



*Better
Together*

Patient information

Assistive Listening Devices

Ear Nose and Throat Directorate

What are Listening Devices?

Listening devices make sounds louder, helping you to hear better at home, with the television, at work, in lectures etc. Listening equipment can be used whether or not you wear hearing aids. The type of listening device that you need depends on the type of hearing loss that you may have.

- **Mild deafness**

You have slight difficulty following speech in noisy situations.

- **Moderate deafness**

You have difficulty following speech without hearing aids.

- **Severe deafness**

You have difficulty following speech even with hearing aids and rely a lot on lip reading.

- **Profoundly deaf**

You are more likely to rely on lip reading.

More information about the type of listening device you need depending on the type of hearing loss can be found on the Action on Hearing Loss website or by contacting their information line (see details at end of this leaflet).

Sensory Alerts

There is equipment available to alert you to sounds around the home such as flashing lights and vibrating pads.

Having trouble waking up in the morning?

Alarm clocks can either alert you by vibrating or flashing lights. They are also available with sound if you have a partner with normal hearing. The vibrating alarm clocks are usually placed under the pillow. Whereas the flashing alarm clock alerts you by a flashing light. This is useful for people who are woken up easily by light.

Can't hear the doorbell?

Doorbell systems can either use loud sounds or flashing lights. If you have a mild to moderate hearing loss then a louder doorbell would be suitable. If you have a more severe hearing loss then a flashing light doorbell would be more appropriate.

Are you having difficulty hearing the phone ring?

Try increasing the ring volume or adjust the pitch if possible. It is also possible to attach a flashing light or extension bells making it easier to hear the telephone ring if you are in another room.

Are you finding it difficult hearing the caller?

Using a telephone amplifier can help overcome this problem. You can also use your hearing aid with a phone that is hearing aid compatible. However for this you will need to have the loop system activated on your hearing aid. This can easily be done; all you need to do is book an appointment with one of the audiologists.

There also special telephones available by BT for hearing impaired that use amplifiers. For further information please contact: **Tel: 0800 917 0510**

Mobile Phones

It is possible to adjust the ringer volume on mobile phones as well as having a range of ring tones. Many mobile phones also vibrate when they ring. On some mobile phones you can also adjust the volume when having a conversation on the phone. There is also the advantage of sending SMS messages which can be useful in emergencies.

As mobile phones are digital they cause interference with hearing aids so it is best to try the mobile phone with your hearing aid before purchasing one. However there are listening accessories such as neck loops and ear hooks which you can attach to your mobile phone to prevent the interference.

Videophones

You can use videophones to make video or voice only calls. It allows you to see and talk to a person at the same time. It also allows you to sign language however you will need to sign slower than usual.

Text Phones

These are useful if you are severely or profoundly deaf. They come with a display screen and a keyboard which allows you to type what you want to say. If the person you are talking to also has a text phone you can read their reply. If the other person has a normal phone and you have a text phone then it is possible to talk to them using the RNID type talk.

The RNID type talk allows you to type what you want to say and an operator will pass the message on to the other person on the telephone. More information about the Action on Hearing Loss type talk can be found on www.typpetalk.org

Baby Monitors

Baby monitors are similar to alarm clocks in the way they operate. They also use vibrating pads or flashing lights to alert you to your baby. There are also baby monitors available that allows you to see your baby on the television which has become quite popular.

Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms are important safety devices that everyone should have.

The fire service will often fit smoke alarms as part of their 'Home Fire Safety Check' service.

For more information please contact the Merseyside Fire Service and make them aware that you have a hearing impairment.

Smoke alarms are also available through Action on Hearing Loss (AoHL). They are available with vibrating pads or flashing lights.

Loop Systems

A Loop system picks up on sound so you can hear it more clearly as it reduces the background noise around you. To use the loop system an additional program called the Telecoil is needed. For example loop systems can be connected to your television so it only picks up sound from the television.

It can also be used at public places such as banks, theatres and churches. If there is a loop system then they will have this sign displayed:



The loop system may not always be activated so remember to ask if it is activated or not when you see this sign.

How does it work?

The loop system converts sound into magnetic signals. These signals are then picked up by the hearing aid if the hearing aid is switched to the 'T' position i.e. the telecoil program.

Neck loops and Ear hooks

A neck loop is worn around the neck with an ear hook that fits over the ear next to the hearing aid. The hearing aid will pick up the signal via the ear hook and neck loop as long as the hearing aid is switched on to the loop system. The neck loop and ear hooks are then connected to headphone sockets on your television or listening equipment. This will only pick up on the sound from the television for example and cut the noises around you.

Contact Information

The devices mentioned in this leaflet are available from Action on Hearing Loss (AoHL) or Merseyside Society for Deaf people (MSDP).

You may be able to get help to pay for the equipment. Please contact your social services for more information. They may be able to help towards or pay for your equipment. Social services should provide a loop system for your television and equipment for your doorbell if you contact them.

Additional Resources

Each service provides extra advice, guidance and information on additional resources such as listening devices or other support services.

Merseyside Society for Deaf People (MSDP)

1st Floor

Etc Buildings

16 Crosby Road North

Waterloo

Liverpool

L22 0NY

Tel: 0151 285 4054 (Voice/ Minicom)

Email: reception@msdp.org.uk

Website: <http://www.msdp.org.uk/>

British Tinnitus Association

Ground Floor,

Unit 5 Acorn Business Park,

Woodseats close,

Sheffield,

S8 0TB

Tel: 0800 018 0527

Website: <http://www.tinnitus.org.uk/>

Action on Hearing Loss (AoHL)

19-2 Featherstone Street

London

EC1Y 8SL

Tel: 0808 808 0123

Text phone: 0808 808 9000

Website: <http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/>

AoHL Shop (hearing loss products)

Tel: 01733 361199

Text phone: 01733 238020

Website:

<http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop.aspx>

Access to Work Support unit

Operational Support Unit

Harrow Jobcentre Plus

Mail Handling Site A

Wolverhampton

WVN8 1JE

Tel: 0345 268 8489

Text phone: 0345 608 8753

Email: atwosu.london@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Website: http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport/WorkSchemesAndProgrammes/DG_4000347

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service

Service Headquarters,

Bridle Road,

Bootle,

Merseyside,

L30 4YD.

Tel: 0151 296 4000

Website: <http://www.merseyfire.gov.uk>

Further information

Audiology Department

Alexandra Wing

Broadgreen Hospital

Thomas Drive

L14 3LB

Tel: 0151 706 2533

Text phone number: 18001 0151 706 2533

Liverpool social services

Tel: 0151 233 3800

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Ear Nose and Throat

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All Trust approved information is available on request in alternative formats, including other languages, easy read, large print, audio, Braille, moon and electronically.

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