

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

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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