

Getting your hearing tested

✓ *Get regular hearing tests throughout life*

It is important to get your hearing tested regularly, especially as you reach midlife and later life as hearing tends to deteriorate with age. It is also important to get your hearing tested regularly if you are exposed to loud sounds at work or in your personal life (including listening to music over headphones). The Australian Government's National Acoustic Laboratories has a "Know Your Noise" online resource (<https://knowyournoise.nal.gov.au>) which includes a Noise Risk Calculator which assesses your risk of hearing damage from noise exposure.

✓ *Understand the difference between awareness-raising hearing screening versus hearing tests*

Community awareness-raising hearing screening services can be found online, in self-serve kiosks, in shopping centres, and at community awareness events.

While useful as community awareness activity, the results from hearing screening can be unreliable due to a range of factors including distractions, background noise levels, the skill of any screener present, and the quality of the equipment used.

If potential hearing loss is detected during hearing screening, **further hearing tests are needed to diagnose the degree of any hearing loss and determine if any treatment is needed (including hearing aids).**

✓ *Choose a qualified hearing service practitioner for hearing tests*

When choosing where to go for a hearing test, which is also known as an audiological assessment, you should ask if the hearing service practitioner conducting your tests:

- Is a **registered Ear Nose and Throat specialist** (a medical specialist) or a **clinically certified audiologist or audiometrist** (an allied health professional).
- Has the **expertise and equipment** to meet your hearing needs.

✓ *Ask for a copy of your hearing test results*

You can ask the hearing service practitioner for:

- A copy of your hearing test results.
- A letter summarising the results to share with your GP or other health service provider.

✓ *Ask for written treatment recommendations including quotes*

If the hearing service practitioner recommends treatment of your hearing aid, for example with hearing aids, ask for written information which includes:

- A range of treatment options that may meet your needs, including any specific features of recommended hearing aids and devices.
- A breakdown of the costs for the different goods and services included in each treatment option.
- The details of any hearing aids or other devices recommended, including their make and model number.
- The full name of the hearing service practitioner recommending the services.
- The full cost of any hearing aids or other services, the amount of any Government or private health insurance funding available to contribute to those costs, and any gap amount you will need to pay yourself.

✓ *Consider your options before making a decision about treatment*

Before deciding on whether or not to proceed with treatment you can:

- Ask for time to go away and read through the information provided.
- Seek second opinions from other health professionals.
- Ask other hearing service practitioners for additional hearing tests and/or quotes for similar goods and services.
- Talk through your options with trusted family/friends/others.

How to check if your hearing practitioner is clinically certified

Clinically certified hearing service allied health professionals (audiologists or audiometrists) are people who are:

- Audiology Australia Accredited Audiologists,
- Members of the Australian College of Audiology with a Hearing Rehabilitation Specialist (HRS) and/or Diagnostic Rehabilitation Specialist (DRS) competency, and/or
- Full Members of the Hearing Aid Audiology Society of Australia.

You can confirm if someone is an Audiology Australia Accredited Audiologist on their [online register](#).

You can also confirm someone's clinical certification by asking for a copy of their certificate, and if you have concerns about its authenticity, you can contact the Ethics Officer at ethicsofficer@hpccb.org.au or 0475 245 635.

Contact the Ethics Officer with questions or concerns about hearing services

The Ethics Officer is available to talk through and questions or concerns you may have about hearing services. The Ethics Officer can also provide you with information about how to make a complaint and guide you through the process.

You can contact the Ethics Officer at ethicsofficer@hpccb.org.au or 0475 245 635.

The preferred, and most expedient, methods of contact for the Ethics Officer are phone and email. However, if you do not have access to a phone and/or email you can write to the Ethics Officer at:

Ethics Officer
PO Box 370
Monbulk
Victoria 3793

Further reading

Hearing Professional Conduct and Complaints Body, 2024. How are hearing service practitioners regulated? Information for public. Available online at: <https://hpccb.org.au/faqs/how-are-hearing-service-practitioners-regulated/>

Hearing Professional Conduct and Complaints Body Ltd, 2024. Code of Conduct for audiologists and audiometrists by-law. Available online at: <https://hpccb.org.au/code-of-conduct/>

Audiology Australia, 2013. Professional Practice Standards Part B Clinical Standards. Available online at: <https://audiology.asn.au/Tenant/C0000013/Position%20Papers/Member%20Resources/Clinical%20Standards%20part%20b%20-%20whole%20document%20July13%201.pdf>

Audiology Australia, Australian College of Audiology, and Hearing Aid Audiology Society of Australia, 2016. Scope of Practice for audiologist and audiometrists. Available online at: <https://audiology.asn.au/Tenant/C0000013/Position%20Papers/Other%20documents/Scope%20of%20Practice%20All-in-one%2020170119.pdf>

Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, 2017. Hearing aids and devices- information to help make an informed choice. Available online at: https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/1171_HearingAids_FA.pdf