

# Locating & Equipping a Private Practice

# Why is this important?

- Determine:
  - Type of clients
  - Clients flow
  - Overhead costs
  - Profitability

# Clients Types

## ■ Determined by

- Special skills and interests of clinician
- Community needs and attitudes
- Results of feasibility study

## ■ Types

- Out-of-office clients
- Office clients
- Facility clients

# Why is this important?

- Determine:
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# Overhead Costs

- It is a professional service and a business
- Need to
  - Support your lifestyle
  - Educate your children
  - Provide for your retirement
- Lower overhead expenses as much as you can, but
  - Keep a professional appearance
  - Provide quality service
  - Keep an eye on cash flow and income projections
  - Future financial needs
- Overhead costs from building and equipment costs
- Consult with your accountant, lawyer, and financial advisor

# Location

## ■ Region

- Governed by existing geographic location
- Long- versus short-term commitment
  - Ease of dismantling

## ■ Lifestyle

- What kind of place do you prefer to live in?
  - City? Suburbs? Country?
  - Distance from relatives and friends
  - Climate preference
  - Landscape preference and recreational availability

# Location

## ■ Professional Considerations

- License requirements
- Association availability
- Relative need comparison
  - Number of SLPs/100,000
- Assess awareness, knowledge, and attitudes
- Impact of competitors

# Location

## ■ Economic Considerations

- Stability of local government
- Unemployment rate?
  - high → sluggish economy → risky
  - Low → good, but not too low → no employee!!
- Census
  - Static or declining → risky
  - Growing → rate of growth comparison → better health
  - Age, sex, marital status, ethnic affiliation, family income data
    - Pediatric or geriatric?
    - Type of service? Accent reduction?
- Check “Evaluating Communities” pp. 69 and “Checklist for Locating a Practice” pp. 72



# Location

## ■ Communities

### – Factors:

- Quality of the schools
- Property values
- Percentage of home owners vs. renters
- Prosperity of the community
- Supply of local businesses
- Local travel patterns for accessing services
- Population size
- Seasonal changes in population
- Location of the local hospitals
- Availability of other professionals
- Competitors
- Available work for supplemental income
- Distance from your home

# Location

## ■ Specific Site

- Easy to find
  - Pts come late or don't come
  - Well-known nearby site
- Easy access
  - Public transportation nearby?
  - Parking
    - Handicap parking spaces
- Neighborhood Quality
  - Safe and professional
  - Neighborhood trend to upgrade or deteriorate
- Other nearby professional buildings
  - Neighborhood stability and referrals
- Convenience
  - "on the way" to supermarket
- Visibility
  - Attractive, visible sign on a busy street

## ■ Home office not that attractive!!

# Location

## ■ Sources of Information

- Library and computer searches
- Chamber of commerce
- Government officials
- Dept of Health and education, insurance commissioners, and licensure boards
- Small business Administration
- Bankers
- Real estate brokers
- Hospitals
- Schools, colleges, and universities
- Professional association
- Local Professionals
- Lawyer, accountant, financial counselor, insurance broker, management consultant

# Location

## ■ Rent, Buy, or Build?

### – Rent:

- Initial financial investment is small
- Overhead low
- Limited commitment length to a site
- Terms to be included in lease pp. 61-62

### – Buy:

- Investment (an asset growing without taxes)
- Expansion needs

### – Build:

- You plan layout
- But,
  - Cost overruns
  - Invest time and attention to the building process

# Location

## ■ Shared Facilities

- Professional appearance
- Referrals from other professional organizations
- Relatively low overhead
- But,
  - No control over
    - Appearance
    - Scheduling of common areas
    - Training of receptionist

# Physical Characteristics of the office

## ■ General Appearance

- Professional, attractive, comfortable
- Must meet fire and safety codes at city and state levels
- Uncluttered layout, allowing for wheelchairs, walkers, and strollers to be negotiated
- Children space far from walking area, with materials to educate and entertain
- Adequate heating, cooling, and ventilation – smoking?
- Age-appropriate materials (educational, promotional, general reading)
- Clean environment
- Quiet environment

# Physical Characteristics of the office

## ■ Layout

- Minimum: 2 rooms
  - Reception and secretary
  - Treatment and office space
- But, could have
  - Waiting room
  - Child treatment room(s), with parent observation and counseling accommodations
  - Adult treatment room(s) – may serve as small conference rooms
  - Professional offices
  - Materials storage area
  - Conference room
  - Secretarial office(s)
  - Staff lounge
  - Lavatory (Toilet)

# Equipping an SLP Practice

- Establish a budget and prioritize needs
  - But maintain low overhead
- Could lease, purchase, or lease-purchase
  - Depends on funding and long- and short-term plans
- Check list pp. 65-68
  - Furniture
  - General Equipment
  - Office Supplies
  - Decorations and Miscellany
  - Professional Equipment
  - Diagnostic Materials
  - Treatment Materials
  - Professional Supplies