

# Audiology

A guide for hearing aid users  
What you need to know

# Contents

What to expect from your hearing aid	3
Will I get used to my hearing aid?	4
Hearing aid controls	5
Using your hearing aid(s) with the phone	6
Induction Loop	7
Care and Maintenance	8
Troubleshooting guide	9
Workshop: Open access repair service	11
Listening Tactics & Communication tips	13
Battery postal service	15
Helpful Resources & Contact Details	16
Audiology Contact Details	19

# Welcome

You have recently been fitted with a digital hearing aid; this is the first step towards better hearing and here at the Bradford Audiology Department we want to help you get the full benefits from our hearing aids.

**At your appointment you should have received the following:**

- Hearing aid record card
- Hearing aid pouches
- Instruction booklet
- Batteries

**If you did not receive any of the above please contact the department using the contact details at the back of this booklet.**



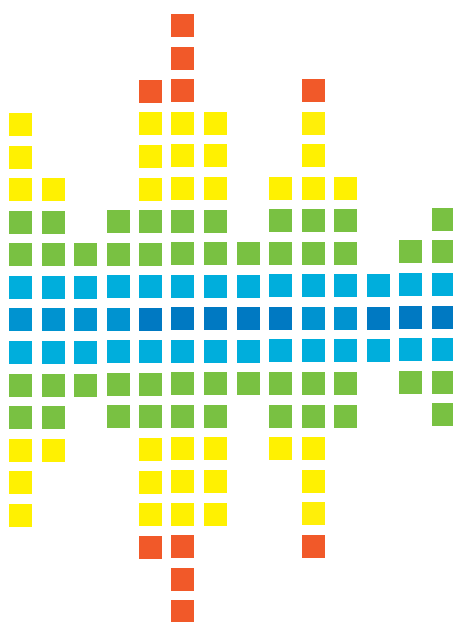
# What to expect from your hearing aids

Digital hearing aids are programmed to match your hearing loss and hearing needs as closely as possible. They work by increasing the volume of sounds by an appropriate amount at different pitches of sound.

Hearing aids cannot give you perfect hearing, but they can help you to hear better in situations where you are struggling. The benefit you will receive from your hearing aid is dependent on your degree of hearing loss. The hearing aid should improve your ability to pick up speech so that you are able to follow conversation.

Hearing in a noisy environment can be challenging for anyone but becomes more difficult if you have a hearing loss. Modern day hearing aids aim to minimise the background

noise as much as possible, however it is not possible for them to completely remove it. It is important that you do not expect your hearing aid alone to be sufficient in noisy places and you still need to consider various communication strategies such as ensuring you have face to face conversation.



# Will I get used to my hearing aid?

It is likely to take time to get used to a hearing aid. Generally people notice gradual deterioration in their hearing and therefore become accustomed to hearing at a quieter level or completely missing some sounds. When a hearing aid is fitted it will turn the sounds up instantly. You may not recognise some sounds; some sounds may not sound natural to you, and some sounds you may not have heard for a while (for example a clock ticking or bird songs). As a result it does take some time to get used to the sound of your hearing aid.

In order to adapt to the amplification provided by the hearing aid, it may be best to gradually increase usage, starting with easier listening situations such as your home environment and then more challenging environments.

You may initially wear it for an hour and slowly increase the amount of time you wear your hearing aid and gradually start introducing more complex listening situations. You will obtain maximum benefit from your hearing aid if you use it consistently.



# Hearing aid controls

**Colour coded** – If you have been issued with two hearing aids your hearing aid will be coloured with a marker to help you identify which is for your right and left ear. This is located in the battery drawer.



**Red – Right ear**



**Blue – Left ear**

**Program switch** – this is present on most hearing aids. It allows you to switch between different programs and is most commonly used for the Loop/T system or different programs for different listening environments. Your audiologist would be able to explain and discuss programs which would be more suitable for you.

**Volume control** – some hearing aids may have a volume control. This can be a wheel or a lever. Your audiologist will have informed you if it is active on your hearing aid and how to use it.



# Using your hearing aid(s) with the phone

The most important thing to remember when using the phone is that you should hold the receiver to the hearing aid(s) and NOT your ear. As a hearing aid user, any sound now passes through your hearing aid before reaching your ear. The picture shows an example of how to achieve this.





# Induction Loop

A loop system transfers sound direct to the hearing aid, cutting out most background noise enabling you to hear sounds more clearly. You will find loops in many theatres, cinemas, conference halls, booking offices, bank counters, hospitals and many other public places.

Wherever you see this sign it means an induction loop is fitted. The induction loop may not always be switched on or working even though it is fitted in an area therefore ask someone for assistance if you are having difficulty picking up any sound through the loop.

The loop system should be activated on your hearing aid in your fitting appointment.

If it has not been activated then you can ask the audiologist to activate this for you. You can also get loop systems for use in the house and you can get telephones which are compatible with hearing aids with built in loop systems.



