

## Children's audiology

# Transitioning to adult audiology services

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

Transition is the process of transferring your audiological care from children's services to adult services. Once this has happened, the adult audiology department will then be responsible for assessing your hearing and maintaining your hearing aids. We understand that you might have some questions about this process. This leaflet can help answer some of those questions but will not replace the conversation with your care team.

### When does the transition process happen?

We will start discussing your transition process with you when you turn 16 years old. By the age of 18, you should be fully transferred to the adult audiology service. If you have special educational needs, this might happen once you finish full-time education. It is important to transfer your care and for you to engage in this process so that your care continues

### What will change?

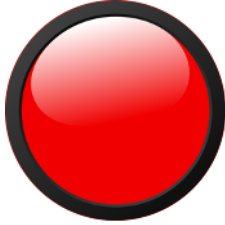
There will be some changes in your healthcare but we will try to make this process as smooth as we can.

- To start with, you need to decide where you would like to continue with your hearing aid care. We currently have adult services at St Mary's Hospital (Paddington), Charing Cross Hospital (Hammersmith) and St Mary Abbots (Kensington)
- At your final children's audiology appointment we will write to the GP and ask them to refer you to adult audiology services. You will need to follow this up with your GP to ensure you are referred and then attend the adult audiology department for an initial hearing assessment appointment. This will ensure that your care is transitioned over fully and your hearing aids are supported
- If you do not attend your initial adult audiology appointment you may be discharged. It is really important to attend so that if your hearing aid breaks or is lost it can be replaced quickly. If you have been discharged, **you will need a new referral from your GP before your hearing aid can be replaced/repared**

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- We want you to feel in control of your health, so we will not automatically send you appointments for hearing aid reviews anymore. You will need to seek a referral from your GP every time you want to have a hearing test
  - Clinic letters will be addressed to you and not to your parents. It is important for you to make sure your address and contact details are up-to-date with your GP and the audiology department
  - You will need to book a hearing aid repair appointment. It is important to anticipate when you think your hearing aid might need maintenance (usually every 6 months) and plan ahead
  - You are unlikely to have your ear moulds changed as often as you used to. Adult services can only provide you with new ear moulds when your current ones are damaged or lost. You can still customise them with the colours you want
  - We make sure your hearing aids are the latest model available before you are transitioned. You can keep this hearing aid for as long as you want or as long as it works. When the warranty ends or if you lose your hearing aids then you may need change the style when you replace them
  - Adult audiology have other models of hearing aid available for you but be mindful that you will not be allowed to change your hearing aids as often as you are used to. You will still be able to choose the colour but from a limited range of options
  - You can now attend appointments on your own. If you have health, social or communications needs you can attend with a carer but please let clinic know beforehand
  - Please look after your hearing aids. You can be charged up to £100 every time you lose one of your hearing aids
  - The adult audiology team is larger and therefore you may see a different audiologist at each visit

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## The steps for transition



### **Red**

At 16 years old, we will start discussing this transition process with you. We will perform a full hearing assessment and we will adjust your hearing aids as needed. We will check that the doctor has discussed the cause of your hearing loss with you and there are no outstanding investigations.



### **Amber**

We will see you when you are 17 years old for another hearing assessment. We will adjust your hearing aids as needed and prepare you for your final children's audiology appointment.



### **Green**

Our last appointment should be when you turn 18 years old. We will perform a full hearing assessment and upgrade your hearing aids to the latest version available. You will get a hearing aid passport with the details of your new hearing aids. Your consultant may want to see you before your transition. We will discuss the best hearing aid centres for you, ready for transition. We will write to your GP and ask them to refer you to adult audiology. It is very important you check this referral goes through and attend your first adult audiology assessment appointment.

## What will happen at my first adult audiology appointment?

The adult audiology team will send you a face-to-face appointment. They will introduce you to the service and briefly assess your hearing and satisfaction with your current hearing aids. They may discuss other alternative hearing aid technology available to you. They will advise you on how your hearing aids can be maintained and repaired through the adult audiology services. Attending this appointment is vital to ensure that your audiological care continues as the children's service will no longer be available to you.

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## What if I go to university, would I still be supported?

If you choose to continue with higher education, you can get support for your hearing. Depending on the location of your university, you may still have a teacher of the deaf (TOD) that can support you in the classroom. Nearly every college and university has a specialist educational needs coordinator (SENCO) who can explain what kind of support you can get. If you are going to university, you can also apply for a disabled student allowances (DSA) through Student Finance England. This will help you to fund any equipment needed in the classroom. Please visit [www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas](http://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas) for further details about eligibility and how to apply.

## What support am I entitled to in employment?

The Access to Work scheme is a government-funded program that can help anyone who has a disability, including a hearing loss, to get funding in case you need any equipment or adjustments in your work place. You would need to register for this – find out more at [www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work) or in your local Jobcentre Plus.

## What if I move outside of this area?

If you move outside our area, we will write a letter to your GP with our latest clinical report and we will ask for you to be referred to your local adult audiology service. We will give you a hearing aid passport and you still will be upgraded to our latest version of hearing aids. We will then discharge you from our services. If you are enrolling at university, we recommend you enrol with a GP there and request a referral to the local audiology department nearby.

## What are assistive listening devices (ALDs)?

We know that technology plays a crucial role in our lives. We like to stay connected with others as well as with other electronic devices. ALDs can help you to hear conversations, TV or music better by connecting your hearing aid directly to a streaming device. These devices can enable your hearing aids to link up with your smartphone for everyday use. You can find more information about funding and types of ALDs at the following websites:

- National Deaf Children's Society: [www.ndcs.org.uk/](http://www.ndcs.org.uk/)
- Connevans: [www.connevans.co.uk/viewPage.do?id=index](http://www.connevans.co.uk/viewPage.do?id=index)
- Phonak: [www.phonaknhs.co.uk/funding/](http://www.phonaknhs.co.uk/funding/)
- The Buzz: [www.buzz.org.uk/](http://www.buzz.org.uk/)

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## What if I need an interpreter?

Please let the audiology department know if you need an interpreter for your appointment and we will book one for you.

## Our adult audiology services

Charing Cross Hospital	St Mary's Hospital	St Mary Abbots Hearing Aid Centre
Adult audiology department Charing Cross Hospital 1 <sup>st</sup> floor, south wing Fulham Palace Road Hammersmith W6 8RF <b>Tel:</b> 020 3311 1021 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:audiology.imperial@nhs.net">audiology.imperial@nhs.net</a>	Adult audiology department St Mary's Hospital Basement, Mary Stanford Wing, Praed Street, W2 1NY <b>Tel:</b> 020 3312 1015 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:ichc-tr.imperialaudiologistsmarys@nhs.net">ichc-tr.imperialaudiologistsmarys@nhs.net</a>	St Mary Abbots Hearing Aid Centre 2 Beatrice Place, Marloes Road, W8 5LW <b>Tel:</b> 020 3315 6011 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:audiology.imperial@nhs.net">audiology.imperial@nhs.net</a>

## How do I make a comment or suggestion?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments**, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross Hospital), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's Hospital). You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net) The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:  
Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street  
London W2 1NY  
Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)  
Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:  
[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

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