



Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Matt Bevin  
Governor

Hal Heiner  
Secretary, Education and Workforce Development Cabinet

Virginia L. Moore  
Executive Director

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** July 1, 2016

**TO:** David Byerman, Director  
Legislative Research Commission

**CC:** Hal Heiner, Secretary  
Education and Workforce Development  
Cabinet

Aaron D. Greenwell, Acting Executive Director  
Public Service Commission

**FROM:** Virginia L. Moore, Executive Director  
Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and  
Hard of Hearing

**RE:** Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Annual Report for Fiscal  
Year 2015 - 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Virginia L. Moore'.

Enclosed is the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) Annual Report for the fiscal year 2015 - 2016. As per KRS 163.527, this report is to be submitted annually to the Kentucky General Assembly through the Legislative Research Commission by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [Virginia.moore@ky.gov](mailto:Virginia.moore@ky.gov) or at 502-573-2604.

## The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Since its inception in 1995, the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP), administered by the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH), has strived to serve the 694,301 deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired and deaf/blind consumers (16% of population) in Kentucky that apply through the TAP for specialized telecommunications equipment. From time to time, we receive letters of thanks from grateful recipients. Below are some of the excerpts from FY 15-16.

"I love the iPad I received from TAP. It allows me to be independent and safe when I travel as I can use apps to communicate with anyone. This program and the Commission are such a blessing to Kentuckians. This service is so needed as many deaf and hard of hearing people feel isolated and don't know where to turn for help!" (Deaf Consumer - Louisville)

"Thanks so much for this program and the staff that make it possible for individuals with visual, hearing and speech problems to receive equipment that brings them into mainstream of technology. The apps provided on the iPads/iPhones are so amazing for speech impaired individuals and give them a new freedom that some never thought possible. This program is life changing for those individuals and I am happy for the opportunity to work with your staff." (Speech Language Pathologist working with Speech Impaired Consumers - Paducah)

"I love my iPhone as it allows me to use mobile captions to communicate in many places. It's a lifesaver for emergency situations when I didn't know what was happening around me before I had this phone. Now I feel like I am safe and can fully participate in society." (Severely Hard of Hearing Consumer - Lexington)

"Thank you so much for the service provided to my mother. She received an amplified phone and now she can hear us when we call to check on her. At 97 and still living alone this phone gave her back her independence. Please keep up the good work serving seniors (and others) in Kentucky." (Caretaker for Hard of Hearing Consumer - Owensboro)

"Bless you for helping me get a phone I could hear on again, and afford (wireless). It was such a God send and the kindness and compassion your staff showed while assisting me with the application was amazing. God says *he will throw favors into the paths of the righteous*. And he certainly did so when I found your agency. Many, Many sincere thanks again for changing my life for the better with your service! (Hard of Hearing Consumer – Stanford)

Telecommunications Access Program  
Annual Report  
Fiscal Year 2015 - 2016

Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
Virginia L. Moore, Executive Director

In compliance with KRS 163.527, this annual report is submitted to the Kentucky General Assembly through the Legislative Research Commission.

"The Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing shall provide to the General Assembly an annual report on the operation of the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP). The report shall be due on July 1 of each year, beginning July 1, 1995, and, at a minimum, provide:

The number of persons served and the number of TDDs (*equipment*) distributed;

The revenues and expenditures of the program;

Discussion of any major policy or operational issues;

Any changes the Commission plans to make in the program that does not require legislative action;  
and

Any proposals for legislative changes in the program."

**The number of persons served and the number of STE's distributed:**

The Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) processed 1,876 applications during FY16. The status of those applications for Specialized Telecommunication Equipment (STE) is as follows as of 6/30/2016, and definitions of the statuses are below:

Status	Total
Approved	118
Complete	1268
Incomplete	82
Denied	401
Ready for Review	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>1876</b>

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Approved** - Applications are considered approved once the last piece of documentation required is received. As of that date, they placed on a waiting list and are ordered on a first come first served basis depending on availability of funds. Or equipment has been ordered but is pending delivery, or has yet to be paid for during the FY.

**Complete** - Applications are considered complete once they are approved, the STE has been ordered, delivered to the consumer and paid for during the FY.

