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**Policy No. 15-002**

**Speech-Language Pathologist Policy for the Administration of Barium  
During Radiographic Procedures**

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Speech-language pathologists provide evaluation and treatment services including radiographic procedures to evaluate an individual's swallowing. Such procedures may require the administration of barium to the patient. Barium has been designated a medication. Therefore, the Board issues this Policy to clarify the scope of practice for the use, administration, storage and disposal of barium by speech-language pathologists.

The Board interprets G.L. c. 112, §138 to allow licensed speech-language pathologists who are properly trained to administer barium when necessary for radiographic procedures and evaluations, under the general supervision of a physician, provided that there are protocols in place for emergency response.

The following guidance has been adopted by the Board for speech-language pathologists when administering barium:

1. Before implementing the use of barium in his or her practice, the speech-language pathologist must review all available clinical information about the use, storage, administration and disposal of barium, as well as management of adverse reactions and follow-up care. This may include but is not limited to any relevant standards or studies issued by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association ("ASHA"), and facility policies that govern all aspects of the use of barium.
2. The speech-language pathologist must have an on-going relationship with a physician for referral and communication purposes.
3. The speech-language pathologist must comply with facility policies regarding the use, administration, storage and disposal of barium, which may include directives from the radiology and pharmacy departments.
4. The speech-language pathologist shall follow facility policy and procedure for the performance of radiographic studies, and shall not perform any functions assigned by the facility to another licensed medical professional, including but not limited to the operation of any radiographic equipment.
5. When participating in radiographic swallowing studies, the speech-language pathologist must have access to an appropriate medical professional with appropriate emergency response protocols in place to respond to an adverse reaction.

