



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Audiology at the Royal Berkshire Hospital

Advice for care homes on the
role of Audiology and useful
information and contacts

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Useful contacts

Audiology Department	Telephone: 0118 322 7238 Email: audiology.royalberkshire@nhs.net
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Hearing aid repairs

Patients with hearing aids provided by the Royal Berkshire Hospital Audiology services are able to book a hearing aid repair appointment if they are experiencing problems with their hearing aids by visiting: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/hearingaidrepairs

A wide range of information can also be found on our website, including information on maintenance, cleaning and how to fix most common issues experienced by hearing aid users. Consumables (replacement batteries, tubing and domes etc) can also be ordered by visiting: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/hearingaidrepairs

Are you deaf aware?

Being deaf aware is not difficult – but it is very important. You could unintentionally be excluding those with a hearing loss or making their access to information or treatment more difficult.

Communicating with someone who is deaf or hard of hearing does not need to be difficult.

Here are some tips to help make communication easier for both of you:

- Make sure the person you are talking to can see your face.
Ensure that your face is well-lit.
- Get the person's attention before you begin to talk. You can do this by saying their name or perhaps lightly touching them on their arm.
- Speak clearly and at a normal pace. It is important that you do not speak too fast.
- Do not exaggerate your lip movements - it's harder to read someone's lips if the lip patterns are exaggerated.
- Don't shout! It can be uncomfortable for some hearing aid users and can appear aggressive.
- If they don't understand what you have said, try saying it in another way rather than simply repeating it.

And remember... even if someone is wearing hearing aids, it doesn't mean that they can hear you perfectly. Ask if they have understood you or would like anything repeated.

Being referred to Audiology

If you feel that someone you care for has a hearing loss, you may be able to speak to their GP. If appropriate, their GP can then make a referral to the Audiology Department to arrange a hearing test. In order for a hearing test to take place, the ears need to be clear of wax. A GP or the practice nurse will be able to check the ears for wax and give advice on how to treat any wax.

Hearing aid batteries

There are four main types of hearing aid battery:

Yellow (10), Brown (312), Orange (13) and Blue (675)

● Size 10 (or 230)

● Size 312

● Size 13

● Size 675



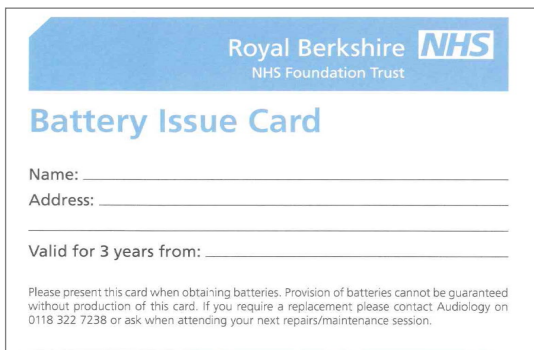
For information regarding what size battery a hearing aid requires, please refer to the inside page of your patient's Battery Issue Card (shown below). If in doubt, you can compare the size of the current hearing aid battery to ensure you replace it with the correct one.

Obtaining replacement batteries

When a patient is fitted with hearing aids from the Royal Berkshire Hospital Audiology Department they are given a Battery Issue Card (see right). The NHS covers the cost of batteries for NHS hearing aid users, but a **valid Battery Issue**

Card must be shown. The Battery Issue Card should be kept in a safe place. It may be given to a patient's family member who can obtain batteries on behalf of the patient.

Replacement batteries can be obtained via post by sending the battery card, along with a stamped addressed return envelope to:



Audiology

The Royal Berkshire Hospital

London Road, Reading RG1 5AN

Battery safety

Batteries are toxic and should be stored safely. Always keep out of reach from children, vulnerable adults and pets.

Hearing aids can be fitted with a tamper-proof battery lock compartment. This should be fitted to hearing aids used by vulnerable adults, children or where there is a risk that the battery or hearing aid could be swallowed by the user or anyone else. It should also be considered if anyone wearing a hearing aid comes in to contact with young children or vulnerable adults.

The tamper-proof battery locks require a tool to open so require reasonable dexterity to open. If you suspect that someone in your care has swallowed or placed a battery in their body (swallowed, put it in their ear or nose), **seek immediate medical help.**

Useful tips

- Take the tab off the battery and leave it for one minute before putting it in the hearing aid to allow the air to activate the battery.
- Did you know that you can recycle hearing aid batteries? Hearing aid batteries should not be disposed of in general household waste. Recycling points can be found in most recycling centres, supermarkets and at your local Audiology Department.
- Audiology can provide patients with an individual Audiology Care Plan. These can be printed off and added to your patient's notes. They contain useful information, such as an explanation of your degree of hearing loss. They also indicate what you can expect to be able to hear and what you may struggle to hear.