**Incomplete** - Applications are incomplete if they are pending receipt of missing verification required to determine eligibility. Applicants have been notified to provide the missing information to complete their application within the 12 month timeframe.

**Denied** - Applications are considered denied because they did not meet eligibility requirements to receive the STE. Notification has been sent to the applicant explaining why they are ineligible, and when they might be eligible to reapply if applicable.

**Ready for Review** - These applications have already been reviewed at two levels and are pending the last supervisory review to ensure that all eligibility criteria is met per regulations. After a final review, they are moved to approved applications.

1,263 consumers received 1,748 pieces of equipment during FY16. Consumers that received equipment are broken down by degree of hearing/speech loss as listed below:

Degree of Hearing Loss	Total
Deaf	322
Deaf w/ Limited Vision/Deaf Blind	18
Hard of Hearing w/ Limited Vision	67
Hard-of-Hearing	434
Late-Deafened	12
Severely Hard-of-Hearing	376
Speech-Impaired	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>1263</b>

The Public Service Commission (PSC) collects funds for TAP and the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) through a small surcharge on all telecommunication access lines and distributes those funds as appropriated to KCDHH to administer the TAP.

During FY15-16 the TAP did not add any new equipment but continues to serve all applicants with a hearing or speech loss. The iPad continues to be popular as this device better meets the broadening communication needs of deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired and deaf-blind applicants. With the preloaded specialized apps, these devices provide better communication access to all individuals served. Many professionals that work with the deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired became aware of the TAP during FY15-16 and applications from speech, language pathologists (SLP) continue. Signaling devices are also very popular as consumers can now receive a smoke/CO2 detector. We have testimonies to the saved lives because of this kind of accessible notifications. Some applicants that received an iPhone previously are requesting another device after four years and reapplications have increased this FY as a result. New applicants are always served first, and then reapplicants are served as funding permits.

**Public Relations:**

Television advertisements by Sprint, our state Relay Provider until May 2016, regarding Captioned telephones increased the number of applications for that device. Hamilton, our new state Relay provider as of May 2016, plans to continue state outreach for devices utilizing the relay service. AT&T placed an ad in their billing insert which increased the number of applications for other landline devices. Partnership events, routine outreaches including the state fair, and word of mouth from friends and professionals has increased by 24 percent the number of TAP requests for FY16. The grid below analyzes the effectiveness of the PR means utilized to advertise the TAP. Adjustments are made accordingly each FY to utilize the most efficient means possible.

**TAP Counts – Fiscal Year 2015 – 2016**  
*A Statistical Analysis to Help Determine the Best Methods of Advertising*  
 How did they find out about the TAP?

	Applied before	TV ad	Billboard	Radio	Outreach	Friend	Website	Newsletter	Facebook	Professional Referral	Other	TOTAL
FYC*	431	35	2	2	188	365	121	12	15	885	358	2,414

\*FYC: "Fiscal Year Count" – This count is for the fiscal year July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

**Revenues and Expenditures of the Telecommunications Access Program  
For fiscal year 2015 - 2016**

REVENUE	Budgeted Expenditures	Actual Expenditures
<b>FY 2015 – 16 Allotment</b>	1,109,200	1,109,200
Total Revenue collected	1,109,200	1,109,200
<b>PERSONNEL EXPENSES</b>		
State Employee Salary	220,200	220,100
State Employee Benefits/Fringe	154,300	153,925
Other Personnel Services	69,300	69,845
Other	1,200	1,130
<b>Total Personnel Services</b>	<b>445,000</b>	<b>445,000</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>		
Utilities	6,100	5,110
Other Rentals	36,000	37,205
Maintenance and Repairs	100	84
Postage and Related Services	6,400	6,880
Miscellaneous Services	24,700	25,100
Telecommunications	8,200	6,373
Computer Services	9,200	9,032
Supplies	12,400	12,850
TAP Commodities	4,100	4,600
TAP Equipment Purchases	500,000	499,772
Travel Expense/ Allowances	24,500	24,294
Miscellaneous Commodities	32,500	32,900
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>664,200</b>	<b>664,200</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,109,200</b>	<b>1,109,200</b>
<b>13-33-340-TBOO BALANCE</b>		<b>0</b>
<b>AS OF 6/30/16</b>		

