novus health

NHS

Hearing Health

Audiology

General Information Leaflet

Get better
Stay better

What is hearing loss?

As our ears age their sensitivity to different tones can become reduced. Most commonly this happens in the high pitched region although this can vary. Changes in hearing can come about due to noise exposure, disease or simply the ageing process.

What happens in the ear to cause hearing loss?

In most cases hearing loss is caused by damage or wear and tear to the 'hair cells' inside the inner ear. As these cells reduce in number the volume required for us to hear a sound increases. Damage to the eardrum or 3 small bones can also prevent sound from reaching the inner ear making it difficult to hear.

What are the symptoms of hearing loss?

Difficulty in background noise - Hearing may seem normal in quiet or one to one environments but you may struggle in group situations.

Increased TV volume - You may require a higher volume setting on your television than those around you.

Repetition - You may find it increasingly necessary to ask those around you to repeat what they have said for clarification.

Pathway

Assessment

This appointment normally lasts for 45 minutes to an hour. The Audiologist will ask you about your hearing, explain the process to you and you will have an opportunity to ask questions. Your ear canals will be examined to ensure the skin of the ear canal and the eardrums are healthy. A detailed history of your hearing health will be taken including the speed of any changes and any problems with balance or ringing in the ears (Tinnitus).

Pure tone audiometry is the assessment which allows us to measure any hearing difficulty you may be having. You will have headphones placed onto your ears and be asked to listen to sounds of different pitches and levels of loudness. You will be asked to press a button each time you hear a sound.

The Audiologist may also make the sounds louder to find out the level at which they become uncomfortable for you to listen to them.

All these tests will help the Audiologist identify if you have hearing loss and the level of your hearing loss. The tests can also show up any problems with your eardrum or middle ear. The information received from the assessment is used to programme your hearing aids.

Should we identify a hearing loss requiring correction we will offer to fit hearing aids on the same day in most cases. Where this is not possible an impression will be taken of your ear for a custom made ear mould to be made and an appointment will be booked for your hearing aids to be fitted.

Hearing aid fitting

Modern digital hearing aids are capable of being very accurately fitted to your individual hearing loss and ear shape. The fitting procedure involves placing a very sensitive microphone into your ear canal and measuring the output of the hearing aid against a target for your hearing loss to ensure you will obtain the maximum benefit from your devices.

Once your hearing aid has been fitted the Audiologist will discuss the following points:

- Setup of the aid
- Fitting and using your hearing aid
- Adaptation to the hearing aid sounds
- Information on how to maintain and take care of the hearing aid
- How to change the battery
- How to receive your batteries

Written information on all the above will be given to you at the end of your appointment.

Hearing aids

Modern hearing aids are significantly more discrete and effective compared to older models. In the majority of cases you will be offered 'open style' thin tube fittings which are very light and comfortable to wear. If your hearing loss requires a very high powered device an ear mould will be made for your ears to ensure you obtain maximum benefit from the fitting. All hearing aids, batteries and aftercare are free of charge.

However please note that Novus Health reserves the right to apply a charge of £70 for hearing aids that have been lost or damaged due to user negligence. Novus Health makes no profit from this charge which simply takes into account the cost of a replacement aid, mould or receiver and the Audiologists' time and materials.

Not treating may be an option

Where your hearing measurement indicates a very mild loss or you feel you are not experiencing any significant difficulties a hearing aid may not be required. Should this be the case appropriate listening tactics will be discussed to help you maximise your hearing performance in a range of situations.

Follow up

Within 8 - 10 weeks after your fitting you will receive a paper review via post. This will include a questionnaire on the care you received and how you are getting on with the hearing aid. It will also include a self-addressed and pre-paid envelope to send back to Novus Health. Depending on the feedback we receive, you may be invited to a 15 minute appointment for us to rectify any issues you may be experiencing with your hearing aid.

Ongoing care for 3 years

Novus Health will continue to support you throughout your 3 year pathway:

Provision of batteries/hearing aid repair appointments - (15 minute appointments) for new ear moulds, lost, broken, faulty hearing aids etc.

Fine tune/review appointments - (30-60 minute appointments) to retest hearing, adjust/upgrade hearing aids and check progress as necessary.

Long-term care - once you are satisfied with your hearing aid provision, you will be put onto our 3 year pathway which allows you to contact us at any time to access any changes you may need.

3 year review - You will be offered a repeat hearing assessment and if required reprogramming of your hearing aids, at the end of your 3 year care pathway.

Additional Support

We have a wide range of self-help tutorials available on our website here: www.novushealth.co.uk/our-services/adult-hearing-loss/self-help-tutorials

Assistive Listening Devices

All of our new hearing aids are compatible with the Resound Unite wireless streaming devices. These can help you hear the television, in a noisy room or even link your hearing aids to your mobile phone for clearer calls. These devices are not available on the NHS but can be purchased separately. Ask your Audiologist for further details.

Our Vision

"To be recognised for our commitment to improving health care services for the local community, developing our range of locally accessed services and excelling in quality, safety and patient experience"

This vision is underpinned by a series of more specific strategic aims

- Improving the safety and clinical quality of our services
- Improving the experience for the patients that we treat, as well as their carers and families
- Developing the range of services we provide and developing the integration of services between primary and secondary care
- Delivering services closer to peoples' homes, with continually improved access to treatment times
- Developing our organisation and workforce
- Continually improving the financial stability of the organisation to enable us to re-invest in new services
- Supporting local GP networks to develop and deliver services

Patients are referred to Novus Health by their GPs using the 'e-Referral' system.

Contact us

If you have any comments, complaints or just want to know more about the services we provide, please contact us on 01924 898784.