

Phonak Combination Devices

Audiology Department

This leaflet is for people who have been fitted with one or two hearing aids. In it you will find information about the audiology department and your new hearing aid(s).

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What happens when I visit the audiology department?

It's **very important** that you check in at the reception desk **every time** you visit the audiology department. This will help us to try to see you on time.

At your visit, you might see just one team member, or you might see a few of them.

Information about my hearing aid(s)

I have hearing aid(s).

The type of hearing aid is Nathos Auto M

The settings on my hearing aid(s) are as follows:

- 1) Hearing Aid
- 2) Hearing Aid + white noise
- 3) White noise

Volume control is active

My batteries are size 13

My tubing size is, and dome/s.

I received my hearing aid(s) on

Right = red

Left = blue

Any other information:

.....
.....

Lost device policy

In the case of you losing your device(s) and requiring a replacement, the following charges will apply:

- One replacement aid £75
- Two replacement aids £100

This payment goes towards not only the cost and replacement of the lost hearing aid, but also the administration costs involved in booking appointments and the cost of replacement ear moulds / slim tubes.

Getting used to your hearing aid(s)

A new sound

The sound you get through your hearing aid is a processed sound. It won't sound like normal hearing. Luckily, our brains are very good at helping us get used to the new sound. As long as you wear your hearing aid regularly, you will get used to the new sound. Important things to remember are:

- Background noise is NORMAL. Don't be alarmed if everything seems so much louder with a hearing aid. In the beginning, it is louder. That's because your brain is not used to hearing all the sounds anymore. If you wear your hearing aid regularly your brain will adjust to the sound.
- You need to teach your brain that the sound through the hearing aid is now normal for you. With your hearing aids on, listen to water running, close and open doors and cupboards, turn the pages of a newspaper... All these things will sound different. Regular use means better sound quality for you.
- Effective listening is influenced by background noise, lighting, familiarity of the speaker and various other factors. Pay attention to when it is difficult for you and try to think of ways you can make it easier, such as sitting in a quieter part of a restaurant and watching the speaker's face. Taking note of situations when you are having difficulty hearing is also useful to the audiologist to adjust your hearing aid(s) optimally.

Sensorineural hearing loss (hearing loss due to nerve damage) creates distortional changes to sound processing that cannot be completely eliminated by hearing aids. Despite advancements in hearing aid technology, communication in challenging environments for people with hearing loss is still difficult, even for those with mild and moderate hearing losses.

As with anything new, you will need some time to get used to your hearing aid(s). You may have worn hearing aids before and be quite familiar with how the ear mould feels and

adjustment period required for the new sound or you may never have worn hearing aids before in which case you will need to get used to everything.

Why regular use is important

Usually hearing through hearing aids becomes easier the more they are used. This is because the brain is adapting to the new (different) sound – it has been a new sound experience that you have had to learn to get used to. If you don't use your hearing aid(s) regularly, the brain will need to re-learn every time you use the hearing aids.

Expectations of your hearing aids

Absolute expectations include:

- Hearing aids should be functional on a daily basis
- Hearing aids should be free from feedback (whistling) when correctly positioned in the ear.
- Hearing aids should be physically comfortable to wear. Whilst they can feel cumbersome and strange to begin with this should settle as you wear them more. If significant discomfort is experienced adjustments can sometimes be made to the physical shape of the ear mould
- Loud sounds whilst expected to be perceived to be louder should not be uncomfortable so that you might flinch. If this severity of discomfort is experienced adjustments can be made to the output of the sound.
- The hearing aid should improve the ability to hear soft and conversational levels.

Hearing aids can:

- Make sounds louder
- Make some sounds a bit clearer (not all sounds)
- Make listening in quiet easier
- Pick up a lot of information that was previously missed
- Help you to feel more relaxed about hearing in important situations.

Hearing aids can't:

- Make sounds the way they are with normal hearing
- Cut out background noise
- Make other people more patient.

Remember that you didn't get new ears in the hearing aid clinic. Hearing aids can help to improve difficulty with hearing, but they can never be as good as normal hearing.