STE (Telephone equipment) ALL TYPES and replacement of discontinued models	Units
AMPI 600ER	5
PowerTel 785	47
CAPTEL 840 Plus	49
CAPTEL 840i	54
CAPTEL 880i	8
CAPTEL 2400i	16
CS-WCSC1000	37
CS-WCS 600	58
Geemarc AMPLIPOWER 60	97
Pro 80 Gold TTY	0
SUPERPRINT 4425	3
Remote Control Speakerphone RC-1000	0
Uniphone 1140	0
DeafBlind Communicator	2
TELETALK	5
XLC 3.4 -White Cordless	232
IPHONE 5C - WHITE	64
IPHONE 5S	134
IPHONE 6	30
IPAD_DEAF_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORIGINAL	181
IPAD_HOH_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORIGINAL	131
IPAD_LOW VISION_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORIGINAL	32
IPAD_SPEECH IMPAIRED_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORGINIAL	19
MINI IPAD_DEAF_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORIGINAL	29
MINI IPAD_HOH_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORIGINAL	21
MINI IPAD_LOW VISION_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORIGINAL	3
MINI IPAD_SPEECH IMPAIRED_WIFI ONLY_AIR ORGINIAL	6
<b>*Total telecommunications devices</b>	<b>1,263</b>
<b>Signaling Devices</b>	
CA-360 package (signaler/smoke alarm)	182
CA-380 package (signaler/smoke alarm)	150
Bellman Signaler Package (signaler/smoke alarm)	92
Krown TA005 Visual Combo Signaler	83
<b>*Total Signaling Devices</b>	<b>507</b>
<b>*Total Equipment</b>	<b>1,748</b>

## Discussion of any major policy or operational issues:

As KCDHH is the only centralized, non-biased source of information regarding issues related to hearing loss, our ability to provide information, referrals and advocacy, as well as specialized telecommunications equipment for the citizens of the Commonwealth is an essential service to the general public. TAP staffs are highly qualified individuals that work hard to bring positive change to Kentucky by providing the most technologically advanced telecommunications equipment possible, so we can serve our constituents transitioning communication needs. The TAP is committed to improving the quality of life for the deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired or deaf/blind/low vision citizens throughout the Commonwealth.

TAP equipment vendor contracts expired at the end of FY15. New vendor contracts were bid through the procurement process (Finance Cabinet) and were awarded in July 2016. Equipment changes were made to reflect the emerging technology, and some model replacements were required. As a result of the current equipment offerings the program brochures and webpages have been updated with new devices this FY and staff has been trained on how to demonstrate the current equipment effectively.

Some clean up to the regulations are required and the TAP application will be revamped to make it easier to read for older applicants, and then incorporated by reference in the regulation changes.

The eight TAP demonstration cabinets throughout the state have also been updated with equipment during FY16 and local staff have been trained on how to utilize the equipment models to best serve applicants in their area. One cabinet was moved in Northern Kentucky to a more prominent location and another cabinet is being prepared for a location in far Eastern Kentucky, to reach more of our rural applicants. These demonstration sites give consumers the opportunity to test equipment before selecting their device. Partnerships with private, public and state agencies are utilized to neutralize the cost of housing the cabinets.

Vlogs in American Sign Language (ASL) with captions continue to be posted on the KCDHH website to explain the use of the various kinds of TAP equipment. This provides information to our deaf constituents in their native language, ASL, and allows hard of hearing consumers to gain the information via captions. Accessibility is mandatory in our production of any informational materials.

Kentucky's Relay provider changed to Hamilton Relay effective May 15, 2016. Meetings have been held with the new provider and Hamilton has agreed to provide assistance in training consumers' one-on-one, resolve any equipment connection problems, and collaborate with KCDHH in various outreach efforts. Sprint provided relay service previously in the FY and always offered good service. We anticipate more outreach opportunities with Hamilton Relay as they focus on educating Kentuckians about their services and have an assigned Outreach Coordinator for Kentucky. They have already committed to partner with us on several major outreach events during FY17.

