



Accommodations for Hard of Hearing Residents in Long Term Care



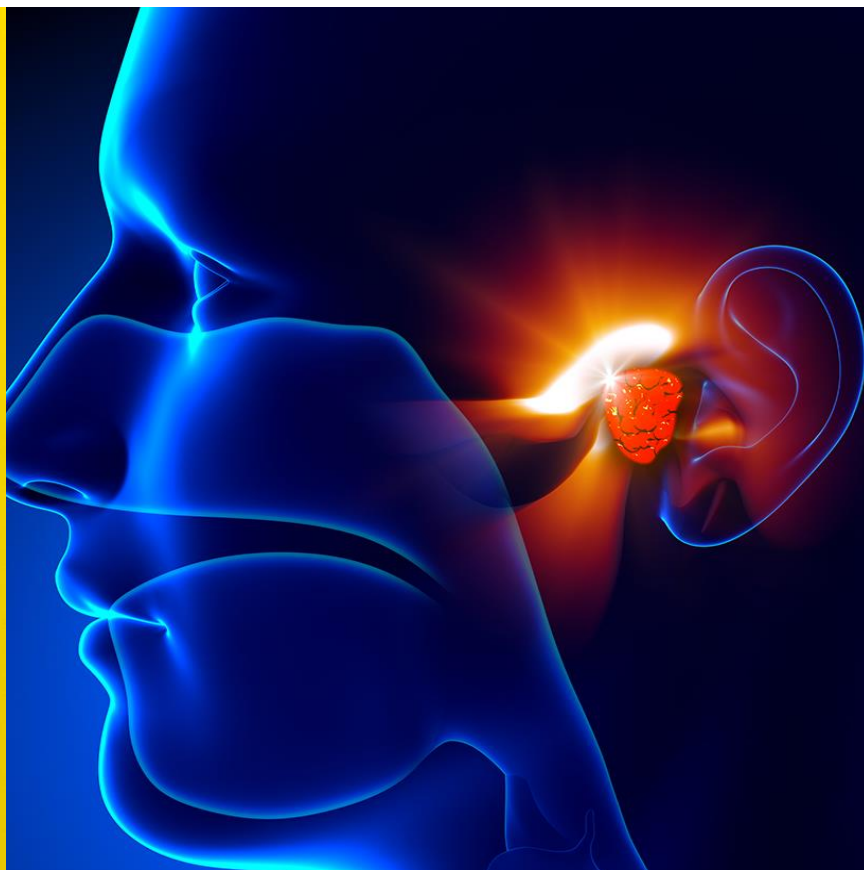
**Tony Davis, MSW, Hard of Hearing Services
Coordinator**

**N.C. Division of Services for the Deaf
and the Hard of Hearing**

July, 2019



Hearing Aids



Hearing Aids

Benefits of using hearing aids in long-term care settings

- **Resident able to more fully participate in:**
 - **Activities**
 - **Mealtime group conversations**
 - **Care planning meetings**
 - **Daily interactions with staff and other residents**
 - **Doctor and nurse visits**
- **Untreated hearing loss leads to**
 - **Increased risk of**
 - **Dementia**
 - **Falls**
 - **Isolation and depression**



Funding Hearing Aids

- **Medicare**
 - **Part A and B: No coverage**
- **Medicare Supplemental Plans**
 - **i.e. United Health Care Plan NC**
- **Medicaid**
 - **Adults: no coverage in North Carolina**
 - **Twenty-Five states cover one or two hearing aids**
 - **One state covers for nursing home residents**
- **Private Insurance Companies**
 - **May contribute towards total costs e.g. \$500-\$1,000**
 - **May give allowance to purchase hearing aids**
 - **Offer discounts to specific providers e.g. 30 percent off**
- **Veteran's Administration**
 - **Covers hearing aids and accessories**
 - **Veterans Benefits Administration (based on percent of disability)**
 - **Veterans Health Administration (Health Care)**

Funding Hearing Aids

- **North Carolina Statewide Resources**
 - **Equipment Distribution Services Program through the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
 - **Provides one hearing aid with a telecoil for people to communicate on the telephone**
 - **Serves those that meet specific audiological need and are below 250 percent of poverty line**
 - **NC Independent Living Program**
 - **Charlotte Speech and Hearing Center (discounted hearing aids)**
 - **Easter Seals NC**
 - **Self Help Credit Union assistive technology loan**
- **Potential Barriers**
 - **A person will not financially qualify for assistance**
 - **A person will not know about these resources available**

Funding Hearing Aids

- **Some National Resources**
 - **AARP: offers discounts on certain hearing aids and accessories**
 - **Audient: Provides hearing aids at partial cost to low income Americans**
 - **National Hearing Aid Project**
 - **Gift of Hearing Foundation**
 - **Starkey Hearing Aid Foundation: Hear Now Program**
 - **Foundation for Sight & Sound: Help America Hear**
 - **Hearing Charities of America**
 - **Miracle-Ear Foundation**
 - **Lions Club international**

- **Potential Barriers**
 - **A person will not financially qualify for assistance**
 - **A person will not know about the resources available**

Recommendations to Consider Related to Hearing Aids

- **When adults with hearing loss cannot afford hearing aids on their own**
 - **Medicaid**
 - **Both Direct Medicaid and Managed Care:**
 - **DHB or PHP's purchase binaural hearing aids every four years for recipients with hearing loss regardless of age if medically necessary**
 - **Purchase drying/storage system for hearing aids that will prolong the life of a hearing aid and provide a safe and identifiable storage system**
 - **Access to:**
 - **Navigators that can assist those in long term care settings with applying for hearing aids from various resources**
 - **Social workers for both hospital systems and long term care facilities**
 - **Provide NC and national hearing aid bank resources that are continuously kept up to date**
 - **Assist residents/patients with applying for the DSDHH EDS program and or other hearing aid resources**
 - **Training for long-term care staff on hearing aid care i.e. cleaning, storage, testing and changing batteries**

