



ASHA
American
Speech-Language-Hearing
Association

Audiology Survey Report: Private Practice Trends 2006–2018

AMERICAN SPEECH-LANGUAGE-HEARING ASSOCIATION

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Introduction

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) conducted the *2018 Audiology Survey* to gather information about employment and earnings, service provision, and other professional topics. Results from this survey are presented in a series of reports, including this report on private practice trends. Findings from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016 *ASHA Audiology Surveys* are included in this report for comparative purposes. Questions differ among surveys, so data on all topics are not available for all survey years.

The statistic that is presented in this report is the median (i.e., middle or 50th percentile). Medians are presented because they are more stable than means (averages) and are less sensitive to extreme values. To preserve confidentiality and provide more certain results, we have not reported data for groups of fewer than 25.

The salaries and wages presented in this report are gross salaries/wages (salaries/wages prior to deductions). They do not include bonuses or commissions. (That information is presented separately in the report.)

Survey Report Highlights

Employment and Earnings

- In 2018, most audiologists in private practice were self-employed (42%) or employed in a practice owned by non-audiologists (41%). These figures are largely consistent with those of recent past years.
- In 2018, audiologists employed full time in private practice reported a median annual salary of \$75,000, up from recent past years (\$65,000–\$70,000 from 2014 to 2016). Owners reported a median annual salary of \$80,399, up slightly from \$80,000 in 2016.

Service Provision

- From 2014 to 2018, most private practice clinicians demonstrated, fit, or dispensed hearing assistive technology; fit and dispensed hearing aids; and provided informational counseling on a daily or weekly basis.
- In 2018, more than half (66%) of audiologists in private practice bundled charges for products and professional services—about the same as in recent past years (63%–69% from 2014 to 2016).

Demographics

- In 2018, more than half (63%) of audiologists in private practice held a doctor of audiology (AuD) degree as the highest degree, up steadily from 30% in 2006.
- In 2018, most (79%) audiologists in private practice were women—about the same as in recent past years (72%–78% from 2006 to 2016).

Employment and Earnings

Primary Work Setting

In 2018, 75% of audiologists in private practice delivered all or most of their services in nonresidential health care facilities, which include audiologists' and physicians' offices (see Appendix Table 1). This figure is largely consistent with those of previous years.

Primary Work Role

In 2018, 90% of audiologists in private practice were clinicians (see Appendix Table 2). A small percentage (5%) were administrators, supervisors, or directors. These figures are largely consistent with those of previous years.

Type of Private Practice

In 2018, most audiologists in private practice were self-employed (42%) or employed in a practice owned by non-audiologists (41%; see Appendix Table 3). A small percentage (17%) were employed in a practice owned by other audiologists. These figures are largely consistent with those of previous years.

Type of Private Practice Position

In 2018, most audiologists in private practice were owners (41%) or full-time salaried audiologists (35%; see Appendix Table 4). A small percentage were part-time salaried audiologists (11%) or contractors/consultants (13%). These figures are largely consistent with those of previous years.

Form of Pay

In 2018, 68% of audiologists in private practice were paid an annual salary (see Appendix Table 5). The remainder were paid per hour (28%) or on commission (4%). These figures are largely consistent with those of previous years.

Annual Salaries

Median annual salaries varied by type of private practice position. In 2018, audiologists employed full time in private practice reported an annual salary of \$75,000, up from recent past years (see Table 1). Owners reported an annual salary of \$80,399, up slightly from \$80,000 in 2016.

Table 1. Median annual salaries of audiologists, by type of private practice position and year.

| Type of position | \$ | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2014 (n = 358) | 2016 (n = 284) | 2018 (n = 357) |
| Full-time audiologist | 70,000 | 65,000 | 75,000 |
| Owner | 78,439 | 80,000 | 80,399 |

Note. These data are from the 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys.

Hourly Rates

Median hourly rates varied by type of private practice position. From 2014 to 2018, contractors/consultants reported a higher hourly rate than full- or part-time audiologists in private practice (see Table 2).

Table 2. Median hourly rates of audiologists, by type of private practice position and year.

| Type of position | \$ | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2014 (n = 137) | 2016 (n = 125) | 2018 (n = 156) |
| Contractor/consultant | 40.00 | 41.87 | 40.00 |
| Full-time audiologist | 31.56 | 31.00 | 35.77 |
| Part-time audiologist | 35.26 | 36.03 | 35.90 |
| Owner | n/r | n/r | n/r |

Note. These data are from the 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys. n/r = not reported. (To preserve confidentiality and provide more certain results, we have not reported data for groups of fewer than 25.)