TAP staff utilizes v-logs, videoconferencing, video relay interpreting, FaceTime, instant messaging, text messaging, interpreters and email, as well as traditional voice lines and face-to-face contacts to promote the program and explain its requirements to consumers and professionals as well. TAP staff team with the agencies' PR staff to do outreach that covers all the agency's programs and services offered to our constituents. Most outreach is accomplished through partnerships with

other agencies, attendance at conferences and health fairs, word of mouth, and in-house advertising, which is primarily electronic based.

The agency once again took advantage of the opportunity to meet people face-to-face at the 2015 Kentucky State Fair. In partnership with Heuser Hearing Institute and Sprint Relay, a fully interactive booth was provided during the 10-day event and educated fairgoers on living with a hearing loss and resources available to those affected by it, including assistive technology. Hundreds of referrals, including applications for equipment and general requests to the agency, are generated from this particular outreach. TAP is scheduled to participate in the State Fair in 2016 and Hamilton Relay has committed to partner with us in this unique and very effective outreach.

The TAP Advisory Board, which consists of consumers, agency oversight representatives and TAP staff, meets at least once annually face-to-face. During the October 2015 meeting, members discussed possible equipment changes and recommendations for the equipment vendors' bids that were processed through the Finance Cabinet in the early spring of 2016. At the April 2016 meeting a tragic event caused cancellation of the meeting as the Chair of the Board passed away. Election of a new Chair, which must also be a Commissioner, will be held in July 2016. Elected members may serve three consecutive four-year terms while law mandates other member positions. Meetings are scheduled for October 2016 and April 2017 as necessary.

#### TAP Advisory Board Members

Last Name	First Name	Membership Status	Term Ends
VACANT		*KCDHH Commissioner/Advisory Board Chair	
Ziehr	Jeremiah	*Deaf Consumer	2017
Fowler	Lewis	*Deaf Consumer	2019
Lawson	Johnny	*Speech-Impaired Consumer	2017
Fenwick	Marilyn	*Hard of Hearing Consumer	2019
McGirt	Melinda	*Hard of Hearing Consumer	2019
Timon	James	*Hard of Hearing Consumer	2017
Stevens	Jim	**Public Service Commission Representative	Law
Hatzel	Amy	**KCDHH Commission Chair	Law
Campbell	Tyler	*KY Telephone Association Representative	Law
Moore	Virginia	**KCDHH Executive Director	Law
Zulauf	Cole	***Program Coordinator	Staff
Endler	Jessica	***Document Processing Specialist II	Staff
Crowe	Tashina	***Administrative Secretary II	Staff
Holloway	Rowena	***Internal Policy Analyst III	Staff

\*voting members

\*\*non-voting members, serve by law or ex-officio

\*\*\*TAP staff

The Internal Policy Analyst (IPA) III serves on the AT&T Advisory Board, the Telephone Relay Service (TRS) Advisory Board and the Kentucky Outreach and Information Network (KOIN). The IPA III was appointed by the Governor in 2014 to serve on the Kentucky Assistive Technology Service (KATS) Network Advisory Board effective until February 2017, and was appointed to the Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation (KATLC) Board effective until February 2019. Written reports from these meetings are compiled and included in the agency's quarterly reports and archived as required.

TAP staff also serves on several emergency notification teams to represent KCDHH in the state's efforts to bring E911 to fruition and make wireless communication in emergencies a reality. Text messaging is the norm for most consumers with a hearing loss and 80% of the national's disabled population utilizes wireless devices as their primary source of telecommunication. PSAPs must be fully accessible and text messaging is the most logical answer to that requirement, not only for our population but for hearing individuals that use mobile devices. KCDHH continues to work with state and federal entities to make this goal possible, including legislative work.

