



Stockport Local Involvement Network

Hearing Aid Repairs Waiting Times

A report compiled by the Stockport Local
Involvement Network

29th November 2010

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What is the Stockport LINK?

The Stockport LINK is a network of groups and individuals from across Stockport coming together to ensure that health and social care services are planned and delivered to meet the needs of the people that use them.

The LINK will:

- **Find out what people like and dislike about health and social care in Stockport.**

We are always here to listen at the LINK Support Office, if you know of a wider health and social care issue in Stockport, let us know. The LINK is proactive in producing questionnaires and feedback forms that are circulated around the Stockport area for a wider balanced view.

- **Suggest ideas to help improve these services and consider specific issues of concern to the community.**

Because the LINK is made up of Stockport residents, these issues and the ideas to help tackle them are being formulated by you and people representing you. The LINK wants to hear about your experience of health and/or social care services in Stockport.

- **Visit premises in Stockport where care is provided or those providing care to Stockport residents.**

This is called Enter & View, and is undertaken by trained LINK members. Authorised LINK members can visit care premises to view the quality of care, write a report and feed back to both the organisation providing the care and the wider public.

- **Work with and influence those who make decisions about new services or existing services to help make them better.**

The LINK has the power to make statutory bodies listen; they are under an obligation to respond to LINK requests and reports within a given amount of time, meaning that the LINK can really make a difference.

- **Be flexible, providing many opportunities and different ways in which you can get involved.**

One of the great things about the LINK is that you can be as involved as much or as little as you like. From being a Core Group member, attending meetings, participating in Enter & View, participating in subgroups or you can simply choose to receive the Newsletter or provide us with your feedback. The choice is up to you.

Hearing Aid Repairs Waiting Times

Report from:	Stockport LINK Hearing Aid Task & Finish Group
Members:	Joyce Drummond & Clem Beaumont
Report to:	LINK Core Group
Report Date:	29 th November 2010
Subject:	Hearing Aid Repairs Waiting Times
Appendix i:	Alan Dawson - Hearing Aid Experience
Appendix ii:	Hearing Aid Waiting Time Task Group Report November 2009
Appendix iii:	New Guidance Leaflet
Appendix iv:	Task group comments on new guidance leaflet

Introduction

On 15th July 2009, LINK member Joyce Drummond raised the issue of waiting times for hearing aid routine maintenance, (e.g. tube replacement and minor repairs) to the LINK Core Group and as a result of this, a letter was written to Stockport NHS. This was not just an individual complaint, other members had heard of similar experiences.

On 20th August 2009, there was more discussion at the LINK Core Group around the waiting times. It was reported that NHS Stockport tends to have contracts for hearing aid repairs, mostly with Ormerods. This worked very well initially, with the quality of service higher, but due to staff shortages etc. it has quickly deteriorated. In 1996, you could walk in and get a hearing aid repaired on the same day, now patients can go days without being able to hear while waiting for wires/tubes.

Feedback from the public

On 18th September 2009, a member of the public, Alan Dawson came along to the LINK Core Group to talk about his hearing aid experience. Alan said that he usually had a wait of 6 weeks for any hearing aid repairs, which the group agreed was too long. (A full copy of Alan's experiences from the LINK Core Group minutes 18th September is available in appendix i.)

Clem Beaumont and Joyce Drummond, both hearing aid users of the service provided by Ormerods offered to form a task group to investigate this problem.

An article was put into the Stockport LINK Newsletter asking people who had experience of using Ormerods to get in contact with the LINK. The LINK received a

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small but significant amount of feedback from members of the public via feedback forms and accounts from LINK Core Group members of long waiting times for repairs on hearing aids.

Issues were particularly evident where the NHS had sub-contracted the work to Ormerods. The waiting times were then on average 15 working days.

Meeting with NHS Stockport

On the 29th October 2009, the task group met with the PCT Audiology Commissioner, Cath Comley at Regent House.

A summary of the reasons given by Cath Comley for the longer waiting list for re-tubing ear moulds and repairs/adjustments to the hearing aid compartment were:

1. 1500 patients were transferred to Ormerods for new digital hearing aids after they won the contract. Experience has shown that most digital users wear the aids for much longer than the non-digital ones. Consequently the service demands are higher than originally anticipated at times. This led to a waiting time of up to 6 weeks compared to 3 or 4 days under the audiology service at the audiology unit based at Stepping Hill Hospital (for non-digital hearing aids). The average waiting time for the service was around 15 working days at the date of the meeting in October 2009.
2. Whilst there were no facts and figures supplied to the task group by the PCT, Cath told them that there was an increase in demand for services from much younger patients generally now compared to a few years ago.
3. When the task group asked about complaint, they were told that the PCT have only had one complaint to address over the last six months. In the same period, from May 2009 there were no complaints to them from PALS and likewise, nothing from Stockport's Members of Parliament on behalf of their deaf and hard of hearing constituents. This differed from the task group's view based on the feedback gained from the public by the LINK.