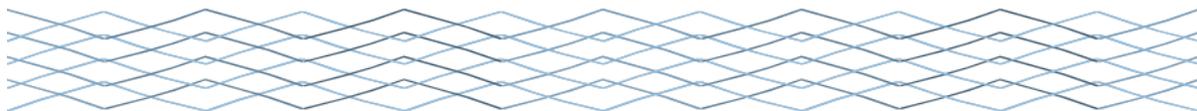
Number of Hours Worked per Week

In 2014, 2016, and 2018, audiologists in private practice who were paid at an hourly rate were asked to indicate the number of hours they worked in a typical week. In 2018, the median number of hours worked ranged from 20 for contractors/consultants to 40 for full-time audiologists—the same or about the same as in recent past years (see Table 3).

Table 3. Median number of hours that audiologists who were paid at an hourly rate worked in a typical week, by type of private practice position and year.

| Type of position | # | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2014 (n = 177) | 2016 (n = 124) | 2018 (n = 201) |
| Contractor/consultant | 19 | 20 | 20 |
| Full-time audiologist | 37 | 40 | 40 |
| Part-time audiologist | 23 | 20 | 24 |
| Owner | 26 | n/r | 30 |

Note. These data are from the 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys. n/r = not reported. (To preserve confidentiality and provide more certain results, we have not reported data for groups of fewer than 25.)



Bonuses

In 2014, 2016, and 2018, some audiologists in private practice received a bonus in addition to their base earnings (annual salary, hourly wages, or commission). In 2018, the median amount that they received was \$2,500, compared with \$3,797 in 2014 and \$2,000 in 2016. (These data are not shown in any figure or table.)

Bonuses by Type of Private Practice Position

Median bonuses varied by type of private practice position. In 2018, owners received a median bonus of \$15,000, compared with \$15,000 in 2014 and \$23,768 in 2016. Non-owners (contractors/consultants and full- and part-time audiologists) received a median bonus of \$1,997, compared with \$2,000 in 2014 and \$1,300 in 2016. (These data are not shown in any figure or table.)

Commissions

In 2014, 2016, and 2018, some audiologists in private practice received commissions in addition to their base earnings (annual salary or hourly wages). In 2018, the overall median amount that they received was \$15,513, compared with \$18,999 in 2014 and \$14,700 in 2016. (These data are not shown in any figure or table.)

Commissions by Type of Private Practice Position

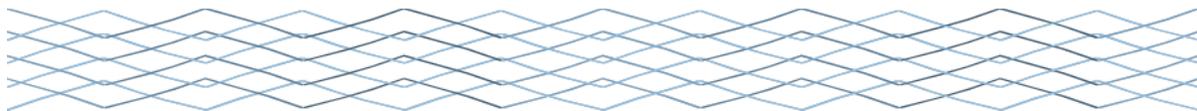
Median commissions varied by type of private practice position. In 2018, owners received a median commission of \$38,104, compared with \$60,000 in 2014 and \$36,491 in 2016. Non-owners (contractors/consultants and full- and part-time audiologists) received a median commission of \$15,000, compared with \$19,946 in 2014 and \$15,290 in 2016. (These data are not shown in any figure or table.)

Commission Rate on Product Sales

In 2018, the median commission rate on product sales for audiologists in private practice who were paid an annual salary or at an hourly rate was 10%—the same as in 2014 and 2016. (These data are not shown in any figure or table.)

Unpaid Student Debt

In 2018, audiologists in private practice reported having a median student debt amount of \$60,000, compared with \$45,433 in 2016. (These data are not shown in any figure or table.)



Service Provision

In 2014, 2016, and 2018, private practice clinicians were given a list of activities and were asked to indicate how often they performed them. Appendix Table 6 shows the percentage of clinicians who performed the activities daily/weekly, monthly/less than monthly, or never.

As indicated in Appendix Table 6, from 2014 to 2018, most private practice clinicians demonstrated, fit, or dispensed hearing assistive technology; fit and dispensed hearing aids; and provided informational counseling on a daily or weekly basis.

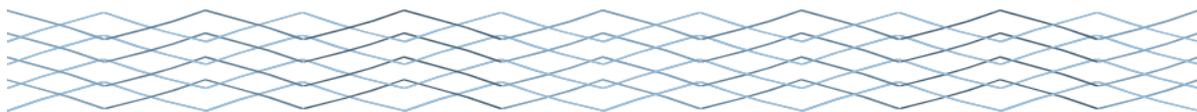
Ways of Charging for Products and Services

In 2018, more than half (66%) of audiologists in private practice bundled charges for products and professional services—about the same as in recent past years (63%–69% from 2014 to 2016; see Table 4).