**Staff members attended the following to promote the TAP during FY15-16:**

Hearing Loss Association of America, Kentucky chapter meetings;  
National Hearing Loss Association of America conference;  
Lexington Association of the Deaf meetings;  
Louisville Deaf Senior Citizens meetings;  
Kentucky Speech-Language Hearing Pathologists Association conference;  
Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Administrators conference;  
National Association of State Relay Service Providers conference;  
Kentucky Department of Education (various local school districts);  
Kentucky Black Deaf Advocates conference;  
Kentucky Audiologist Association conference;  
Kentucky Association of the Deaf conference;  
Deaf Nation Expo;  
Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf conferences;  
Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf National conference;  
Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD) Family Learning Vacation;  
KSD Pancake Breakfast;  
KSD Gallaudet Alumni banquet;  
Paducah Barbeque Festival;  
Hillbilly Days – Pikeville;  
Infant & Toddler Institute on Deafness Conference;  
Early Hearing and Identification Detection conference;  
First Steps /Hands Alive events;  
American Association of Retired Persons Health Fair;  
Mental Health Advisory Board workshops/conference;  
Main Street and Shiloh Baptist Church Activity Day presentations;  
Community and Senior Health Fairs statewide;  
Kentucky Police Academy trainings;  
Kentucky Correctional facility trainings;  
Kentucky Society of Medical Assistants;  
Kentucky Emergency Preparedness presentations and workshops; and  
Senior Citizen Association meetings statewide.

## Statistical Update:

### Overall Population

- Kentucky has an estimated 694,301 deaf and hard of hearing residents (16% of population). *(National Health Interview Survey)*
- Hearing loss ranks as the third most common health issue in the country, behind heart disease and arthritis. *(National Institutes of Health)*
- 1 in 5 Americans (48 million) have some degree of hearing loss. *(Hearing Health Foundation)*
- Men are more likely to experience hearing loss than women. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*
- Kentucky ranks third per capita nationally in people identified as deaf or hard of hearing. *(American Community Survey Data, United States Census)*
- Approximately 17% (36 million) of American adults report having a hearing loss, with that number expected to double by 2030. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*
- Roughly 25 million Americans have experienced tinnitus. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*
- Approximately 4,000 new cases of sudden deafness occur each year in the United States. Only 10 to 15 % of patients with sudden deafness know what caused their loss. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*

### Children

- About 3 out of every 1,000 children in the United States are born deaf or hard-of-hearing. 90% of children who are born deaf are born to hearing parents. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*
- Approximately 6 % of all deaf children and 6 % of hard-of-hearing children have Usher syndrome. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*
- One in five teenagers (20 %) will incur a hearing loss at a much earlier age due to music listening devices. This represents an overall increase in hearing loss of 30 % for that age group. *(National Institutes of Health)*
- 14.9 % of children between the ages of 6 and 19 have a hearing loss in one or both ears. *(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*

### Adults/Senior Citizens

- There is a strong relationship between age and reported hearing loss: 18 % of American adults 45-64 years old, 30 % of adults 65-74 years old, and 47 % of adults 75 years old or older have a hearing loss. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*
- 15 % (26 million) of Americans between the ages of 20 and 69 have high frequency hearing loss due to exposure to loud sounds or noise at work or in leisure activities. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*
- Of adults ages 65 and older in the United States, 12.3 % of men and nearly 14 % of women are affected by tinnitus. *(National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders)*

- The number of Americans who are 65 or older (220,000) increased 15.1 % from 2002 and that number is expected to double by 2030. (*Census Brief on Older Populations*)

### Military

- More than 59,000 military veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are on disability due to service-related hearing loss. (*United States Department of Veterans Affairs*)
- The most prevalent service-connected disability for veterans was tinnitus and hearing loss (60 %). 1.5 million Veterans are receiving veterans' compensation for "profound unusable hearing." (*United States Department of Veterans Affairs*)

### **Legislative Plans for FY 17:**

In November the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) implemented a Federal Register ruling effective January 2016 stating that hearing aids cannot be covered by insurance based on age as it is discriminatory. Federal Register, Vol. 79, No. 228, Part III, Page 70722-70723 <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2014-11-26/pdf/2014-27858.pdf> The ruling prohibits discrimination based on present disability and age limits are discriminatory when applied to services that have been clinically effective at all ages. In the ruling an example was given, that hearing aids cannot be denied coverage based solely on age or it is considered discrimination. The ruling also instructed "Issuers" that they should not attempt to circumvent coverage of medically necessary benefits for adults.