The task group were aware that PCT will put measures in place for Ormerods to perform against. They will be monitored and reviewed by the PCT. Such as negotiating criteria based on waiting times with them. They agreed at the meeting to a formal review meeting between LINK representatives and the PCT. It was agreed at the November Core Group 2009 meeting that Joyce and Clem as the task group should be among representation at such meetings as well as taking responsibility generally on this issue until we can see progress, such as a 10 working day waiting list minimum.

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A summary of proposed actions that will significantly reduce waiting times were given on behalf of the PCT at the meeting were as follows:

1. PCT to renegotiate with Ormerods to reduce waiting times from 15 working days currently to 10 working days in the proposal to be put to them. (This had been independently looked into by the LINK). The task group agreed to keep this under review.
2. An option (already in place) for Ormerods NHS patients to move back to Stepping Hill. Although the waiting list there is 15 working days according to the PCT. However the main reason for this not being a good option at this time as users would need a new hearing aid as the software between Ormerods and Stepping Hill hospital is not compatible.
3. Ormerods to offer a "cancellation service" from its two centres in Stockport (at Great Under Bank and Cheadle Heath). The task group were unaware of this option, since Clem had not been offered it when booking appointments with them. Users need to be informed of this option by Ormerods and the group suggested to the Core Group that the LINK suggest the PCT build this into future contracts. The Core Group agreed.
4. The group were shown a draft of a new guidance leaflet which included a section on re-tubing your own ear moulds when it is necessary (usually with normal usage every 3 to 5 months). The group felt that this is feasible, and may bring down waiting times slightly. The group felt that it might work, if piloted appropriately and targeted and researched well to attract voluntary users in the first instance. One thing of concern was that they are introducing the option to re-tube your own hearing aids, which can only be done by very dexterous people; those who are not very dexterous or have bad eyesight will have trouble with this. The task group were given the draft of a new guidance leaflet to look at and comment on.

The full report from the task group is available in Appendix ii

Results of the meeting

On 4th November 2009, the task group sent their suggestions on the new guidance leaflet produced by Ormerods - which they felt had not been designed by anyone with hearing problems. There were significant changes made based on the task group's comments. A copy of the finalised leaflet and the corrections they made are in appendix iii & vi

On 20th April 2010, the task group reported to the Core Group another follow up meeting with was arranged with Cath Comley on May 13th 2010.

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The task group asked for any more feedback from the public to be sent to them and the LINK support team added a request for feedback to the May 2010 Member Update.

The meeting with Cath scheduled for May 13th was put back to 22nd July for the group to find out what the impact of the LINK's suggestions had to the service.

Conclusion

On 22nd July 2010, the task group met with Cath Comley as a follow up from the meeting held with Cath the previous November to discuss routine repairs and appointments. At the time, the average appointment time was 15 working days. After working with the task group, waiting times are now down to 6 working days for routine repairs at Ormerods. This is a vast improvement and the task group are happy that this is genuine. They asked to be kept in touch with Ormerods about this service and/or any new services.

Ormerods now email the PCT on a weekly basis giving the dates/times of their next 3 available appointments. Their waiting times are monitored in the same way as they would be for any other provider of a NHS service. If waiting times increase to more than 7 days Ormerods are contacted and asked how they are going to deal with this, for example putting on extra clinics. Average waiting times are now 5-7 days. The task group said they will continue to monitor periodically but feel that the work is successfully concluded. However in line with best practice a final review meeting has been arranged with Cath Comley. This will take place on 13th May 2011. The task group will report back to the Core Group.

An independent check by LINK at the end of September 2010 revealed that this average waiting time was being maintained.

Clem and Joyce from LINK and the PCT Audiology Commissioner's office worked persistently and harmoniously together throughout to achieve this significant reduction in waiting times from 15 working days to 7 working days from Ormerods.

This report will be available on www.stockportlink.co.uk and www.mycaremychoice.org.uk

Appendix i

Alan Dawson - Hearing Aid Experience

Alan Dawson was invited to the LINK Core Group to give firsthand experience of the problems he has with hearing aid waiting times.