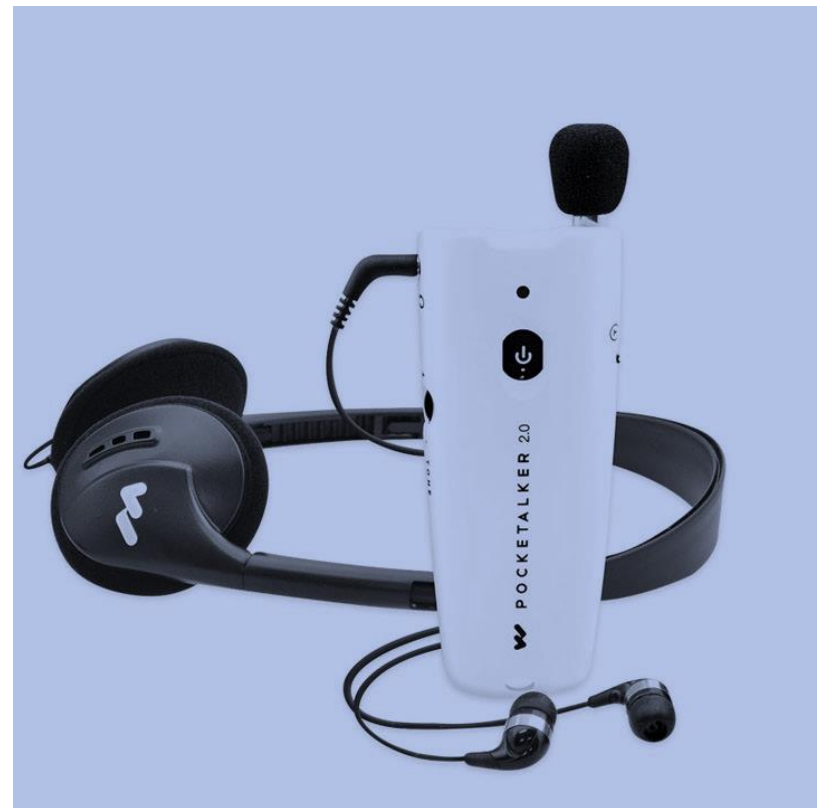
Personal Amplifiers



Personal Amplifiers

A multi-use solution for those who do not use hearing aids and some that do

- Use with headphones or earbuds, neckloop
- Often rechargeable
- Often \$100-\$200
- Easy to use for most patients
- Can use with hearing aids that have t-coil
- Can have several sets available for multiple use during activities



Funding Hearing Personal Amplifiers

- **Medicare**
 - **No coverage**
- **Medicaid**
 - **No coverage**
 - **MN does cover by using Medicaid Waivers (considered a durable medical supply)**
- **Private Insurance Companies**
 - **No coverage**
- **Veteran's Administration**
 - **Will cover**
 - **May require resident to self-advocate**
- **Equipment Distribution Services Program through the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
 - **Can choose amplifier instead of hearing aid or amplified phone**
- **Accessibility: Should have several on hand at each long term care setting**
- **Depending on brand, can use with inductive loop system**

Recommendations to Consider Related to Personal Amplifiers

- **Long-term care settings, medical centers and small practices provide personal amplifiers to residents and patients**
 - **Number of amplifiers provided fits the need of facility**
 - **Example:**
 - **Medical center: two amplifiers per waiting room area**
 - **Long term care setting: five amplifiers for each ten residents**
 - **Physician offices: two amplifiers per office**
 - **Headphones and earbuds stored for each resident in long-term care settings**
 - **Amplifiers are charged and sanitized after use**
 - **Signage that promotes culture of use and acceptance**
 - **Medicaid**
 - **Utilize waiver funding**
 - **Create new waiver for persons with hearing loss**
- **Civil Money Penalty Reinvestment Program funds**

Wide Area Listening Systems



Wide Area Listening Systems

FM System, Infra Red, Inductive loop

- **Uses transmitter and receiver(s)**
- **Can connect directly into sound system**
 - **Group**
 - **Activities**
 - **Presentations**
 - **Performances**
 - **Movies**
- **Inductive Loops**
 - **Conference rooms**
 - **Activity rooms**
 - **Chapels**
 - **Theatres**



Funding Assistive Listening Systems

- **Facilities should provide systems as an ADA accommodation**
- **ADA-219**
 - **There need to be assistive listening systems provided**
 - **For assembly area where “audible communication is integral to the use of space”**
 - **Laws about receiver ratios**



Recommendations to Consider Related to Assistive Listening Systems

- **Signage that promotes culture of use and acceptance**
- **Hearing aid providers working with residents informed of assistive listening systems**
- **Civil Money Penalty Reinvestment Program funds can be used to**
 - **“to aid nursing home teams in reducing adverse events, improving staffing quality and improving dementia care”**
 - **Untreated hearing loss leads increases risk of**
 - **Dementia**
 - **Adverse events**
- **Long-term care settings contact DSDHH to get expert guidance and resources**

Civil Money Penalty Reinvestment Program, July 2019

Thank you

- **Questions?**
- **Contact Information**

Tony Davis Hard of Hearing Services Coordinator

Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

NC Department of Health and Human Services

Office: 919-351-2206 (VP)

Voice/TTY: 800-851-6099

Fax: 919-855-6873

Tony.Davis@dhhs.nc.gov

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