However, state laws have not yet adopted this federal mandate universally and KCDHH continues to advocate for consumers who have requested coverage of hearing aids through their insurance providers and been denied. We are working with the Department of Insurance to obtain a clear directive on how consumers should approach their insurance companies to acquire coverage for hearing aids. Unfortunately Medicare is exempt from this ruling and still does not provide coverage for hearing aids. This is an ongoing battle at both the state and federal level that we intend to continue advocating for our consumer; even if it means proposing legislation at the state level that would mandate providers to follow the Federal Rule.

*"How can I get help paying for hearing aids"* is the number one request received by our agency. We work with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and Hear Now to continue expanding the Statewide Hearing Aid Assistance and Reuse Program (SHARP), which supplements the Hear Now application fee for those applying for assistance to purchase hearing aids, or it pays a small amount toward the purchase of hearing aids. This partnership has been successful; however budgetary cuts for FY17 may jeopardize the continuation of the SHARP.

We are also working with the Commonwealth Office of Technology (COT), KY Broadband Office, KY Communication Network Executive Director to pursue a means that would prevent internet service providers (ISP) from capping broadband usage for individuals that utilize videoconferencing or captioned telephone programs to access equitable communication. Some major ISP's have raised the cost of broadband usage over the cap, making it impossible for low income or fixed income individuals to ensure they have access to telecommunications, especially during emergencies. We met with several legislators in FY 15-16 and if a solution cannot be resolved

voluntarily then we would potentially pursue legislative action to ensure equitable communication access is provided statewide.

**Plans for FY 17, not involving Legislative changes include:**

The expansion of TAP, administered per KRS 163.525, continues to evolve and grow as demand increases and technology changes. The selected device(s) provide affordable, portable, reliable and accessible telecommunications for all eligible applicants. Regulations are in place outlining criteria for approving applications, outlining a processing system for vendor participation and specifying maintenance and repair procedures. Amendments to the regulations will be completed in FY17 to incorporate a revised application, add professionals authorized to verify hearing loss, and simplify the application process overall.

KCDHH continues to work with the Commissioner of Education to ensure that accurate and thorough hearing screenings are completed at the required grade levels to identify students with a hearing loss. Without proper identification, and resources for dealing with a hearing loss and accommodations in the school systems, children cannot learn appropriately.

KCDHH continues to work with emergency service providers, PSAPs and other entities involved in upgrading the E911 system to accept text messaging and videoconferencing as a mean of contacting assistance during an emergency. Federal Law mandated PSAP's to have this ability by 2015 but Kentucky's emergency providers are not yet in compliance. In today's world of mobile communications there must be a way to incorporate text/video messaging to call for help during an emergency. We must bring our 911 system into compliance so that it can serve all consumers!

The Internal Policy Analyst III, Program Coordinator and Executive Director plan to attend the National Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) conference to be held in September 2016 in Maryland. This conference highlights emerging technology and provides an opportunity to network with other state program managers to improve services to our consumers, as well as learn of Federal changes in regulations. Kentucky is highlighted at this conference as a leader in providing the most advanced telecommunications equipment and KCDHH staff serves on several panels to discuss how to best provide effective communication for our consumers. Many states have adopted Kentucky's wireless distribution policy and have added appropriate devices to their distribution programs because of the success of Kentucky's TAP.

**Outreach Plans for FY17 include partnerships with the following entities:**

- Hamilton Relay Service;
- AT&T;
- Kentucky Telephone Association;
- Kentucky Association of the Deaf;
- National Association of the Deaf
- Alexander Graham Bell Association;
- Hearing Loss Association of America;
- American Association of Retired Persons;
- Kentucky School for the Deaf;
- Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation;

Kentucky Office for the Blind;  
Kentucky Assistive Technology Services Network;  
Kentucky Assistive Technology Loan Corporation;  
Kentucky Office of Aging;  
Kentucky Department of Education;  
Veteran's Affairs;  
Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs;  
Speech-Language and Hearing Pathologist Association;  
First Steps;  
Audiologists, Hearing Instrument Specialists; and  
Area Developmental Districts

*What TAP accomplishes as a program, providing basic telecommunication services, goes to the core of what our consumers are able to give back to society. We impact the lives of these citizens by providing services that allow them to utilize telecommunications, receive emergency notifications should a state or national emergency occur, and participate equitably in everyday work and life activities.*