Alan went on the list for digital hearing aids as soon as he heard about them and was on the list for years.

Alan had bad experiences while waiting to get digital hearing aids, he was called to jury duty and was embarrassed by them having to give him huge hearing aids and a loop in court. He also worked outside and couldn't hear other people. Tired of waiting for his digital hearing aids, Alan decided to go private and made enquiries on the difference between private treatment and the service provided by the NHS. The cost of his hearing aids with private treatment was £1300 each. He was told when buying the hearing aids they would last a lifetime but in reality they only lasted 5 years.

He had to wait 8 years before the NHS gave him digital hearing aids. When he got the hearing aids, he realised they were not right and made an appointment to get them checked. For this appointment he had to wait 6 weeks. They were adjusted in a small room and he could not hear outside, when he went outside he discovered they were adjusted wrongly and had to wait another 6 weeks for another appointment.

When Stepping Hill provided them you could go in and get them adjusted on the day. With Ormerods you have a 6 week wait. Alan said he can understand why people give up on the NHS and are forced to go private. After the problems he had with adjustments, he then had to make another appointment - with another 6 week wait - to have moulds taken and then another week to get them.

A question from the group asked whether it is a case of Ormerods not having the right equipment or of them not having the right environment to test. Alan said he felt that it was about being in a small room and being unable to get them adjusted right the first time and the equipment breaking down over time. Alan explained that with private care - which he has now turned to - a tester comes into the home to check the home environment and adjust the hearing aids to how the patient will be using them.

Tony asked Alan who he complained to and Alan replied that he had not known who to complain to. Tony said that this shows that PALS is not sufficiently known about.

Pat asked Alan where he went to get his hearing aids done. Alan told her that you go straight to Ormerods and you have to fit in the appointment after work. Pat said she was aware that Ormerods is cutting back, and insufficient staffing levels.

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Clem updated Alan on his and Joyce's work programme, where they are visiting one of the commissioners within the PCT about this issue. He feels that it all boils down to finance and resources. He gave an example of his own problems with NHS hearing aids where he was hearing whistling for 6 months and was told he had to deal with it. But it turned out that it was adjustments needed after having to cope with it for months. Clem and Joyce will be asking about the decreased service delivery from Ormerods and asking why it has deteriorated from the days that Stepping Hill dealt with hearing aids. John asked to be kept in the loop with developments of the work programme and Clem agrees.

Joyce said that she is with Ormerods on private healthcare and it is fine for her.

Alan concluded that the NHS is falling behind and the private sector is charging and getting away with it because people can't cope with the NHS anymore.

Both Stan and Peggy gave positive examples of using NHS Hearing Aids. Stan went to the GP, was sent to Stepping Hill and within 2 weeks he got hearing aids. He then got a call 6 months later about checking adjustments. Peggy spoke of a friend who got her hearing aids via Wythenshawe hospital under the NHS Choices system and avoided Ormerods.

The group thanked Alan for his time and input and Mike suggested to him to visit PALS to get his complaint dealt with as an individual case. Tony mentioned to Alan that he could visit Kay Kelly at Walthew House as she is an advocate for deaf and blind people in the borough.

Action: Joyce and Clem to take Alan's comments into consideration

Appendix ii

Report from: Clem Beaumont on behalf of the Hearing Aid task group

Report to: Core Group

Date: 17th November 2009

Subject: Hearing Aids

Appendix: (Action Plan, correspondence, supporting reports)

Activity Brief

Introduction/Background (explain a little about the subject)

The LINK received feedback from LINK members and the general public that the waiting times for Hearing Aids and Hearing Aid tubing had increased in the last few years.

Purpose/Aim

The group hope to, by talking to the public, commissioners and contractors to reduce the waiting times for Hearing Aids and Hearing Aid tubing.

Objectives

(a) To explore reasons for long waiting times for routine repairs and re-tube work to the hearing aid for NHS patients who go to the sub-contractor, David Ormerod Ltd. a problem rapidly accelerating in the last couple of years.

(b) To achieve, in a period of the next 6 months, reduced waiting times.

Team Members

Clem Beaumont and Joyce Drummond

Activity Report

After hearing concerns from LINK members, the Core Group invited Alan Dawson, a hearing aid user, to talk to the group about the problems he has had with the service. On the 29th October 2009, Joyce Drummond and Clem Beaumont (from LINK) met with a senior official from PCT audiology commissioning unit at Regent House to discuss concerns that had been raised from LINK members and the public about hearing aid repair waiting times.