Table 4. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice who use ways of charging for products and services, by year.*

| Ways of charging | % | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2014 (n = 681) | 2016 (n = 552) | 2018 (n = 715) |
| Bundle all charges | 63 | 69 | 66 |
| Charge separately for professional services and devices | 35 | 30 | 35 |
| Charge for professional services when device was purchased elsewhere | 44 | 1 | 46 |
| Not applicable | 8 | 7 | 10 |

Note. These data are from the 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys.



Demographics

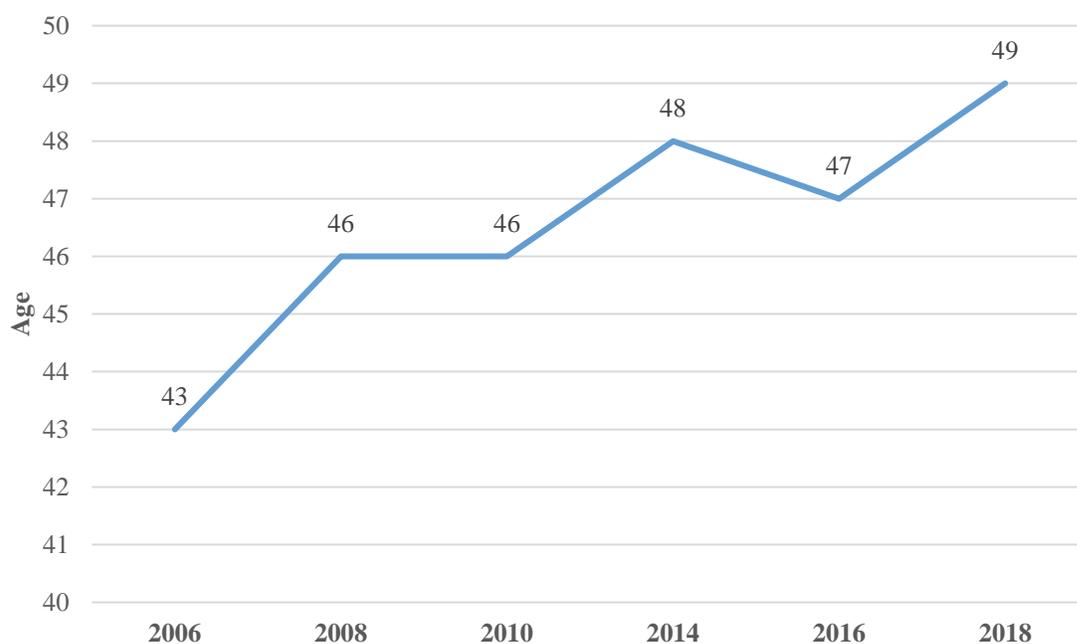
Highest Degree

In 2018, more than half (63%) of audiologists in private practice held a doctor of audiology (AuD) degree as the highest degree, up steadily from 30% in 2006 (see Appendix Table 7).

Age

In 2018, the median age of audiologists in private practice was 49—somewhat higher than in recent past years (43–48 from 2006 to 2016; see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Median age of audiologists in private practice, by year.



Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys. Median age data are not available for 2012. $n = 941$ (2006); $N = 2,340$ (2008); $n = 685$ (2010); $n = 674$ (2014); $n = 557$ (2016); $n = 717$ (2018).

