

Care Home Hearing Screening and Support Project

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Identifying and supporting care home residents living with hearing loss has been difficult internationally for many decades (Leroi et al, 2019), compounded by problems due to untreated wax impaction.

As part of the Care Home Hearing Screening and Support Project, an Audiologist will visit 4 care homes in Edinburgh to assess hearing, provide rehabilitation for residents and support and training for care home staff.

Care Home 1

A process map for identifying and referring residents to Audiology was completed (Figure 1). Problems with wax management and arranging for residents to travel to Audiology clinics were highlighted. Before the project, **9% of residents were using NHS aids** (further 13% wearing private aids). This is similar to an audit of Care homes in East Lothian - average of 12 % using NHS aids (range 0 – 28%) .

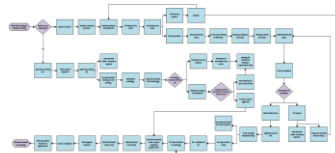


Fig 1. Process Map CH 1

Residents were offered a hearing check. **Final consent was obtained from 60% of residents** ranging in age from 62 – 97 years old (others did not consent, were too ill to take part or were judged by staff to be unable to cooperate). Tests were carried out in a quiet room in the care home (Figure 2) or for 3 residents who were unable to leave their beds in their rooms.

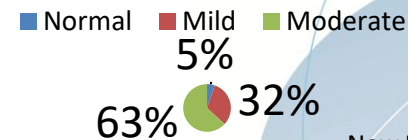
Leroi et al (2019) *Age and Ageing* , 48(4), 580-587



Figure 2. Test room

Asking residents if they wanted to have a hearing check identified 2 residents who had aids but did not wear them successfully - one from NHS and another borrowed from a relative

Av Hearing Loss Better Ear (dB HL)



95% of residents had HL

New NHS hearing aids will be provided for 19% of residents previously unaided or with lost or old private aids

Discussions with staff led to :

- modification of a dining room to reduce reverberation of noise by using felt under tables and canvas pictures on walls
- finding equipment that could be used to improve sound levels for activities
- arrangements to organised staff training on hearing and hearing aids for all interested care home staff