A report of the meeting with the senior official from PCT audiology commissioning unit at Regent House is as follows:

The waiting times regarding replacement of non-digital hearing aids for new digital hearing aids is no longer the problem it was a couple of years ago and all references in this report

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solely refer to re-tube work on the ear mould and routine repairs to the hearing aid compartment.

However LINK would still like to know if this is not the case for some deaf and hard of hearing persons. Please get in touch by telephone on 0161 477 8479 or e-mail links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk

A summary of the reasons given by the PCT official for the longer waiting list for re-tubing ear moulds and repairs/adjustments to the hearing aid compartment are:

1. 1500 patients were transferred to Ormerods for new digital hearing aids in the first place, after they won the contract and experience has shown that most digital users wear the aids for much longer than the non-digital ones.

Consequently the service demands are higher than originally anticipated. At times, as some of us are aware, this has led to a waiting list of up to 6 weeks compared to a 3 or 4 days under the old audiology service for non-digital hearing aids at the audiology unit based at Stepping Hill Hospital.

2. Whilst there are no facts and figures supplied to us by the PCT, their official told us that there was an increase in demand for services from much younger patients generally now compared to years ago. This is perhaps understandable, we suppose due to greater health promotion initiatives across the whole spectrum of the population.

However, we have obtained separately, some facts and figures from the RNID (the Royal National Institute for the Deaf) giving some (non-comparative) statistics. These are shown in a later part of this Report. Also, the PCT official referred to the well accepted fact that we have an increasing ageing population generally and this adds to the problem. We suppose this issue could have been anticipated, along with many other age related health issues in our society and cannot really be an excusable reason, a fact that was accepted at the meeting by the official.

3. We were also concerned of the lack of recorded complaints about this service, by deaf and hard of hearing persons over the last six months. The PCT have only had one complaint to address. In the same period, from May 2009, no complaints to them from PALS. Likewise, nothing from Stockport's Members of Parliament on behalf of their deaf and hard of hearing constituents. We however are far from convinced that there are no grounds for complaints about the waiting times that have been offered by Ormerods. Alan Dawson's experience is shared by others and this problem needs to be pursued by LINK, through publicity and public awareness mediums generally.

We are aware that PCT are to put measures in place with Ormerods, which we will monitor and review by obtaining written details from the PCT of the waiting times criteria negotiated with them. We have already agreed at the meeting to a formal review meeting between LINK representatives and the PCT. The authors of this report would like to be among representation at such meetings as well as taking responsibility generally on this issue until we can see progress, such as a two week waiting list in future. We ask for this mandate formally either at the next meeting of the Core group or the one after, when members have had time to read it and are happy with the content of this report and its plan of action.

Outcomes of the Activity

A summary of proposed actions that will significantly reduce waiting times were given on behalf of the PCT at the meeting were as follows:

1. PCT to renegotiate with Ormerods to reduce waiting times from 15 working days currently to 10 working days in the proposal to be put to them. (Something that has already been put into place and which we had separately checked prior to the meeting when one of the authors had to actually book an appointment for re-tubing his ear mould.)The waiting time for the earliest possible appointment turned out to be 15 working days. This is still a long time, but we were told this is the current waiting time for those patients still with Stepping Hill. To achieve this Ormerods will progressively put extra staff resources into place at the 2 Stockport locations are we imagine open another unit in Stockport. We will keep this under review and certainly will feature as the main issue for us to watch between now and May 2010.The agreed time with the PCT to formally review progress.
2. An option (already in place) for Ormerods NHS patients to move back to Stepping Hill. Although the waiting list there is 15 working days according to the PCT. However the main reason for this not being a good option at this time since we were told users would need a brand new ear mould making. We understand that this is due to a computerised technical difficulty in adapting existing servers to fit with Stepping Hill's equipment. This clearly would add a lot more than 15 working days.
3. Ormerods to offer a "cancellation service "from its two centres in Stockport (at Great Under Bank and Cheadle Heath). We were unaware of this option, since we have not been offered it when booking appointments with them. Users need to be informed of this option by Ormerods and we seek the Core group's formal approval to get the PCT to build this into future contracts.
4. In a draft of a new guidance leaflet given to us at our meeting for vetting and advice, there is a particular section showing a diagram and words giving users directions on how to re-tube their own ear moulds when it is necessary (usually with normal usage every 3 to 5 months). It is feasible, we suppose and expressed this at the meeting though, that it may not significantly reduced waiting list. Despite this reservation, however younger patients with good eyesight and a good level of physical dexterity in their hands may be able to cope. Consequently, it might work, if piloted appropriately and targeted and researched well to attract voluntary users in the first instance.

