



Corner

American Academy of Health Physics
 American Board of Health Physics
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Title Protection

As reported some time ago in the *CHP News*, the Executive Committee has been studying the issue of Certified Health Physicist (CHP) title protection. This is in response to the concerns expressed by Academy members in the membership survey published in the December 1999 *CHP News*. Previously, the Executive Committee determined that undertakings such as licensure or registration were beyond the needs and capabilities of the Academy and were probably not reasonably achievable. However, title protection seemed more appropriate and possibly easier to enact, and the Executive Committee has continued to review this matter.

Title protection, as envisioned by the American Academy of Health Physics (AAHP) and American Board of Health Physics (ABHP), would ensure that only individuals certified by the ABHP, and whose certification has not been revoked, could use the title or represent themselves to the public as a CHP. Individuals violating these provisions would be subject to a civil penalty (fine of \$1,000 for example).

Title protection would require that appropriate legislation be enacted in each state. In addition, such legislation may have to include specific definitions of terms such as "Health Physicist" and "Health Physics" and should not be undertaken without consultation with and input from the Health Physics Society. In fact, this topic was forwarded to the Society for discussion last June. For these reasons, the AAHP Executive Committee has concluded that title protection is best undertaken by individuals or groups such as local chapters, at the state level, and requires guidance from the national society. The Academy is prepared to provide assistance in any endeavor regarding title protection. We can provide model legislation and contact with Academy members who might have experience with similar pursuits.

Failure to enact such legislation does not mean that we are without recourse when individuals misrepresent themselves as CHPs. Several (three or four) cases of individuals misrepresenting themselves as CHPs in the past

have been presented to the Academy. In each case, direct confrontation with the individual has resulted in a satisfactory resolution of the problem. The best way to prevent this abuse in the future is for all Academy members to remain vigilant and to report any questionable activities to the Secretariat or an Executive Committee member.

Outreach to Inactive CHPs

The ABHP and the AAHP have defined three classes of CHPs. The three categories are:

1. Active Certified Health Physicist—CHPs who have met all continuing education and other requirements for renewal of certification.
2. Emeritus Certified Health Physicist—CHPs in good standing who have retired from professional practice because of age or health.
3. Inactive Health Physicist—CHPs who have not met the requirements for certification renewal.

As of this date, 320 CHPs are listed as Inactive. Of this number, 46 are Inactive by request; that is, they have asked to be placed in the Inactive class because they have moved to other professions or for other reasons. The remaining 274 are Inactive simply because they have not renewed their certification.

In an effort to determine the actual status of the 274 Inactive CHPs and to encourage those who are still active in the profession to become Active CHPs, the Board and Academy have initiated a mailing to each. This mailing offers the Inactive CHP an opportunity to recertify or to apply for emeritus status. Alternatively, the individual may formally request to be listed as Inactive and, it is hoped, will indicate the reason for this action. We hope that this project will encourage Inactive CHPs to become Active and will better identify those who have left the profession or who cannot maintain certification, and the reasons for this. Results will be presented in the "CHP Corner" or *CHP News* when responses have been received. ■