They are devices that are helping ears that are not working properly. Even when they're set perfectly, the sound is still going to ears that are not working properly.

Considering that your ears are not working as you'd like them to, you may need to use other ways in addition to wearing your hearing aids to make communication easier.

Ways to improve communication

Things that help to make communication easier:

- Being in the same room as the person to whom you are talking.
- Having good lighting so you can see the person to whom you are talking.
- Looking at the person to whom you are talking. (We all lip-read a bit.)
- Telling people to get your attention before talking to you (then you can give them your full attention).
- Confirming what you think you've heard instead of asking for repetition.

If you only wear the hearing aid(s) occasionally your progress will be slow and you won't get the full benefit of the hearing aid(s). We recommend you wear the hearing aid(s) every day.

Looking after your ears

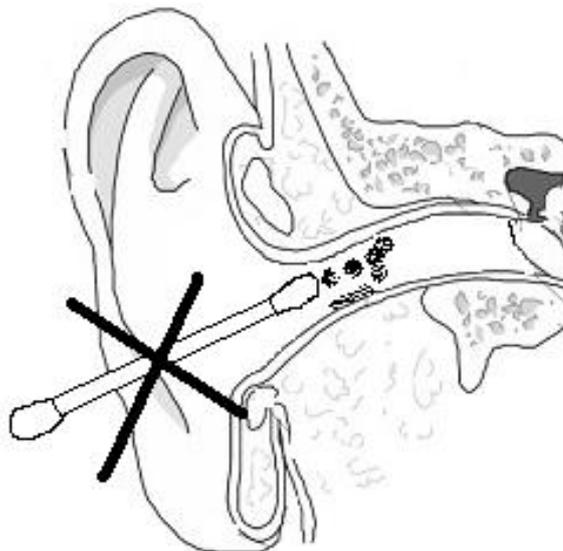
Did you know that wax helps to keep our ears healthy?

Wax comes in all different colours, from light yellow to black. Working together with the little hairs in our ears, it actually helps to carry dust and debris out of the ear canal, protecting the middle and inner parts of the ear.

Wax is only a problem if it blocks the ear canal.

If using cotton buds, whilst you may see some wax come out on the end, ear buds will be pushing wax deeper into the ear canal where it wouldn't naturally form. This can be difficult to remove and can in some circumstances cause a temporary hearing loss.

If you feel you have wax blocking your ears, do not use cotton buds. Instead see your practice nurse who can syringe (wash) out the wax. Sometimes when the wax is very hard, the nurse may ask you to use olive oil or bicarbonate-of-soda softening drops for a few weeks before they attempt to remove it. If you have ever been told that you have a perforation (hole in the eardrum), then please see your GP for advice before using ear drops. If syringing is not



appropriate for you then your GP may refer you to your local ENT (Ear Nose and Throat) department to have the wax suctioned out.

Battery Safety

Coin/button batteries such as those used in hearing aids can be extremely harmful if ingested and should be treated as a medical emergency. Battery compartments on hearing aids should be tamper-proof (lockable battery compartment) for anyone at risk of accidental ingestion, such as children under five years of age, as per an NHS national safety alert. If you do not have a lock on your battery compartment and you/your carer believe it is appropriate that you have this feature, please contact the audiology department and speak to an Audiologist urgently.

Tamper proofing may be required for hearing aid users living with children aged under five years, hearing aid users who have additional risk factors of coming to harm from their hearing aid batteries or who live with someone with these additional risk factors putting them at a higher risk of swallowing a coin/button battery or pushing one into an ear or nostril. Additional risk factors to consider include complex learning difficulties, dementia, other cognitive or sensory impairments, individuals who may self-harm and vulnerable adults.

In the case of suspected ingestion of a coin/button battery, the matter should be treated as a **medical emergency**. The removal of the battery itself may be an inadequate action to prevent further damage, with further symptoms manifesting later. Following an incident as such, expert input, careful monitoring and several follow ups may be required. In case of a medical emergency as such **please call an ambulance or go directly to A&E Department**.