**Hearing Loop**  
Switch hearing aid to T-coil



# Care and maintenance

If your ear mould is not maintained correctly, the quality of sound from your hearing aid will be affected. If the ear mould becomes blocked, your hearing aid may appear to stop working altogether. Therefore it is important to clean your ear mould regularly.

It is recommended to have the hearing aid serviced regularly, as a minimum every 6 months, which can be done at the open access repair clinic. The service consists of cleaning and re-tubing the mould.

## **Cleaning your hearing aid**

Clean the hearing aid by wiping it carefully with a soft, dry cloth or tissue. Take care not to get it wet.

## **Cleaning your ear mould**

The ear mould should be wiped clean every night with a soft, dry cloth, a tissue or a wet wipe. Do not use any chemicals as this can damage it. A pin or a similar item can be used to remove any wax or debris that has got into the channel that goes through the ear mould.

At least once a week, preferably more often – the ear mould should be separated from the hearing aid and washed in warm soapy water. Once the ear mould has been washed please allow the water to dry or blow any water out in the tubing before attaching the ear mould to the hearing aid. However, this should be checked with your audiologist first.

# Troubleshooting guide

Problem	What could it be?	How to fix it
No Sound	Aid not switched on	Check that the hearing aid battery drawer is closed and hearing aid is switched on.
	Battery inserted incorrectly	Make sure the battery is inserted correctly; make sure the '+' on the battery matches the '+' on the hearing aid
	Dead battery	Replace Battery
	Ear mould, thin tube or domes blocked with wax	Clean ear mould or thin tube, pay special attention to the end of the tube
	Water droplets or condensation in tubing	Detach hearing aid from tubing, blow through tube, tap or shake to remove water
	Using incorrect program	Make sure the hearing aid is not on the telecoil program
Sound is intermittent	Tubing is twisted	Untwist tubing
	Water droplets in tubing	Tap, shake or blow to clear tubing
	Internal intermittent problem with hearing aid	Visit the workshop for your hearing aid to be checked

Problem	What could it be?	How to fix it
Sore ears	Ear mould is too tight or there are sharp edges on the ear mould	Visit the workshop. May need to modify or arrange to replace the mould
	Ear mould has been inserted incorrectly	Check whether the mould has been fitted properly in the ear using a mirror
	Allergic reaction to ear mould	Visit the workshop; they will need to arrange for a new ear mould in a different material
Tubing	Is discoloured, brittle or keeps falling out	Visit the workshop for replacement tubing
Hearing aid whistling	Ear mould is not in correctly	Remove the ear mould and put into the ear again, use a mirror to check if inserted correctly
	Ear mould is too small	Visit workshop for new mould
	Cracked / split ear mould	Visit workshop for new mould
	Cracked / split / stiff tubing	Visit the workshop for replacement tubing
	Tubing is blocked with water or wax	Clean tubing to remove wax or blow through tubing to get rid of any water or condensation
	Wax in the ear canal	Arrange for GP / practice nurse to check and treat if necessary

# Troubleshooting guide

## **Volume and sound alterations**

It is not possible to have the volume or sound of the hearing aid altered or adjusted through the workshop therefore if we are not able to rectify the issue an appointment will be arranged by our clerical team.

## **What to do if you lose your hearing aid**

If you have lost your hearing aid you will need to contact the workshop for us to arrange a replacement for you. At present we do not charge a replacement fee for lost or damaged hearing aids.

# Workshop: Open Access Repair Service

The Bradford Adult Hearing service provides an Open Access Repair Service called the Workshop for all our hearing aid users for which an appointment is not necessary.

The Workshop is based within the Audiology Department at the Bradford Royal Infirmary.

At your fitting appointment you will have been issued with a Hearing Aid Record Card. You will need to bring this card with you to access the service. Patients are seen on a first come first serve basis in number order based on a ticket system. Please take a ticket on arrival and take a seat.

## **What this service offers**

- Replacement batteries and tubing.
- Modification of your ear mould or providing a new ear mould if necessary.
- Hearing aid checks. If you are concerned your hearing aid is faulty or may not be working correctly, we are able to check the function of your hearing aid and replace if necessary.
- Re-instruction of hearing aid use and maintenance.
- Management of hearing aid feedback or additional hearing aid programs.
- Replacement of faulty, damaged or lost hearing aids.

## **Opening Times**

To avoid disappointment please attend within the designated opening times:

Monday to Friday between: 9.00 am to 12.30 pm

Monday to Thursday between: 1.45 pm to 4.00 pm

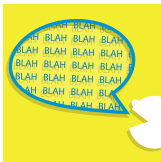
# Listening Tactics & Communication Tips

Even with the best hearing aid, some situations will still be very difficult. There are some things that others can do that can help you stay in conversations more easily.



## **Get my attention**

Before you start to speak ensure you are in the same room as the person and you have their full attention.



## **Don't speak too fast**

If someone does not understand what you are saying you need to try and slow down your speech.



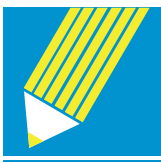
## **Face them**

Always turn and face the person as it helps them pick up any visual clues you may give them.



## **Get to the point**

Use plain language and don't waffle.



