

Self-fitting hearing aids: issues of candidacy and support







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	Initial setup	Ongoing use and management
Conventional hearing aid		
Self-fitting hearing aid		



- ✓ Accessibility
- ✓ Cost-effectiveness
- ✓ User independence and control

Overarching goal: To map out a service delivery model that will support self-fitting hearing aid users

- ↪ **Candidacy:** What factor(s) predict success with setting up a self-fitting hearing aid?
- ↪ **Support:** To what extent do people need support with setting up a self-fitting hearing aid? What is the nature of the required support?

STUDY DESIGN

*Cognitive function
Problem-solving skills
HA self-efficacy
Health locus of control
Previous HA experience*



Initial
assessment

Self-fitting
setup
procedure

Outcome
assessment

*Target N = 60
N to date = 49*

STUDY DESIGN

*Cognitive function
Problem-solving skills
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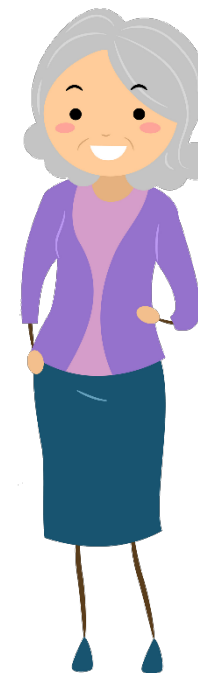
Initial
assessment



Self-fitting
setup
procedure



*Multimedia
instructions and
support from a
clinical assistant
as needed*



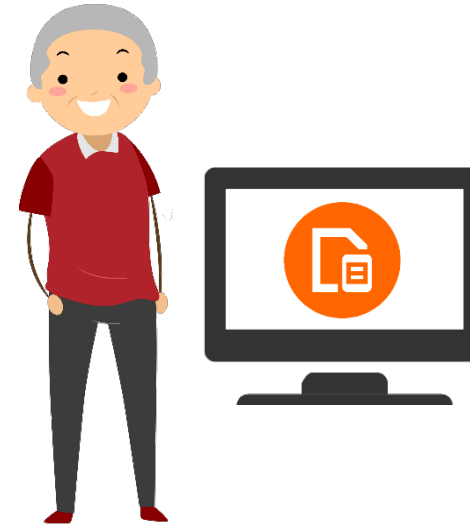
*Target N = 60
N to date = 49*

Setting up the hearing aids, part 1: The physical handling steps



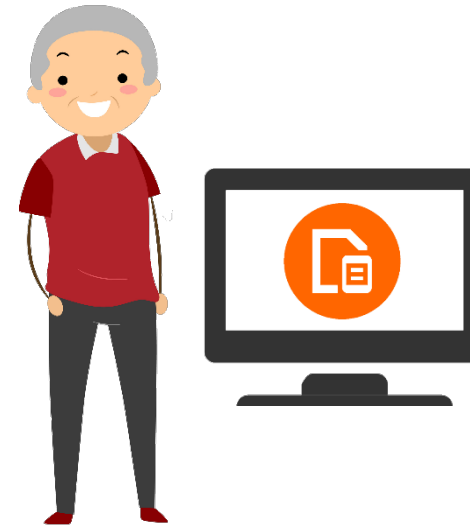
Step	% Correct
Identify L & R HAs	100
Choose ear tip size	100
Adjust tube length	88
Insert HAs into ears	82

Setting up the hearing aids, part 2: Using the smartphone and app



Step	% Correct
Pair HAs to phone	63
Assign L & R HAs in app	43
Automatic hearing test	67
Practice fine-tuning	82