The potential risk of coin/button battery ingestion:

- Choking, rapid tissue necrosis, perforation, haemorrhage, catastrophic internal bleeding and death.

Ways to reduce risk of coin/button battery ingestion:

- Keep coin/button batteries out of sight in a sealed container out of reach of individuals who are at high risk.
- Keep used batteries out of reach/sight instantly and dispose of safely as soon as possible, in order to avoid at risk individuals finding used batteries that have fallen on the floor or other easily accessible places.

The importance to act immediately:

- Trust your instincts and act fast, do not wait to see if any symptoms develop. Due to the lack of clear symptoms it is important to be vigilant with flat or spare batteries in the home and the hearing aid which contains them.

- Symptoms vary but may include, cough, gag or drool, stomach upset, vomiting, pointing to their throat or stomach, pain in their abdomen, chest or throat, loss of appetite, reduced appetite or not wanting to eat solid food/unable to eat solid food.
- A specific symptom to coin/button battery ingestion is vomiting fresh (bright red) blood.

Device insertion

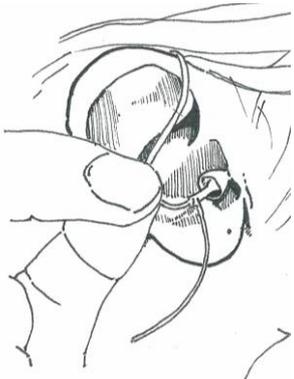
Make sure the slim tube is correctly inserted into your ear



1. Firstly, place the instrument over your ear.



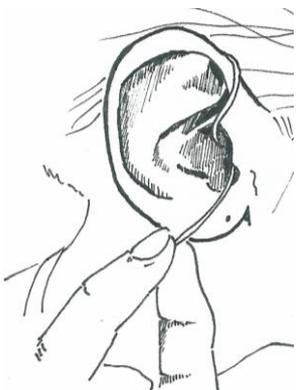
2. This should leave the slim tip in place in front of your ear canal



3. Now take the end of the slim tubing and push it firmly down your ear



4. The dome should be placed far enough into the ear so that the tube lies flush against your head.



5. Now take the retention wire and bend it around the bowl of your ear (sometimes this retention wire may be cut off for your convenience)



☑ Correct insertion

Looking after your hearing aids

The battery must be working: All hearing aids use batteries to work. There are different sizes of batteries. Check your hearing aid issue pack to make sure you get the right ones. If the battery in your hearing aid is flat, you need to change it. You can tell if it is flat if there is no sound coming from the hearing aid. You can expect your battery to last roughly seven to ten days.

If the tube is blocked, you will not hear through the hearing aid: If you are not managing to hear well through your hearing aid, make sure there is no wax or water blocking the slim tube. To clean your slim tubing please refer to Page 10.

Troubleshooting

My hearing aid won't turn on

- Check that the battery has not run out and is in the correct way around.
- Make sure that the tubing in the ear mould or dome is not blocked with any moisture or wax. If it is, then try blowing the water out to dry it, or cleaning out the wax.
- If there is still no sound from the hearing aid after these steps then it may have broken and may need fixing or replacing. See the repair options above.

The sound is very distorted/ quiet

- Change the battery for a new one and see if this makes any difference.
- Make sure that the tubing in the ear mould or dome is not blocked with any moisture or wax. If it is, then try blowing out the water to dry it, or cleaning out the wax.
- Check that your ear is clear of wax.
- If the sound still doesn't seem right after these steps, then it may be that the hearing aid has a fault. Please see Pages 8 and 9 for information on how to get your hearing aid repaired.

The hearing aid is whistling when it is in my ear

- Check that the mould / dome is inserted correctly. If you are unsure of this then refer to your hearing aid booklet for instructions.
- Ensure that your ear is clear of wax.
- If there is no wax and it is inserted correctly, then you might need to come and see us to consider if you require a new better fitting ear mould.

The slim tube looks blocked

- Sometimes after prolonged use the slim tube can become worn, distorted or even twisted and as a result will affect the sound quality you receive in your ear.

To ensure a clear passage of the sound into your ear the first thing to do is refer to page 10 and using your cleaning wire check the slim tube is clean and open.