## **Write things down**

If someone is struggling to understand you, write down what you are trying to say.



### **State the topic**

If the context is known it is easier for someone to understand what you are saying. State the topic before moving from one conversation to another.



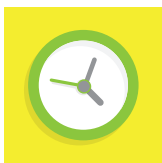
### **Rephrase**

Rephrase what you have said with different words if the person has not understood what you have said even after you have repeated it.



### **Confirm details**

Do not assume someone has understood what you have said to them, confirm important details.



### **Time**

Give plenty of time for the person to understand and process what you have said. Avoid providing too much information quickly, say what needs to be said slowly and pause between phrases.



### **Don't shout**

You should keep your voice at a normal level. It is uncomfortable for a hearing aid user if you shout and it looks aggressive.



# Battery postal Service

- You can post your hearing aid record card in an envelope to the Audiology department and we will post the batteries back to you free of charge.
- The address is available on the reverse of your record card or the back page of this handbook.
- Ensure postage is paid when you send the card to Audiology (a 2nd class stamp is sufficient). You will not be charged for return postage of the card and batteries.
- Please do not include used or spent batteries as this will incur a further postage charge for you.
- Please do not post your hearing aid or mould unless instructed to do so.
- Batteries can also be collected from the audiology department at the Bradford Royal Infirmary.

# Helpful Resources

## **Morley Street Resource centre**

Sensory Needs Services Resource Centre is for visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing people. A comprehensive social work support and rehabilitation service aimed at enabling people to continue leading independent lifestyles. The Resource Room contains examples of many daily living aids including talking watches,

Braille machine loops, flashing doorbell etc. You are welcome to have a look at what is available. Please refer to the website for further information or attend the drop in deaf duty sessions at Morley Street which are as follows:

### **Deaf Duty:**

Monday, Tuesday and Friday –  
9:30am to 12.30 pm

Wednesday and Thursday –  
1.30 pm to 4.30 pm

### **Address:**

Morley Street Resource Centre  
124 Morley Street  
Bradford  
BD7 1BB

**Telephone:** 01274 435001

**Mobile:** 07582101116 (SMS for deaf people)

**Fax:** 01274 435482

**Website:** [www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/health\\_well-being\\_and\\_care/disability/sensory\\_needs\\_hearing\\_impairment](http://www.bradford.gov.uk/bmdc/health_well-being_and_care/disability/sensory_needs_hearing_impairment)

## **Action On Hearing Loss (AOHL)**

A charitable organization based in the UK working for the deaf and hard of hearing. They provide a range of services from:

- Providing a free helpline for information, advice and support.
- Communication training for which more information is available on the website.
- Care and support including access to work and benefit advice.
- Products and equipment for which more information is available on the website or you can request a product catalogue from the Audiology department.
- AOHL have various projects running and you can also get involved. For more information please visit the website.
- AOHL provides information leaflets which are available in the Audiology department waiting area at the Infirmary or through the website. You can also access forums via the website.

**Free helpline number:** 0808 808 0123

**Website:** [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)

## Bradnet

Support service for people with disabilities providing services for independent living, children and young people with disabilities as well as deaf children and adults. You can get a referral form from the Audiology department or you can contact Bradnet directly:

<b>Address:</b>	<b>Telephone:</b> 01274 224 444
Bradnet	<b>Fax:</b> 01274 229 444
Noor House	<b>Minicom:</b> 01274 201 866
11 Bradford Lane	<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:enquiries@bradnet.org.uk">enquiries@bradnet.org.uk</a>
Laisterdyke	<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.bradnet.org.uk">www.bradnet.org.uk</a>
Bradford, BD3 8LP	

## Disability Equipment Bradford

Disability equipment centre for demonstration of disability equipment to members of the public, organizations and professionals. Equipment also includes sensory needs equipment for those who are hard of hearing. They can be contacted directly:

<b>Address:</b>	103 Dockfield Road Shipley Bradford, BD17 7AR
<b>Telephone:</b>	01274 592 474
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.bradforddisabilityservices.co.uk">www.bradforddisabilityservices.co.uk</a>

You can come and see a representative from Disability Equipment Bradford at the Bradford Royal Infirmary in the outpatient's Audiology department waiting area:

**Equipment Assistant:** Every Monday from 10.00 am to 12.15 pm

# Audiology Contact Details

If you have any queries or problems below are our contact details:

Bradford Royal Infirmary  
Outpatients Audiology department  
Duckworth Lane  
Bradford  
BD9 6RJ

**Telephone:** 01274 364070

**SMS text phone:** 07947 478944

**Text Relay:** 18001 01274 364070

**Email:** [audiology.department@bthft.nhs.uk](mailto:audiology.department@bthft.nhs.uk)

## Smoking

Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke free organisation. You are not permitted to smoke in any of the hospital buildings or grounds, with the exception of the smoking shelters which are provided for visitors and patients only.

Review date: October 2018

Author: Zahbeen Kauser

Email: [audiology.department@bthft.nhs.uk](mailto:audiology.department@bthft.nhs.uk)

MID Ref: 16031101