

IP CTS Consumer Concerns

iTRS Advisory Council

September 14, 2016

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Hearing Loss Association of America



- The HLAA mission is to open the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, advocacy, and support.
- HLAA, founded in 1979, has a national network that includes local chapters nationwide, 14 state organizations and office outside Washington, DC.



Director of Public Policy

- Provide information and education about the needs of people with hearing loss
- Advocate for accommodations and greater access to hearing assistive technology
- Work with industry to promote solutions
- Work with regulators who implement laws that impact people with hearing loss

IP CTS is an important, well established service

- A deaf volunteer at HLAA would be unable to manage her doctor's bills, her home repair, her life
- An 80-something yr old user: "I use a captioned telephone, and recently even got a new one with an answering machine."
- For people who have aged into significant hearing loss and people who are oral deaf, there is no other viable option currently available

The Numbers

- 30-48 million people have a hearing loss
- NSA report, *Hearing Health Care for Adults: Priorities for Improving Access and Affordability*: approx .5% of people up to 69 yr old have a moderate to severe loss (150,000)
- 50% of people who are 75 or older have a disabling hearing loss (6 million: NIDCD 2016)
- Fewer than 30% of people 70 and older who could benefit from hearing aids has ever used them

Consumer Concerns

- Distribution of IP CTS phones
 - Too often HLAA hears from or about consumers who could benefit from, but have not heard about IP CTS
 - How do we reach the population that needs it?
 - Will the state equipment programs reach those who need it?

Consumer Concerns

- Quality of services
 - Upgrade of software and hardware
 - Are the providers now investing in upgrades in software that will provide better speech to text captions?
 - Who will be responsible for the future upgrades in the future
 - Troubleshooting
 - Who will be responsible when things go wrong with a particular phone
 - Will enough resources be set aside for troubleshooting?

FCC's Disability Advisory Committee (DAC)



The Nation's Voice for People with Hearing Loss

FCC's DAC Relay & Equipment Distribution Subcommittee, Relay Working Group

Recommendations for Establishing rules and standards for IP CTS quality of service

- Accuracy / Verbatim
 - Completeness
 - Speed
 - Delay / Latency
- Recommendations pending the DAC meeting
September 22, 2016

FCC's DAC

Recommendations from the Technology Transitions Subcommittee

- Voluntary standards for volume control on amplified phones which should apply to CTS
- Next meeting: September 22, 2016
- Live streamed at www.FCC.gov
- <https://www.fcc.gov/general/disability-advisory-committee>

TEDPA & IP CTS

- State distribution: the FCC is moving forward with having the states pick up distribution of IP CTS and the states are willing partners
 - Will states be able to reach a wider market?
 - Will qualifications be so restrictive that people will be denied access?
 - Who will troubleshoot problems?

Mobile IP CTS

- A great idea with mixed reviews
 - Not all smart phones can download the apps
 - Difficulty with connections and dropped calls
 - Latency issues – difficulty in understanding

A Word About The Fund

- Need to balance the need for functional equivalence for consumers with the need to ensure there is a minimum fraud, waste and abuse
- Consumers organizations do worry that our needs will become secondary to fiscal concerns



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