

The Value of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) Program to EHDI

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Abstract

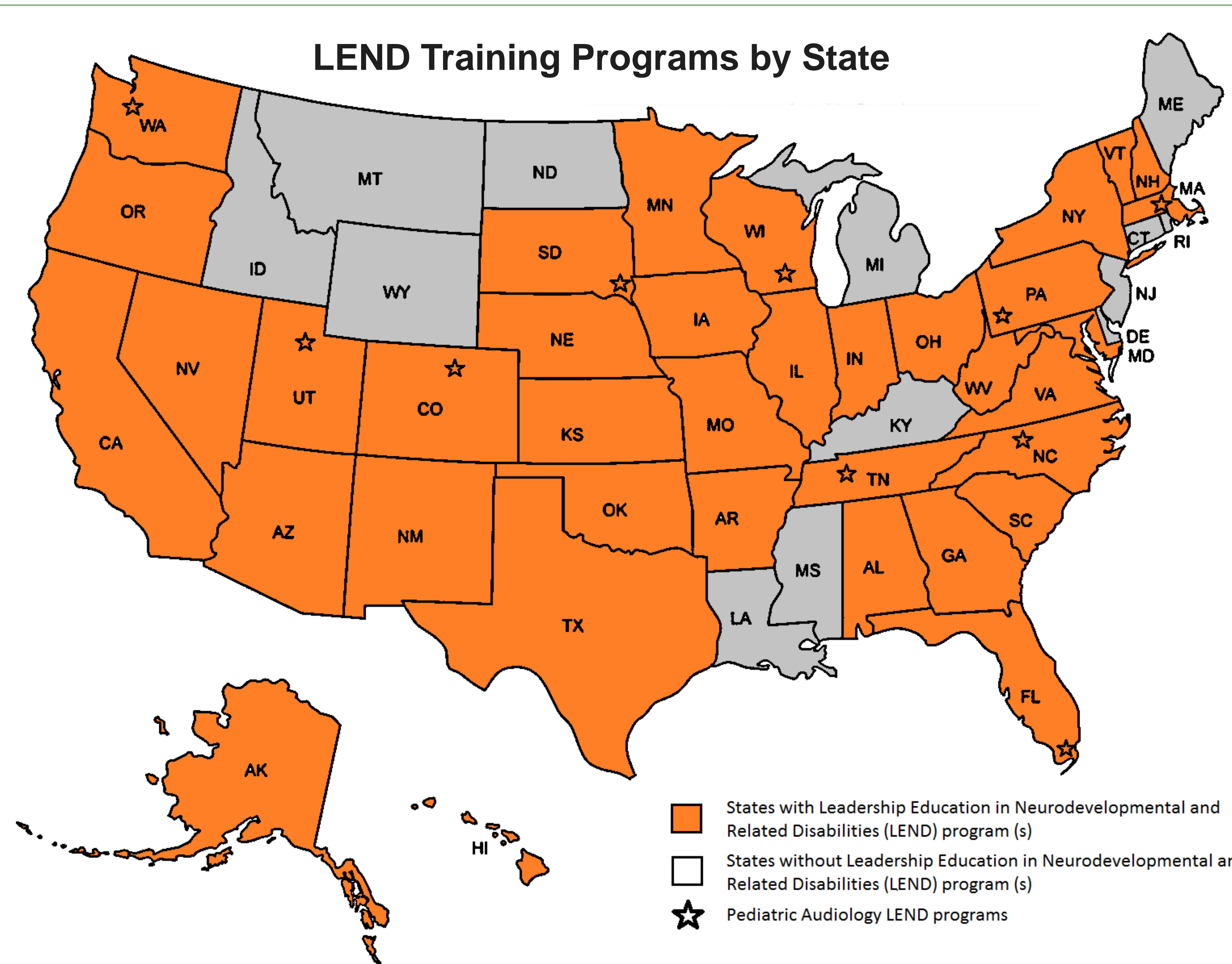
The purpose of this review was to evaluate the relationship of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program and the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) program. A literature review was completed regarding LEND training programs and curriculum and the potential impact on programs such as EHDI. There is a synergistic relationship between the LEND pediatric audiology training program and EHDI. LEND students are specially trained in the evaluation, diagnosis, and treatment of infants/children with hearing loss, and family-centered care. Therefore, with this training and acquired skills, students are able to advocate for pediatric patients with hearing loss and for organizations, such as EHDI, that play a major role in the early diagnosis of pediatric hearing loss.