Keeping hearing aids safe

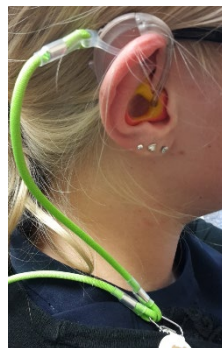
Hearing aids can easily be lost or mixed up with other possessions, e.g. wrapped up in a tissue and put into a pocket and subsequently thrown away.



Some people may find it useful to have a clearly labelled box beside the bed or somewhere noticeable which reminds them where to keep their hearing aids when not in use. All patients are provided with hearing aid pouches.

Hearing aid clips can be used if there is a risk that a patient's hearing aid(s) may be lost or dropped if a patient is prone to pulling them out of their ears.

These clips attach to the wearer's collar and mean that if a hearing aid is taken out or dropped, it remains attached and easily found.



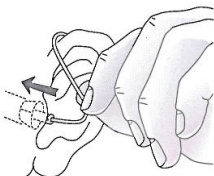
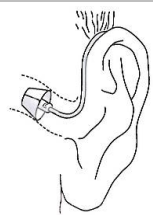
How to put a hearing aid in

Hearing aids with an earmould

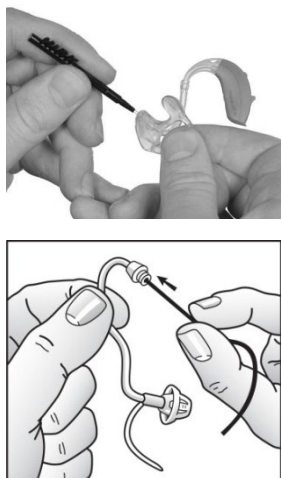
1. Hold the curve at the back of the earmould between your finger and thumb and position the end so that is down the ear canal.	
2. Slide the earmould into the ear so that the top prong tucks under the fold of skin above the ear canal. It may help to gently pull on the back of the ear as this opens up the ear canal.	
3. Give the earmould a gentle push so that it lies flat in the ear.	
4. Tuck the hearing aid over the top of the ear.	

Hearing aids with thin tubes

1. Place the hearing aid over the top of the ear	
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2. Grip the thin tube between your finger and thumb and position the dome so that it is pointing down the ear canal.	
3. Gently pull on the back of the ear and push the dome down the ear canal. The tube should sit close to the side of the ear.	

Troubleshooting

No sound from hearing aid • Check that it is switched on properly, with the battery compartment fully closed. • Try a new battery or check that it is inserted properly with the positive (flat) side upwards. • Check that the sound outlet is not blocked with wax or condensation. If it is, try to clean it out carefully with the brush, hook or cleaning wires provided in the black wallet. • Check the microphone ports aren't blocked with wax or debris.	
Sound from the hearing aid is unclear or distorted • The battery may be weak. Try replacing it. • The earmould may not be inserted correctly. • The tubing may need replacing. Visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment. • The hearing aid may be damaged. Visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment. • Your hearing levels may have changed. Visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment.	

Sound from the hearing aid is not loud enough

- The earmould and tubing may not be inserted correctly.
- The battery may be weak. Try replacing it.
- If you have a volume control, the volume may be set too low. Try increasing it.
- The ear may be blocked with wax. Get them examined at their GP surgery or visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment.
- Check that the sound outlet is not blocked with wax or condensation. If it is, try to clean it out carefully with the cleaning wire provided in the black wallet (see page 7).
- Check the microphone ports aren't blocked with wax or debris (see picture on page 7).
- The tube may have become rigid or kinked due to its age. Visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment.
- Your hearing levels may have changed. Visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment.

The hearing aid is whistling, squealing or buzzing

- The earmould, tube or dome may not be inserted correctly.
- The ears may be blocked with wax. Get them examined at your GP surgery or visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment.
- The earmould tubing may need replacing. Visit the website to arrange a hearing aid repair appointment.
- If you hear a static 'buzzing' sound, check that you have not switched the aid to the telecoil / loop program by accident.

Booklet compiled with thanks to GN ReSound, who provided some of the illustrations.

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

If you would like this leaflet in other languages or formats (e.g. large print, Braille or audio), please contact Audiology.

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