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Hearing Assessment Appointment

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Why might I need a Hearing Assessment?

There are several possible causes of hearing loss. A temporary hearing loss may be due to a cold, wax or an infection. A permanent hearing loss may be due to genetics, noise exposure, disease or age. Many people, as they get older, develop age-related hearing loss (Presbycusis) and may benefit from using hearing aid/s. Your GP (family doctor) has referred you to us for an assessment of your hearing with a view to your being prescribed with hearing aid/s. This appointment is up to one hour long.

Before your visit

If you have any special requirements **please contact us as soon as possible**, i.e. if you require a specific interpreter/BSL or other please let us know (although we cannot guarantee to have the interpreter you want), also if you have a medically implanted device e.g. Pacemaker or PVP shunt or use motorised mobility equipment, as this will impact on where the appointment can be booked for accessibility.

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, if you would like to be accompanied we welcome this; it can be very helpful to have someone with you to remember the information we give you.

Who will I see for my hearing assessment?

You will be seen by a trained specialist called an Audiologist. They will be registered with either the Health Professionals Council or the Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists. These are the organisations responsible for ensuring that all Audiologists are competent and appropriately trained.

As a teaching hospital, you may be seen by a supervised student Audiologist on a clinical placement from their University. If you prefer **not** to be seen by a student, then please inform us **before** your appointment date to enable us to rearrange our schedule.

What happens at this appointment?

You will be asked a number of questions about your hearing history; the Audiologist will also examine your ears using an Otoscope (a hand held device for looking in ears) before performing a test of your hearing.

Headphones will be placed over your ears and you will be asked to listen to sounds of differing pitch and loudness. You need 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 you start to find them uncomfortable to listen to. Sometimes, it is necessary to do further non-invasive tests. The Audiologist will explain these to you at the time, should these be necessary.

The test results are used to determine the level and nature of your hearing. Should you require hearing aids; this will enable us to programme hearing aids to maximise your hearing. The tests can also show up any problems with your eardrum or middle ear. In some cases this might require you to attend an Ear, Nose and Throat department to see a Consultant for further advice. Your GP will be advised if this is the case and make the referral for you.

When will I know the results of the assessment?

As soon as the tests are completed, the Audiologist will explain the results to you and discuss the options you have. This might be a referral back to your GP or you may benefit from Hearing Aids.

What happens next?

If hearing aids are recommended and you decide to go ahead with a trial, the options will be discussed with you and you will agree a management plan with your Audiologist. You will either:

- have an impression taken of your ear/s to enable us to make ear mould/s for fitting of the hearing aid/s and be given an appointment to return for fitting of the hearing aid/s or
- you will be given an appointment date to return for fitting of a hearing aid/s which does not require an impression of your ears as 'lifetubes' can be used. This will have been discussed earlier.

We will also provide you with a copy of your results and a management plan as agreed with your Audiologist; these may be posted to you dependent on printer availability. Following your appointment, a full report detailing your test results and treatment will be sent to your GP.

What if I can't find the answer to my question in this leaflet?

If you have questions not answered by this leaflet please don't hesitate to contact us using the details at the top of this form. Our website hyperlink below takes you to our Website; this site includes useful advice, information and videos. Or type: Audiology Bristol and select St. Michael's in a search engine. <http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/your-hospitals/st-michaels-hospital/what-we-do/audiology/> .

We welcome any comments or feedback about your appointment and you can respond on this online survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/R7HZJKH> as this helps us make changes to support patient care. This document has been reviewed and agreed by the patient participation hearing group.

Please allow plenty of time to get to us, if you are late for your appointment, it may not be possible to see you and the appointment may need to be rebooked.