

Sampling compliance with LA Bulletin 1508 regulations regarding completion of vision & hearing screenings and evaluations for students referred to the LA DeafBlind Project: A Quality Assurance Evaluation Pilot

Priya Balamurugan¹, Nicky Gillies², Rose Angelocci², and Michael Norman²

1. LSU Health Sciences Center, School of Medicine, 2. LSU Health Sciences, Human Development Center

Background

Vision and hearing differences can significantly challenge students in the classroom setting and can affect academic performance and social development.¹ All students, including those with hearing and vision differences, have the right to free appropriate public education. To provide appropriate education, it is essential that a student's educators have accurate information about the student's vision and hearing abilities. Only then is it possible to provide the student with necessary accommodations that give them a learning environment that is best suited to their needs and that gives them the best chance to succeed in school.

Louisiana's Bulletin 1508 provides guidance on how students are to be qualified for special education services. Among other required screenings, Bulletin 1508 requires that students being considered for special education receive vision and hearing screenings. The required vision screening should include tests for near and far visual acuity, color blindness and muscle balance.² The hearing screening is often done using pure tone testing and/or tympanography.^{2,3}

If the student is found to be at risk for vision or hearing loss during the screening procedure, they should receive further assessment such as an eye/vision examination or audiological testing. It is the responsibility of the local education agency (LEA) to ensure that vision and hearing screening, and necessary follow-up assessments, are conducted and that the results are reported in a multidisciplinary evaluation report. The information in the evaluation report should then be used to guide educational planning in the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

In this quality assurance project, we looked at past records of students currently on the Louisiana DeafBlind Registry, who are known to have atypical levels of hearing and vision, to see if they received the necessary screening and assessment for vision and hearing as required by Bulletin 1508 and to determine if the identified hearing and vision abilities were considered in the development of the students' IEPs.

Objective

Determine compliance of Louisiana public schools with Bulletin 1508 regulations (Title 28, Part C1. Bulletin 1508 Pupil Appraisal Handbook) for vision and hearing screening and evaluation

Methods

Data from seventy-six 1508 evaluations was collected including information regarding the initial vision and hearing screenings (conducted by the LEA) and follow-up assessments (completed by the LEA or community health care providers). IEPs that corresponded to the 1508 evaluations (N=51) were then reviewed to see if information about the student's vision and hearing profiles was reported and if the indicated auxiliary aids and services recommended were included in the IEP.

Was a vision/hearing screening conducted?

- Yes
- N/A: no screening; assessment was done directly
- No

Was a follow-up assessment performed?

- Yes, by school
- Yes, by outside professional
- Assessment not needed- student passed the vision or hearing screening
- No

Was the information about student's vision/hearing needs included in their IEP?

- Yes, in General Information about Student
- Yes, but somewhere else in the report
- No

Screenings

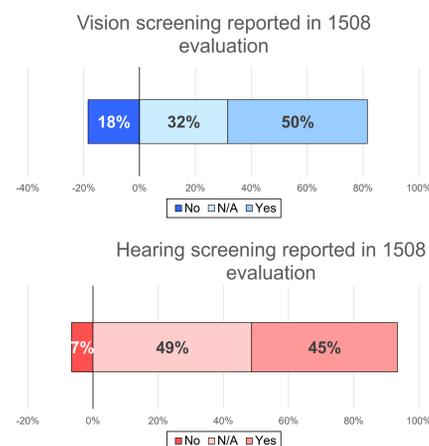


Figure 1: A total of seventy-six 1508 evaluations were reviewed to see if information about a vision or hearing screening completed within one year of the date of dissemination of the evaluation was present.

- **18% did not report vision screening**
- **7% did not report hearing screening**

Follow-up assessment

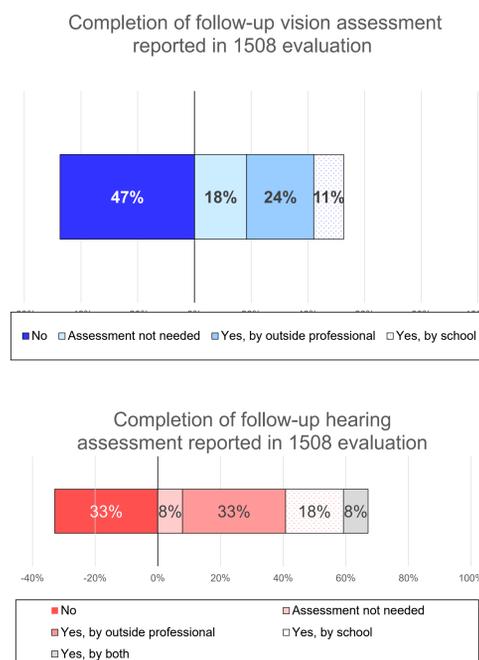


Figure 2: A total of seventy-six 1508 evaluations were reviewed for information about a follow-up vision and hearing assessment conducted within 1 year of the date of screening.

- **47% did not receive needed follow-up assessment for vision**
- **33% did not receive needed follow-up for hearing**

Inclusion in IEP

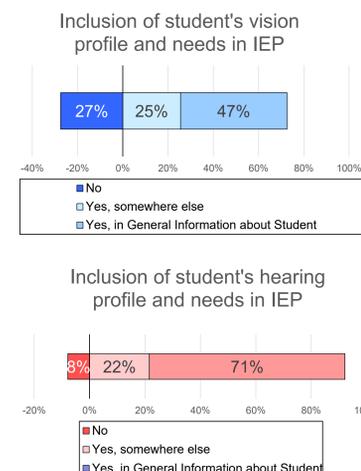


Figure 3: Of the seventy-six 1508 evaluations reviewed, fifty-one had an IEP corresponding with the 1508 evaluation. These data are based on the IEP conducted closest to the date of the evaluation (and not on later IEPs based on the same 1508 evaluation). Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

- **27% of IEPs did not address student's vision profile and required auxiliary aids**
- **8% of IEPs did not address student's hearing profile and required auxiliary aids**

Complete vision and hearing information

Percentage of students with complete vision and hearing information in 1508 evaluation and IEP

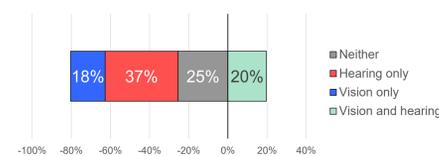


Figure 4: This chart represents students who had all of the following complete: Screenings, Follow-up assessment if needed, Results of the assessment included in the 1508 evaluation and an IEP that addressed vision/hearing profile and support needs. "Vision and hearing" indicates that all of these components were completed in respect to both vision and hearing, while "Vision only" and "Hearing only" indicate that all the components were completed for one area but not the other. "Neither" indicates that all components were not complete for neither vision nor hearing.

- **Only 20% of the 1508 evaluations and corresponding IEPs had complete information in regard to vision and hearing**

Conclusion

These results indicate non-compliance of Bulletin 1508 regulations for vision and hearing screening & evaluation for students that are evaluated for special education.

Future directions:

- Analyze efficacy of vision and hearing screening in Head Start Programs which help with school readiness for children 0-5 years of age

References:

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