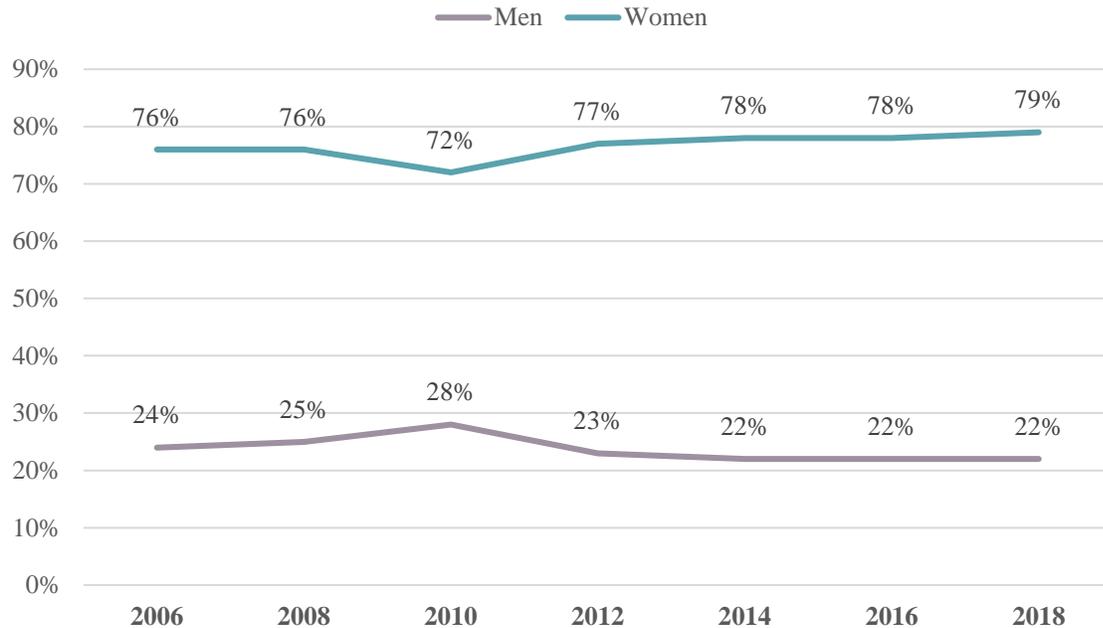
Expected Retirement Year

In 2014, 2016, and 2018, audiologists in private practice were asked to indicate the year in which they are most likely to retire from the profession. In 2014, the overall median response was 2030; in 2016, it was 2032; in 2018, it was 2033. (These data are not shown in any figure or table.)

Men/Women

In 2018, most (79%) audiologists in private practice were women—about the same as in recent past years (72%–78% from 2006 to 2016; see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percentage of audiologists who are men and women, by year.



Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 *ASHA Audiology Surveys*. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%. $n = 975$ (2006); $N = 2,380$ (2008); $n = 692$ (2010); $n = 749$ (2012); $n = 677$ (2014); $n = 559$ (2016); $n = 723$ (2018).

Geographic Region

From 2006 to 2018, a higher percentage of audiologists in private practice worked in the South than in the Northeast, Midwest, or West (see Appendix Table 8; see page 19 for a key of geographic regions/divisions and corresponding states).

Type of Area

From 2006 to 2018, a higher percentage of audiologists in private practice worked in suburban and city/urban areas than in rural areas (see Appendix Table 9).

Survey Methodology and Response Rates

A stratified random sample was used to select 4,500 ASHA-certified audiologists for the 2018 survey from a population of 8,293 audiologists. The sample was stratified by type of facility and by private practice.

The survey was mailed in September 2018. Second and third mailings followed, at approximately 4-week intervals, to individuals who had not responded to earlier mailings.

Of the original 4,500 audiologists in the sample, 44 had incorrect mailing addresses, nine were retired, and 27 were no longer employed in eligible facilities, which left 4,420 possible respondents. The actual number of respondents was 1,756—a 39.7% response rate.

Because facilities with fewer audiologists were oversampled and those with many audiologists were undersampled, ASHA used weighting when presenting survey data.

Past *ASHA Audiology Survey* response rates were 52.0% (2010), 51.4% (2012), 45.7% (2014), and 39.5% (2016).

Suggested Citation

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2019). *Audiology Survey report: Private practice trends, 2006–2018*. Available from www.asha.org.

Additional Information

Audiology Survey reports are available at www.asha.org/research/memberdata/AudiologySurvey. Schools Survey reports, which present data for educational audiologists, are available at www.asha.org/research/memberdata/schoolssurvey.

Questions?

For additional information regarding this report, please contact ASHA's audiology professional practices unit at audiology@asha.org. To learn more about how the Association is working on behalf of ASHA-certified audiologists, visit www.asha.org/aud.

Acknowledgment

Without the generous cooperation of the members who participate in our surveys, ASHA could not fulfill its mission to provide vital information about the professions and discipline to the Association membership and the public. Thank you!

