, Clinical Fellows, or any others under their supervision, and they shall inform those they serve professionally of the name and professional credentials of persons providing services.
- **Principle of Ethics I, Rule G:** Individuals who hold the Certificates of Clinical Competence may delegate tasks related to provision of clinical services that require the unique skills, knowledge, and judgment that are within the scope
of their profession to students only if those services are appropriately supervised. The responsibility for client welfare remains with the certified individual.

- **Principle of Ethics II, Rule A:** Individuals shall engage in the provision of clinical services only when they hold the appropriate Certificate of Clinical Competence or when they are in the certification process and are supervised by an individual who holds the appropriate Certificate of Clinical Competence.

- **Principle of Ethics II, Rule B:** Individuals shall engage in only those aspects of the professions that are within the scope of their professional practice and competence, considering their level of education, training, and experience.

- **Principle of Ethics IV, Rule B:** Individuals shall prohibit anyone under their supervision from engaging in any practice that violates the Code of Ethics.

ASHA-certified individuals who supervise students cannot delegate the responsibility for clinical decision making and management to the student. The legal and ethical responsibility for persons served remains with the certified individual. However, the student can, as part of the educational process, make client management recommendations and decisions pending review and approval by the supervisor. Further, the supervisor must inform the client or client’s family of the qualifications and credentials of the student supervisee involved in the provision of clinical services.

All supervised clinical activities provided by the student must fall within the scope of practice for the specific profession to count toward the student’s certification. The supervisor must achieve and maintain competency in supervisory practice as well as in the disability areas for which supervision is provided. The amount of supervision provided by the ASHA-certified supervisor must be commensurate with the student's knowledge, experience, and competence to ensure that the welfare of the client is protected. The supervisor must also ensure that the student supervisee maintains confidentiality of client information and documents client records in an accurate and timely manner.

Discrepancies may exist among state requirements for supervision required for teacher certification in speech-language pathology and audiology, state licensure in the professions of speech-language pathology and/or audiology, and ASHA certification standards. In states where credential requirements or state licensure requirements differ from ASHA certification standards, supervised clinical experiences (including student practica for teacher licensing) will count toward or may be applied toward ASHA certification (CCC) requirements only if those practicum hours have been supervised by ASHA-certified personnel.

**Guidance**

ASHA-certified individuals who supervise students should possess or seek training in supervisory practice and provide supervision only in practice areas for which they possess the appropriate knowledge and skills. The supervisor must oversee the clinical activities and make or approve all clinical decisions to ensure that the welfare of the client is protected. The supervisor should inform the client or the client's family about the supervisory relationship and the qualifications of the student supervisee.
The supervisor must provide no less than the level of supervision that is outlined in the current certification standards and increase supervision if needed based on the student's knowledge, experience, and competence. The supervisor should document the amount of direct and indirect supervision provided, and design and implement procedures that will protect client confidentiality for services provided by students under supervision.

ASHA members and certificate holders engaged in the preparation, placement, and supervision of student clinicians must make reasonable efforts to ensure that direct practicum supervision is provided by professionals holding the appropriate CCC. They must inform students who engage in student practica for teacher licensing, or other clinical practica under a non-ASHA-certified supervisor that these experiences cannot be applied to ASHA certification. ASHA-certified personnel cannot sign for clinical practicum experiences that were actually supervised by non-ASHA-certified individuals. It is unethical for certificate holders to approve or sign for clinical hours for which they did not provide supervision.