Resources

Members of the group gave up their time to visit the senior official from PCT audiology commissioning unit.

Appendix

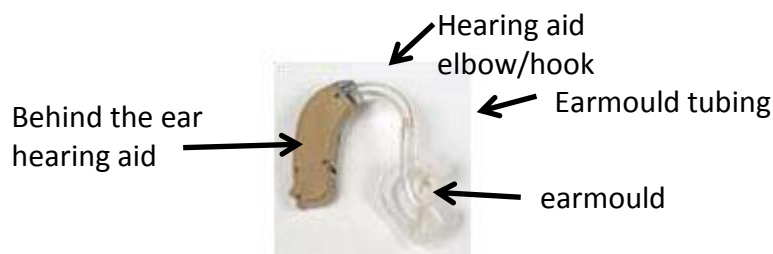
Some Statistics. These have been independently researched by us from RNID latest estimates. They state the number of deaf and hard of hearing people in the United Kingdom is: 8,945,000 people altogether. Estimated at 1 in 7 people of which 2,474,000 are aged between 16 and 60 and 6,471,000 are aged over 60. It is estimated, also, age related hearing loss affects 50% of people over 60.

Appendix iii - New guidance leaflet



Looking after your hearing aid

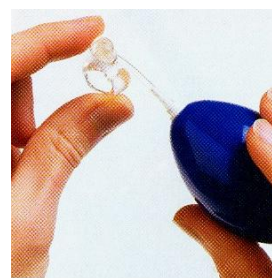
It is important that your hearing aids and earmoulds are kept clean and well looked after in order to prolong their life ensuring continuous good sound quality from them. This leaflet provides some useful advice on how to look after your hearing aid, replacing batteries plus tips on cleaning and retubing your earmould. If your hearing aid is whistling or not working well there is also a trouble shooting section to guide you to possible solutions.



Cleaning

Ideally, you should wash the earmould and tubing weekly in warm soapy water and then rinse them. Leave them to dry completely before fitting them back onto your hearing aid.

1. Only wash the earmould and tubing and **NOT THE HEARING AID ITSELF**.
2. To remove the earmould and tubing from the hearing aid, gently pull the plastic tubing from the elbow (hooked part at top of aid) of the hearing aid. Do not unscrew, pull or tug the tube too hard when carrying this out since it is likely to come away from the earmould completely.
3. Immerse the earmould and tube in warm soapy water in a small bowl or use a cleansing beaker with effervescent cleansing tablets.
4. To clean your hearing aid, wipe carefully with a soft, dry cloth or specialist antibacterial wipes. Do not use general cleaning solutions as they can damage the hearing aid casing. **Do not get the hearing aid wet.**

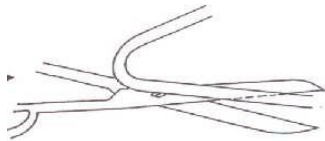


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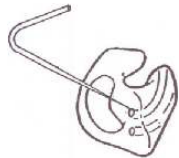
If you have two hearing aids, make sure that you know which earmould belongs to which hearing aid so that you can put them back together properly.

Retubing your earmould

The tubing on your hearing aid will need to be changed every three to six months as it discolours, hardens, splits or causes problems. If you wish you can be offered the option to change the tubing yourself at home. However, you must always ask the hearing aid audiologist to show you how and carefully follow the 6 steps shown below. They will provide you with spare tubing to take home and then follow the instructions below. Don't worry if you make a mistake try again and if really stuck please telephone us to ask for assistance, simply call our Freephone **0800 083 2319** or send a mobile text message to **07725927938** (starting the text message with NHS) or email gill.roberts@davidormerod.co.uk



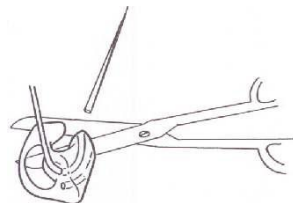
Step 1 : Pull the old tubing out of the mould and keep it. Taper the last inch of the new tubing.



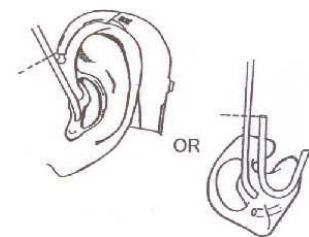
Step 2. Thread the tapered end through from the outside of the mould.