If you cannot pass the cleaning wire through the slim tubing you may need a new slim tube. If you have not already been provided with a spare please contact us and we can organise one to be posted.

The hearing aid has been physically broken

- If part of the hearing aid has been damaged, then we will usually be able to replace it with a replacement hearing aid. If this happens repeatedly then a charge may be incurred.

If your hearing aid is still not working or you require an appointment to see us please see below options available to you

Booked Repair Clinic: Repair appointments are offered on **Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays** at Trevelyan House and on **Fridays** at St George's Hospital.

Please call **020 8266 6363** or email Audiologist.Appointments@stgeorges.nhs.uk to arrange an appointment. We will usually be able to see you within a few days. When you phone, please specify clearly that you need a *repair* appointment.

Walk-in Repair Clinic: Friday walk-in clinics at St George's Hospital have stopped as of the 20th of July 2015. All repairs will now be in booked repair slots, see above for information on how to arrange this.

Drop-in Service: A hearing aid can be dropped off at the Audiology Department at Trevelyan House to be repaired. Please ensure that you leave your details and a contact number on which to call you once the aid is repaired. Repairs usually take about a week; therefore if you are unable to manage without your hearing aid, this may not be the best option for you.

Postal Service: Hearing aids can be posted to us to be repaired. It is essential to include your details and home address in the envelope.

Repairs usually take about a week or more as unfortunately this is also affected by the postal service. Therefore if you are unable to manage without your hearing aid, this may not be the best option for you

Please note that loss of hearing aids in the post is considered a lost hearing aid and standard lost hearing aid procedure will be followed, therefore you may wish to consider sending them by signed delivery.

Frequently Asked Questions

I've lost my device. What do I do?

All devices are issued by the NHS free of charge and remain the property of the hospital that issued them. They are very valuable so if you were to lose or damage the device there would be a charge of £75 for a replacement (or £100 for two devices). If you feel you are unable to pay this charge then you must write to the 'Head of Adult Rehabilitation' at the above address to ask for exemption with a reason why. Each loss will be decided on a case by case basis.

I need new batteries. How do I get them?

You do not need to pay for your batteries, they are provided by the NHS provider of your hearing aids.

You are entitled to two packets of batteries per hearing aid, per visit. **For batteries for your St George's hearing aid(s) the options are as follows:**

- 1) If you would like to collect replacement batteries for your hearing aids you can do so by visiting the reception desks at our below clinic locations in office hours (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) unless otherwise stated:

Main Hospital Site: ENT and Audiology Department, Ground Floor Lanesborough Wing, St George's Hospital, SW17 0QT

Trevelyan House: First Floor Audiology Suite, 160 Tooting High Street, Tooting, SW17 0RT

St John's Therapy Centre: Entrance B, 162 St John's Hill, London, SW11 1SW
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday clinic days (9am to 5pm)

- 2) Ask a friend or relative to take your battery card or patient information to one of the above audiology clinics during working hours for battery collection.
- 3) If you or a friend cannot attend clinic to collect your batteries, you may write to us to request them by post. Please ensure you include your details to us, with a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of your batteries. Our address is:

**Audiology Department
First Floor, Trevelyan House
160 Tooting High Street
London, SW17 0RT**

My GP has made a new referral to the department and I have not heard anything. Who do I contact?

All new referral appointments are arranged by the Central Booking Service you can contact them to discuss your referral and appointment on 020 8725 0007.

I need a follow up appointment. Who do I contact?

To book a follow-up appointment, please contact the call centre on 020 8266 6363.

I can't hear on the phone. Is there another way I can contact the Audiology department?

E-mail: stgh-tr.audiology@nhs.net

Cleaning the slim tubing

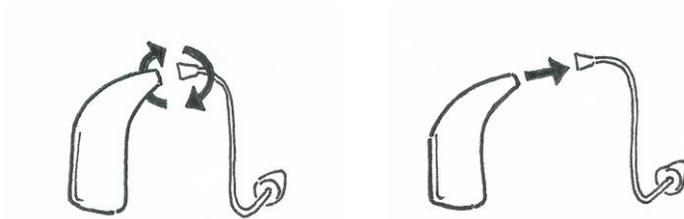
The slim tubing can sometimes become blocked with wax as directed below.

