



Please join us on for a special strategy and planning meeting for HLA-RI:

Saturday March 7th,

2 – 4pm

Warwick Public Library, Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI,

We have been working with Ed Ogiba, the Director of Chapter Development for Hearing Loss Association of America, to better understand how we can operate as both a state entity (influencing hearing access throughout Rhode Island) and as a chapter (organizing activities for our members). At our strategy and planning meeting we will redesign HLA-RI to be more effective as an organization, brainstorm ideas on how to solicit more participation, and plan our 2015 program.

Below is some background on how we can operate as a state organization and as a chapter. If you have ideas on how we can do both of these, please join us at the meeting. If you cannot attend, please feel free to share your thoughts and ideas with the steering committee by sending an email to HLARhodelsland@aol.com

--- State Organization ---

As a state entity, we want to support the 4-prong mission of HLAA:

1) **Advocacy:** select HLAA policy initiatives to implement in RI

Previously we have been successful in implementing initiatives related to hearing aid insurance, newborn screening, T-coil awareness, and requiring political ads to be captioned if a candidate uses state funding for their campaigns. We will review the current HLAA advocacy agenda and decide which area to focus on. The top issues currently include hearing health care awareness and affordability, hearing accessible venues, captioning quality, hearing aid compatible and captioned telephones, hearing assistive technology, emergency preparedness, and communication access in the workplace. Do any of these topics resonate with you?

2) **Awareness:** make hearing loss an issue of state-wide concern

Previously we have coordinated efforts with state organizations and state agencies to make sure that hearing loss issues are part of the state-wide agenda. We have staffed tables at town and state health fair events, made presentations, participated in committees, and many other activities to promote awareness about hearing loss and HLAA. We will review what we are currently doing and decide if there are additional ways that we can promote awareness about hearing loss throughout RI.

3) **Education:** provide information on how to improve the quality of life for people with hearing loss

Previously we have provided information on our website and through our email list. We have also used educational programs at meetings to provide information about technology and coping strategies. HLAA has an educational program that includes webinars and course offerings. We will review how we currently doing and decide if there are additional ways that we can provide education about hearing access.

4) **Fundraising:** raise money to support planned programs

Previously we have raised funds through generous donations from our members and our participation in the New England Walk4Hearing. As we develop plans for 2015, we will also identify fundraising needs and opportunities.

--- Chapter Organization ---

As a chapter, we want to organize meetings and activities for our HLA-RI members. We have had many chapter meetings with interesting and informative speakers over the last 25 years since our Self Help for the Hard of Hearing Sargent Chapter was formerly recognized in 1989 when we were located in Providence and later moved to Warwick. We have also organized social events including dinner socials and the annual sailing trip.

If we transition HLA-RI into a state organization and a chapter, will this make it easier for people to engage in the activities they are interested in? Will this help us both advance hearing access throughout the state and organize activities of interest to our members? Come join us to brainstorm our future.

We hope to see you on March 7th!

There will be CART.