Introduction

Other medical professions, such as medicine and nursing often offer incentive programs for providers to work in underserved areas. Audiology does not have a federal loan forgiveness grant to attract health care providers to work in such areas (Shaw, 2013). To address the shortage of pediatric audiologists in the workforce, the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) program was augmented in 2009 by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in conjunction with the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD). The supplemental funds from HRSA are currently granted to ten LEND pediatric audiology training programs (AUCD, 2014a; Shaw, 2013). Trainees receive additional training and education in the field of pediatric audiology and coordinated care.

What is LEND?

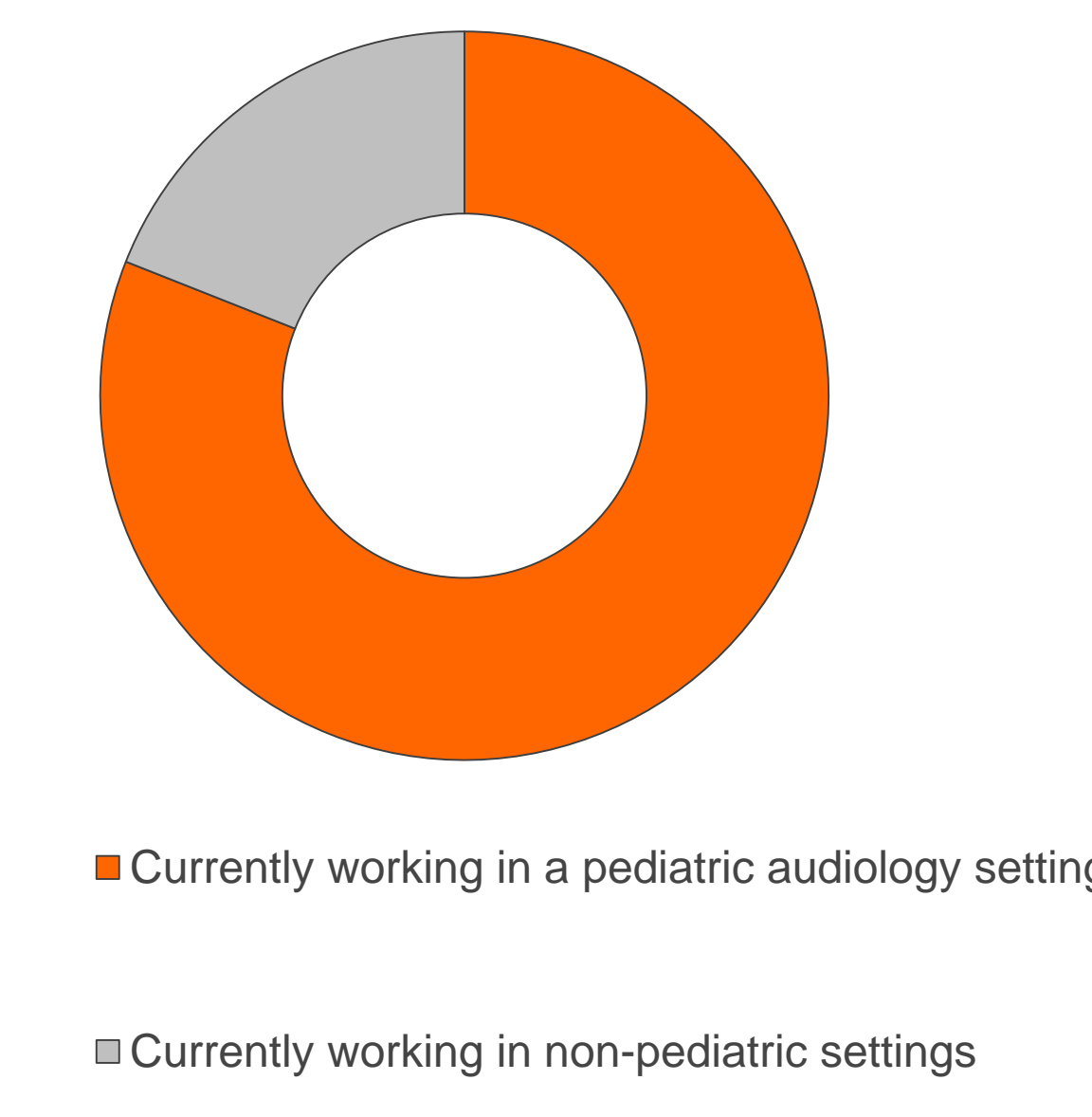
- The LEND program is a graduate level training curriculum set forth to improve the health of the infants, children, and adolescents with disabilities.
- Trainees within the LEND program include students from a variety of professions such as audiology, occupational therapy, psychology, speech-language pathology, nutrition, and more.
- LEND programs are commonly affiliated with universities, hospitals, and health care facilities.
- The LEND training curriculum is focused on a family-centered care and an interdisciplinary model of health care. Training focuses on establishing community-based partnerships, cultural competency, family-centered care, and interdisciplinary partnerships.
- Many LEND trainees complete research, advocacy, or service projects and are actively involved with current issues in their healthcare community.