Please note we currently provide two different manufactured hearing aids, for which the instructions to remove are slightly different.

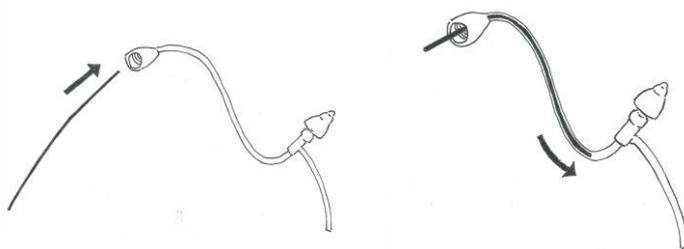
Your type of hearing aid should be documented on page 2 of your booklet.

If you have a **Phonak** hearing aid please **UNSCREW** the tubing.

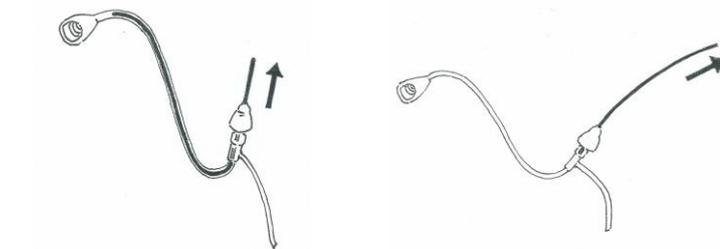
1. Unscrew or pull the slim tubing from the end of the hearing aid.



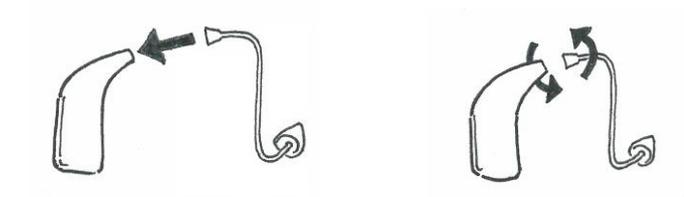
2. Push the cleaning wire through the tubing from the hearing aid end towards the tip.



3. Pull the wire right through so it comes out at the tip end.



4. Screw the slim tube back onto the hearing aid.



If you have any problems with doing this, please visit the hearing aid repair clinic and an audiologist will be happy to assist you.

Phonak Hearing Aid

Program Button



Changing the Battery



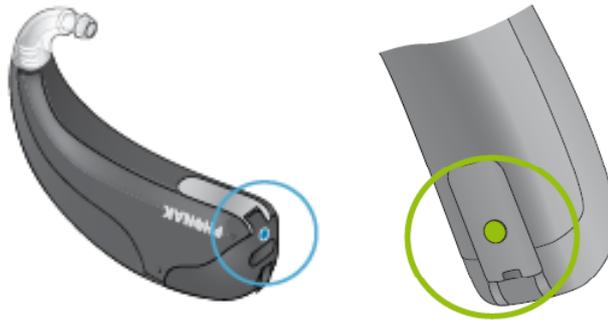
Volume Control



Colour Indicator:

Red = Right

Blue = Left



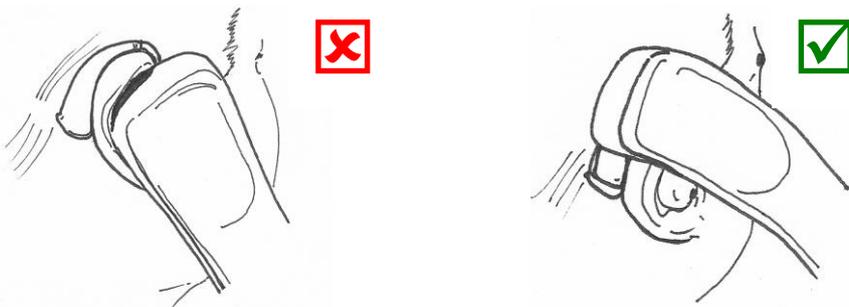
Using the telephone with your hearing aid

Using the telephone can be quite difficult if you have a hearing impairment, as you must rely only on what you can hear, where usually in face-to-face conversation you would be able to use visual cues such as lip-reading for assistance.