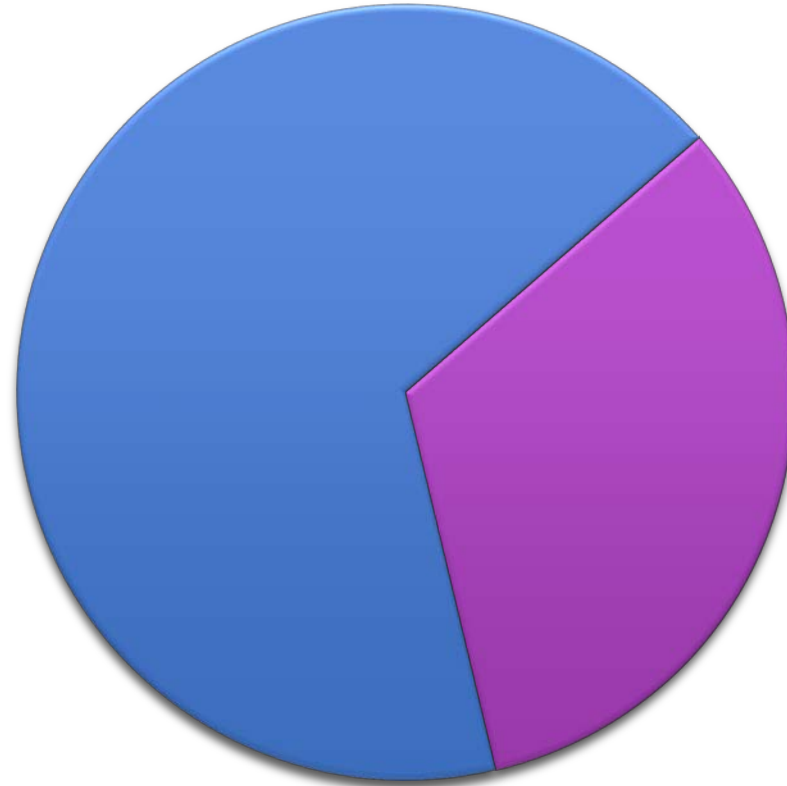
Setting up the hearing aids, part 2: Using the smartphone and app



Step	% Correct	% Correct
Pair HAs to phone	63	94
Assign L & R HAs in app	43	98
Automatic hearing test	67	94
Practice fine-tuning	82	90

67% Successful

- Completed the task independently, using the instructions only
- OR*
- Correctly identified specific difficulties and sought help with them from the CA



N = 49 to date

33% Unsuccessful

- Did not complete the self-fitting task
- OR*
- Did not recognise errors in earlier steps until help was sought from the CA for a later step



A person who is successful at setting up a self-fitting hearing aid is likely to...

- ✓ Be younger
- ✓ Own a smartphone or tablet
- ✓ Have previous HA experience
- ✓ Have better self-management skills
- ✓ Have better cognitive function
- ✓ Be a better problem-solver
- ✓ Have higher HA self-efficacy
- ✓ Believe less strongly in the effect of “powerful others” on health status

CAUTION

Preliminary
UNADJUSTED
analysis only!

OBSERVATIONS

The majority of problems required face-to-face contact with the clinical assistant to adequately resolve



“How do I cope in noisy places?”

“What do I say when my friends see my hearing aids?”

Many participants, especially those without previous HA experience, have been requesting rehabilitative support, not just technical support

Some participants experienced significant ongoing problems during the field trial, yet did not seek help



DISCUSSION

Assessment



Primarily focuses on auditory characteristics (audiogram, speech discrimination)

HA Fitting



Performed by audiologist in the clinic; client receives paper instruction booklet to take home

Follow-up



Primarily focuses on ensuring HA settings are appropriate and client has mastered HA handling skills

DISCUSSION

Assessment



Next best thing to a face-to-face encounter

Let's Skype!

Includes assessment of predictive factors; informs decision to offer SFHAs as an intervention option

SFHA Fitting



Performed by the client at home; technical support delivered via a range of modalities and tailored to individual needs and abilities



Hi! How are you going?
Is there anything we can help you with?

Support-seeking prompts via the app

Follow-up



Focuses on meeting client's psychosocial needs and providing rehabilitative support

THANK YOU

