

Adult Hearing Services

Details for Referrers

Referral Guidelines for Adults with Hearing Difficulty

The Adult Audiology Service offers the following:

- Initial Assessment conducted by, or supervised by a qualified Audiologist registered with the Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP) or a Clinical Scientist (Audiology) registered with the Health Professionals Council (HPC).
- Hearing Aid fitting appointment within 2 weeks of first assessment.
- Follow-up appointment provided within 10 weeks after the fitting of hearing aids via a telephone follow-up appointment or face to face follow up visit.
- Ongoing maintenance and repair of hearing aids, including the provision of replacement batteries by post.
- All hearing aids are free to patients in the same way as any other NHS service.

Exclusions

- Patients under 55 years of age
- Patients who have a medical contraindication to the clinical services
- Patients who are medically unfit to undergo the clinical services

The SHC Audiology Service follows the British Academy of Audiology Guidance (2007) where referring GPs are asked to refer the patient for an ENT opinion when the following findings are discovered. Referral for a medical opinion will not necessarily delay impression taking for ear moulds or hearing aid provision, however, the Audiologist will make a decision based on clinical findings as to whether it is safe to proceed.

Findings on History:

- Persistent Otolgia affecting either ear (being earache which lasts for more than seven days in the last 90 days before the appointment takes place);
- History of discharge other than wax from either ear within the last 90 days;
- Reported worsening of an existing hearing loss of sudden (24 hours), rapid (less than 90 days) or recent (within one year) onset;
- Hearing loss subject to fluctuation (within last 90 days) beyond that associated with colds;
- Unilateral or asymmetrical, pulsatile or distressing tinnitus (within the last 90 days) which lasts for > 5 minutes at a time;
- Vertigo (as classically described 'an hallucination of movement', not to be confused with the common unsteadiness often associated with age) within the last 90 days.

Findings on Examination:

- Complete or partial obstruction of the external auditory canal that would not allow proper examination of the eardrum and/or the proper and accurate taking of an aural impression;
- Abnormal appearance of the eardrum and/or the outer ear – e.g., perforated eardrum; active discharge.

Findings on Audiometry:

- Conductive hearing loss where audiometry shows 25dB or greater air/bone gap at two or more of the following frequencies: 500, 1000, 2000 or 4000 Hz.
- Unilateral or asymmetrical hearing loss as indicated by a difference in the left/right bone conduction thresholds of 20dB or greater at two or more of the following frequencies: 500, 1000, 2000 or 4000 Hz.
- Where an existing audiogram taken in the last 24 months is available, this shall mean a deterioration of 15dB or more in air conduction threshold readings at two or more of the following frequencies: 500, 1000, 2000 or 4000 Hz.

Other Findings

Any other unusual presenting features at the discretion of the Audiologist.

Removal of Earwax

In order to proceed with the assessment, ear impressions for ear moulds and hearing aid provision, the ear canals must be completely clear of wax. Therefore upon referral and to avoid delays in service provision, any necessary wax management procedure must be completed for the following reasons:

- Occluding wax will affect the hearing test results.
- Even wax that is only partially blocking the ear canal will be pushed further down the ear canal during impression taking for ear moulds potentially creating an impacted wax problem.
- Wax in the ear canals will adversely affect the prescription and programming of hearing aids and will cause the aids to whistle.

How to Refer:

- Referrals can be sent by post, fax or via Choose and Book to SHC Audiology

SHC Audiology Ltd,
Boldings Brook Academy
Dorking Road, Warnham,
Nr Horsham,
West Sussex RH12 3RZ

Tel: 0800 622 6282

Email: info@shc-audiology.co.uk

Text: 07957 491830