LEND Pediatric Audiology Training Programs	
Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities, University of North Carolina	University of South Dakota LEND, Center for Disabilities
JFK Partners University of Colorado LEND	Mailman Center for Child Development, University of Miami
University of Pittsburgh LEND	Center for Human Development and Disability, University of Washington
University of Utah Regional LEND	Institute for Community Inclusion, Boston Children's Hospital LEND program
Vanderbilt University LEND	Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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Pediatric Audiology Trainees have completed the program since 2013

Former Pediatric Audiology LEND Trainees: Where Are They Now?



Pediatric Audiology Curriculum

LEND pediatric audiology trainees receive additional clinical training through their graduate programs that is focused on the diagnosis, evaluation, treatment, and intervention for hearing loss in infants and children (Shaw, 2013). Pediatric audiologists should be proficient in electrophysiologic testing, pediatric amplification (hearing aids, cochlear implants, implantable devices, osseointegrated devices, etc...) and behavioral audiometric testing in infants/children (such as conditioned play or visual reinforcement audiometry). Furthermore, pediatric audiologists must be experienced in assistive listening technology (fitting, servicing, and troubleshooting), aural rehabilitation, and offer support to the child and family (ASHA, 1991). Along with the unique skill set essential for a pediatric audiologist, they may act as an advocate for children with hearing loss (ASHA, 2004). LEND training for pediatric audiology trainees encompasses a broad spectrum including diagnostic testing /treatment to advocacy for infants and children with hearing loss.

Why is LEND beneficial to EHDI?

- LEND trainees complete rigorous training so they are prepared to work with complex cases, while being cognizant of the child and family's needs.
- Trainees are able to advocate for children with disabilities and their families at all levels as the LEND training program provides a solid foundation for these skills. (AUCD, 2014a; AUCD, 2014b).
- This training encourages the students to be active, lifelong learners and to use problem-solving skills and other knowledge obtained through LEND training to apply in their everyday clinical endeavors (Eaton, Gangluff, & Deere, 2004).
- Additionally, goals and objectives are similar for EHDI and LEND programs as they are both designed to advocate for children and infants with disabilities (ASHA, 2014; AUCD, 2014a; JCIH, 2007; White, n.d.)

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