Appendix

Appendix Table 1. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice, by primary work setting and year.*

| Primary work setting | % | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2006 (n = 968) | 2008 (N = 2,356) | 2010 (n = 670) | 2012 (n = 747) | 2014 (n = 678) | 2016 (n = 551) | 2018 (n = 722) |
| Audiology franchise, retail chain | — | — | — | 7 | 7 | 10 | 7 |
| College/university | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Hospital (general, pediatric, military, VA) | 6 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 11 | 5 | 12 |
| Industry (hearing aid manufacturing, hearing conservation) | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Nonresidential health care facility (includes audiologists' and physicians' offices) | 85 | 88 | 87 | 79 | 75 | 82 | 75 |
| School | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | — | — |
| Other work setting | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 |

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 *ASHA Audiology Surveys*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%.

Appendix Table 2. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice, by primary work role and year.*

| Primary work role | % | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2006 (n = 967) | 2008 (N = 2,361) | 2010 (n = 671) | 2012 (n = 744) | 2014 (n = 677) | 2016 (n = 555) | 2018 (n = 718) |
| Administrator/supervisor/director | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 5 |
| Clinical service provider | 91 | 94 | 93 | 92 | 91 | 93 | 90 |
| College/university faculty/ clinical educator ^a | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Consultant | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Researcher | 0 | 0 | < 1 | < 1 | 1 | < 1 | < 1 |
| Sales/training/technical support position | — | — | — | — | — | 2 | 2 |
| Other work role | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | < 1 | 0 |

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys. ^aIn the 2006 survey, this item was *college/university faculty member*. In the 2008, 2010, and 2012 surveys, it was *college/university professor*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%.

Appendix Table 3. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice, by type of practice and year.*

| Type of practice | % | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2008 (N = 2,380) | 2010 (n = 693) | 2012 (n = 751) | 2014 (n = 681) | 2016 (n = 560) | 2018 (n = 723) |
| Employed in a private practice owned by non-audiologists (physicians, manufacturers, commercial entities) | 40 | 33 | 37 | 40 | 40 | 41 |
| Employed in a private practice owned by other audiologists | 15 | 19 | 15 | 18 | 18 | 17 |
| Self-employed in a private practice | 43 | 47 | 44 | 37 | 41 | 42 |

Note. These data are from the 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys.

Appendix Table 4. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice, by type of position and year.*

| Type of position | % | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2006 (n = 952) | 2008 (N = 2,380) | 2010 (n = 693) | 2012 (n = 751) | 2014 (n = 681) | 2016 (n = 552) | 2018 (n = 751) |
| Contractor/consultant | 10 | 8 | 9 | 11 | 10 | 12 | 13 |
| Full-time salaried audiologist | 41 | 38 | 32 | 37 | 40 | 35 | 35 |
| Part-time salaried audiologist | 13 | 15 | 16 | 13 | 14 | 11 | 11 |
| Owner | 36 | 40 | 44 | 39 | 36 | 42 | 41 |

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%.

Appendix Table 5. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice who are paid an annual salary, per hour, or on commission, by year.*

| Form of pay | % | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2006 (n = 926) | 2008 (N = 2,277) | 2010 (n = 643) | 2012 (n = 722) | 2014 (n = 667) | 2016 (n = 543) | 2018 (n = 696) |
| Primarily annual salary | 72 | 74 | 72 | 70 | 67 | 68 | 68 |
| Primarily per hour | 28 | 26 | 28 | 30 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| Primarily on commission | — | — | — | — | 7 | 6 | 4 |

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 *ASHA Audiology Surveys*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%.

Appendix Table 6. Percentage of audiologists in private practice who perform activities daily/weekly, monthly/less than monthly, or never, by year.

