



Hearing Assessment Direct Referral Information

Welcome

Your doctor has referred you to Action for Deafness because s/he believes you may benefit from having a hearing aid. There are many possible causes of hearing loss but, in older adults, the main cause is age-related. There are an estimated 10 million people who are Deaf or hard of hearing in the UK and most of them have lost their hearing gradually due to increasing age. 40% of people aged 50 or over have some form of hearing loss.

Your Patient Journey will usually consist of 4 appointments, as follows:

Assessment appointment (Length of appointment is approximately 45 Minutes)

Action for Deafness will, in the first instance, see you to assess whether or not you would benefit from a hearing aid. Your hearing will be tested with an audiometer (this test takes approximately 20 minutes to perform). The audiometer produces sounds of differing pitch and levels of loudness. You will be asked to listen through a set of headphones and to let the audiologist know when you hear a particular sound. The audiologist will record the quietest sound that you can hear at each frequency. This is known as the 'threshold' sound.

If this test suggests that you would find a hearing aid useful, the audiologist will discuss options with you. Unless there is a reason to do otherwise, you will be offered digital hearing aids. The audiologist may also take impressions of your ears so that ear moulds can be made or alternatively you may be offered open fit moulds. Both the test and impression should be quite painless.

Your Individual Management Plan (IMP) will be discussed with you and you will be given a written copy of the plan. If you need to have ear moulds then the audiologist will make another appointment for you to return to have your hearing aids fitted, usually after 4-6 weeks. If you are able to have open fit moulds then you may have your hearing aids fitted at the initial appointment, if you wish to do so. This may result in the initial appointment lasting for an additional 45 minutes.

Fitting appointment (Length of appointment is approximately 60 minutes)

If you need to have an ear mould made, you will be given a fitting appointment to have the hearing aids fitted. At the fitting appointment, the audiologist will show you how to put the aid in your ear, how to use the controls, and how to change the batteries. The audiologist will also explain what your hearing aid can and cannot do. S/he may suggest ways for you to get used to it, such as gradually increasing the length of time you wear it. They may suggest that you use it to listen to different sounds around the house, before trying it outside.

Follow up appointment (Length of appointment is approximately 15 minutes)

You will be asked to return for a follow up appointment approximately 2 months after your hearing aids have been fitted. AFD may call you to ask how you are getting on with your new hearing aids.

Communication tactics training for New Users (Length of appointment is 90 minutes)

When you are fitted with your new hearing aids, the audiologist will give you an appointment to attend a group session with other new hearing aid users. You will be given useful tips on getting the best from your hearing aids and coping strategies for dealing with your hearing loss. Your friends and family are also welcome to attend this session as it will give them an insight into how best they can help you to adjust to your hearing loss.

On-going support

AFD has trained Resource Centre staff who are available to help. Please drop in or contact us by email or telephone or visit our web site for further advice, support or information.

You will be given an opportunity to try assistive listening devices and to find out more about the full range of our services at every appointment.

Please feel free to bring a companion with you to any of your appointments.

AFD's NHS hearing aids are free at the point of delivery. A charge may be made for lost or damaged aids.

All AFD bases have disabled access and members of staff are always on hand to help with any mobility issues. If you require any communication support or have any questions about your patient journey, please let us know before your appointment.

You may wish to visit our web site for further information before your appointment.

www.actionfordeafness.org.uk

Please let us know if you have any communication needs: BSL interpreter, speech to text interpreter, other languages interpreter.