

Eli's Rehab Report

SLPs To Workplaces: Listen Up and Quiet Down

OSHA works with industry leaders to reduce number of patients with hearing loss.

Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) working with patients who have work-related hearing loss will be frustrated to learn that the **U.S. Department of Labor's** Occupational Safety and Health Administration has withdrawn its proposed guidelines for controlling occupational noise.

Why: The proposal would have clarified that hearing conservation programs had to include noise controls -- when economically and technologically reasonable -- for workers who are exposed to extremely loud workplace sounds. However, both industry and Congress criticized the DOL's guidance, the **American-Speech-Language-Hearing Association** (ASHA) reports.

SLPs and occupational therapists alike are most likely to work with patients who are suffering noise-induced hearing loss as it's the most common occupational disease and the second most self-reported occupational injury, according to the **National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health**.

Good news: But hope isn't lost. Industry groups like ASHA continue to work with OSHA to reshape and better define noise-control guidelines and find more feasible approaches to reducing the frequency of work-related hearing loss.