Below are a few suggestions of ways to make the best use of your hearing and hearing aids whilst using the telephone:

Tips to Make Using the Telephone Easier

- Firstly, make sure you are positioning the telephone correctly. The receiver should be placed close to the top of the hearing aid, as this is where the microphone is located. You may need a friend or family member to call you so that you can practise ensuring the telephone is in the correct position. Take a look at the pictures below for guidance as to the correct positioning:



- If the person is speaking too quickly, ask them to slow down and speak more clearly. As you may know asking them to speak more loudly will not necessarily make them easier to hear.
- Don't be afraid to ask the person on the other end to repeat something or use shorter sentences if you did not hear what they said.
- Repeating back the key points of the conversation such as a name, number, time or location, will ensure you have heard the important parts of the conversation correctly.

Telephone Programs for your Hearing Aid

If you have a moderate or severe hearing loss you may find the normal conversation program on your hearing aid is not clear enough. Your audiologist may need to add an additional telephone program, and this may be either an acoustic program or by using the Telecoil/Loop (T) program.

- Before you answer the phone you should switch your hearing aid to the telephone program, your audiologist will tell you what number your telephone program is and how to do this.
- Some landline telephones have a Telecoil (T) available. Please refer to the user manual to find out if your telephone has this feature. If it does you should then switch your hearing aid to the 'T' program.
- If your telephone does not have a Telecoil (T) you will need an acoustic telephone program.
- You may still need to ask the caller to speak slowly and clearly.

If these steps do not work...

- For further advice and assistance on positioning the telephone, you can book a repair appointment. See our Repairs Page 8 for more details of how to arrange this.
- If you feel you are positioning the telephone correctly but are not hearing clearly you may benefit from a telephone designed for people with a hearing impairment.

Telephones Designed for People with Hearing Impairment

There are several different types of assistive devices for the telephone.

- You can get a portable Telecoil (T) amplifier, which fits over your existing receiver of your telephone.
- There are amplifiers, which plug into your existing telephone, allowing you to manually adjust the volume level.
- There are a range of telephones that are designed for use by people with hearing impairment; many have in-built Telecoil systems and amplifiers.

These telephones and amplifiers can be purchased from Action for Hearing Loss (formerly known as the RNID) or Connevans. If you are interested in these options you can pick up a catalogue from the Audiology department or visit their websites.

www.connevans.co.uk

www.aohl.org.uk

Hearing Aid Master Class

Are you afraid you'll break your hearing aid trying to do a simple repair?

Would you like to learn more about repairing & maintaining your hearing aids independently?

Our Audiology department now runs Hearing Aid Master Classes, for patients fitted with hearing aids to learn how they work and support you in maintaining them at home.

What you can expect at the Master Class;

- Groups will involve approximately six patients alongside a friend or family member.
- You will have the chance to meet other patients with similar difficulties and share in your experiences and approaches to managing your hearing difficulties.
- We encourage you to ask questions so this is a great opportunity to learn more and improve your confidence maintaining your device independently.

Sessions will last approximately 90 minutes and include topics such as;

- About Your Hearing Aid.
- What you can expect to experience with a new hearing aid.
- How to check if your hearing aid is working.
- How to troubleshoot why your hearing aid is not working.
- Cleaning and general maintenance (changing parts) on your hearing aids yourself.

To find out more or sign up, just speak to an audiologist or contact us on:

Email: Stgh-tr.audiology@nhs.net

Telephone: 020 8725 1151

Access to Work

An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support to help you if you have a disability, including hearing loss or a physical or mental health condition.

The money can pay for things like:

- adaptations to the equipment you use
- special equipment
- fares to work if you can't use public transport
- a support worker or job coach to help you in your workplace
- a support service if you have a mental health condition and you're absent from work or finding it difficult to work
- disability awareness training for your colleagues
- a communicator at a job interview
- the cost of moving your equipment if you change location or job.