| Activity | % | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|-----|-------|-------------------|-----|-------|-------------------|-----|-------|
| | 2014 (n ≥ 673) | | | 2016 (n ≥ 497) | | | 2018 (n ≥ 671) | | |
| | D/W | M/L | Never | D/W | M/L | Never | D/W | M/L | Never |
| <i>Audiologic/aural rehabilitation:</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| Demonstrate, fit, or dispense hearing assistive technology ^a | 83 | 12 | 5 | 71 | 21 | 8 | 68 | 19 | 14 |
| Fit and dispense hearing aids | 85 | 8 | 8 | 87 | 4 | 9 | 79 | 8 | 12 |
| Fit and dispense personal sound amplification products | — | — | — | 8 | 35 | 56 | 7 | 28 | 65 |
| Provide auditory training | — | — | — | — | — | — | 29 | 27 | 44 |
| Provide informational counseling ^b | 89 | 8 | 3 | 93 | 5 | 2 | 87 | 8 | 5 |
| Teach speechreading ^c | 7 | 26 | 67 | 2 | 10 | 88 | — | — | — |
| Perform cerumen management | 44 | 22 | 34 | 47 | 23 | 30 | 42 | 22 | 36 |
| Program cochlear implants | 5 | 5 | 90 | 3 | 6 | 91 | 8 | 5 | 87 |
| Provide hearing conservation services ^d | 42 | 46 | 12 | 13 | 56 | 31 | 17 | 40 | 43 |
| Provide telepractice services | — | — | — | — | — | — | 4 | 14 | 82 |
| Provide tinnitus assessment/rehabilitation | — | — | — | — | — | — | 20 | 46 | 34 |
| Provide vestibular assessment and/or rehabilitation | 25 | 13 | 62 | 26 | 12 | 62 | 21 | 11 | 68 |
| Validate treatment outcomes using self-report questionnaires | 33 | 36 | 32 | 35 | 33 | 32 | 32 | 28 | 41 |
| Validate treatment outcomes using speech-in-noise testing | 31 | 35 | 34 | 32 | 36 | 32 | 35 | 26 | 39 |
| Verify performance of hearing aids using real-ear measures ^e | 47 | 21 | 32 | 48 | 18 | 34 | 47 | 16 | 37 |

Note. These data are from the 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys. D/W = daily or weekly; M/L = monthly or less than monthly. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey. ^aIn the 2014 survey, this item was *demonstration/fitting/orientation of hearing assistive technology*. ^bIn the 2014 survey, this item was *counseling on communication strategies/realistic expectations*. ^cIn the 2014 survey, this item was *speechreading/lipreading*. ^dIn the 2014 survey, this item was *hearing conservation and prevention*. ^eOf the clinicians who fit and dispensed hearing aids, most (72% in 2014, 2016, and 2018) verified the performance of hearing aids using real-ear measures.

Appendix Table 7. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice, by highest degree and year.*

| Highest degree | % | | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2006 (n = 979) | 2008 (N = 2,380) | 2010 (n = 693) | 2012 (n = 751) | 2014 (n = 679) | 2016 (n = 560) | 2018 (n = 723) |
| Master's | 63 | 49 | 39 | 39 | 32 | 33 | 30 |
| AuD | 30 | 43 | 53 | 55 | 61 | 62 | 63 |
| PhD | 6 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Other doctorate | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | < 1 | 1 |
| Multiple doctorates | — | — | — | — | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 *ASHA Audiology Surveys*. Dash indicates that the item was not included in the survey analysis.

Appendix Table 8. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice, by geographic region and year.*

| Geographic region | % | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2006 (n = 979) | 2008 (N = 2,380) | 2010 (n = 693) | 2012 (n = 751) | 2014 (n = 677) | 2016 (n = 559) | 2018 (n = 719) |
| Northeast | 23 | 26 | 19 | 23 | 21 | 22 | 25 |
| South | 35 | 36 | 38 | 35 | 34 | 33 | 32 |
| Midwest | 23 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 26 | 26 |
| West | 19 | 18 | 21 | 19 | 21 | 18 | 18 |

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, 2016, and 2018 ASHA Audiology Surveys. Because of rounding, percentages may not total exactly 100%.

Key of geographic regions/divisions and corresponding states.

| Geographic region/division | Corresponding states |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Northeast | |
| New England | CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT |
| Mid-Atlantic | NJ, NY, PA |
| Midwest | |
| East North Central | IL, IN, MI, OH, WI |
| West North Central | IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD |
| South | |
| South Atlantic | DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV |
| East South Central | AL, KY, MS, TN |
| West South Central | AR, LA, OK, TX |
| West | |
| Mountain | AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY |
| Pacific | AK, CA, HI, OR, WA |

Appendix Table 9. *Percentage of audiologists in private practice, by type of area and year.*

| Type of area | % | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| | 2006 (n = 979) | 2008 (N = 2,380) | 2010 (n = 693) | 2012 (n = 751) | 2014 (n = 673) | 2016 (n = 551) | 2018 (n = 716) |
| Rural | 17 | 18 | 20 | 17 | 13 | 14 | 14 |
| Suburban | 44 | 43 | 41 | 47 | 41 | 49 | 44 |
| City/urban ^a | 39 | 39 | 39 | 36 | 46 | 37 | 42 |

Note. These data are from the 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014, and 2016 ASHA Audiology Surveys. Definitions of *rural*, *suburban*, and *city/urban* were not provided in the surveys. ^aIn the 2006–2012 surveys, this item was *metropolitan/urban area*.