When you contact Access to Work you may need:

- your National Insurance number
- your workplace address, including your postcode
- the name, email address and work phone number of a workplace contact (e.g. your manager)
- your unique tax reference number (if you're self-employed)
- the name of your New Enterprise Allowance mentor (if you have one).

Access to Work

Email: atwosu.london@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 0345 268 8489

Text phone: 0345 608 8753

Operational Support Unit

Harrow Jobcentre Plus

Mail Handling Site A

Wolverhampton

WV98 1JE

Information above is from the government website <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview> please see this website for more information.

Assistive Listening Devices

There are lots of different devices which can help you make more effective use of your hearing aids as well as assist in a day to day environment. Items will usually need to be purchased by yourself or you may be able to seek help from Access to Work or your local Adult Sensory Services Team if you are eligible. Please refer to page 19 for your relevant sensory services team contact details for more information on eligibility.

Portable Telecoils (Loop Systems)

At home these can be used to help make the television clearer by directing the sound to the hearing aid similar to public loop systems within theatres, banks and supermarkets. **You will need to have the loop on your hearing aids to make use of these. If you do not have this please see your audiologist.**

Audio Shoes (Direct Audio Input)

Audio shoes allow you to directly plug items i.e. a mobile phone or a music player into the hearing aids instead of using headphones. **You will need to have the audio input activated on your hearing aids to make use of these. If you do not have this please see your audiologist.**

Alarm Clocks

Various alarm clocks are available that can vibrate, produce a light (or both).

Fire Alarms

Please see your local fire services as most offer a service to fit a fire/smoke alarm that that may be visual or vibrate depending on your requirements.

Doorbells

Similar to alarm clocks, visual lights or vibrating pagers can be bought to attach to the doorbell so you are alerted.

Most items can be purchased from the following websites or alternatively ask your audiologist for a catalogue.

www.aohl.org.uk

www.connevans.co.uk

Action on Hearing Loss (AOHL) Equipment Room available to try equipment – Book an appointment before attending

London – Islington

Address: 1-3 Highbury Station Road, London, N1 1SE

Contact: 020 7296 8000 (calls welcome via Text Relay)

or ResourceRoom.London@hearingloss.org.uk

Opening hours: Tuesdays 10am to 12pm with BSL support available, Thursdays 2pm to 4pm (please call or email to arrange an appointment).

Contact us

Appointments: 020 8266 6363 / 0208 725 1122

Audiologist.Appointments@stgeorges.nhs.uk

General enquiries: 020 8725 1151

stgh-tr.audiology@nhs.net

Adult Sensory Services Teams

Wandsworth Sensory and Physical Disability Team

90 Putney Bridge Road

London

SW18 1HR

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Email accessteam@wandsworth.gov.uk Tel. 020 8871 7707

Minicom: 020 8871 8485

Merton Sensory Impairment Team

Adult Access Team

11th Floor

Community & Housing

Civic Centre

London Road

Morden

Surrey, SM4 5DX

Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm

Drop in session (BSL Users): Wednesdays 2 to 4pm

Email adultaccessteam@merton.gov.uk Tel. 020 8545 4430

Lambeth Adults' and Community Services

Phoenix House
10 Wandsworth Road
London
SW8 2LL

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Email acs@lambeth.gov.uk Tel. 020 7926 5555

Surrey County Council Deaf Services Team

First Point
Fairmount House
Bull Hill
Leatherhead

Surrey KT22 7AH

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Email firstpoint@surreycc.gov.uk Voice/Minicom: 01372 376558

SMS: 07854 238787

Fax: 01372 360224

Kingston upon Thames Social Services – Hearing Impairment

Royal Borough of Kingston
Guildhall 1

High Street

Kingston, KT1 1EU

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Email adults@rbk.kingston.gov.uk Tel. 020 8547 5005

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings (near the lift foyer).

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



Reference: AUD_PHO_01 **Published:** October 2020 **Review date:** October 2022