Step 3. Pull the tubing through the mould until the tapered end has passed right through and the other end is flat against the outside of the mould.



Step 4. Cut off the tapered end as close to the mould as possible.



Step 5. Adjust the tubing to the right length, place the mould in your ear and the hearing aid over your ear; ask somebody to mark the tubing just past the end of the hearing aid hook, then remove the mould and cut the tubing at this point OR use the old piece of tubing as a guide: hold it against the mould and cut the new tubing to the same length.

Step 6. Squeeze the top of the tube and fit it over the end of the hearing aid hook.



Fitting your Hearing Aid

The earmould is a vital part of your hearing aid. It channels sound from the aid into your ear and can affect the quality of what you hear.

If your earmould doesn't fit well or is difficult to put in place, it can be uncomfortable and will make your hearing aid less effective.

- Earmoulds should fit snugly and comfortably
- It is important to practise putting your hearing aid and earmould in correctly
- Some people find it helpful to use a mirror
- Once fitted, the earmould should sit flush into your ear with no bits protruding



Hold the earmould at the back between your finger and thumb with the back rounded part inside and the canal channel pointing towards your ear canal.



Put the bit that goes down the ear canal into position. Push the hook part (helix) into the top cavity of your ear

If you have problems with your earmould, simply call our freephone **0800 083 2319** or send a mobile text message to **07725927938** (*starting the text message with NHS*) or email gill.roberts@davidormerod.co.uk

Battery Life

Typically batteries will last 10–12 days. Batteries are designed to just stop although you may hear an intermittent beeping sound to warn you that the battery is about to expire. Their life will vary depending upon usage and the environment. Therefore it is good advice to carry spare batteries with you. If you are worried about your battery running out half way through an important meeting, change the battery beforehand.

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If the sound from your hearing aid gets fainter, disappears, becomes crackly, fuzzy or distorted, you should take the old battery out and replace with a new one of the same type. Always remember to fully remove the sticky label off the battery before inserting it into your hearing aid.

Obtaining New Batteries

New batteries to be supplied free of charge to nhs patients.

You can get new batteries from several outlets in Stockport eg local branch libraries.

Changing batteries in your Hearing Aid

When you replace batteries remember to follow the instructions carefully.

- There is a sticker on one side of the battery. You will need to remove this before placing the battery in the hearing aid. Make sure all sticky residue is removed
- Make sure the battery is the right way round, ensuring that when you close the battery compartment it swings shut easily. If it doesn't don't force it shut the battery could be upside down and the bottom raised part of the battery is catching on the case. Turn the battery the other way round and try again. The '+' on the battery should match the '+' on the battery compartment.
- To check that your complete hearing aid is working properly after you switch it on, cup your open hand over all the hearing aid in your ear and it should make a whistling sound to show it is in working order.

If your Hearing Aid is Whistling

A common problem with hearing aids is 'acoustic feedback'. This 'squeal', 'whistle' or 'buzz' is caused when amplified sound leaks out and gets picked up by the microphone in the hearing aid.

This may happen if:

- You have not put the earmould in properly (gently push it to check.)
- You have excess wax in your ears – (ask your GP to check your ears.)
- The earmould is loose in your ear (ask for a new earmould)
- The earmould, elbow or tubing is cracked , hard or split (try changing the tube)

If you are not sure about any of these, simply call our Freephone **0800 083 2319** or send a mobile text message to **07725927938** (*starting the text message with NHS*) or email gill.roberts@davidormerod.co.uk

Other common problems

If you are experiencing problems with your hearing aid, you should go through a list like the one below to eliminate any common faults.

If your hearing aid doesn't seem to be working:

1. Check that the hearing aid is switched on.
2. Check that it is not on the 'T' setting.

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3. Check you have it on the correct programme
4. Check that the volume is not turned right down.
5. Check that the battery is in the right way round.
6. Try putting in a new battery.
7. Check that the earmould is not blocked with wax.
8. Make sure the tubing is not twisted, split or squashed.
9. Remove any droplets of condensation in the tubing.
10. Make sure the earmould is inserted fully into your ear

If you are not sure about any of these, simply call our Freephone **0800 083 2319** or send a mobile text message to **07725927938** (*starting the text message with NHS*) or email gill.roberts@davidormerod.co.uk

Appendix iv - Task group comments on new guidance leaflet

(1) LOOKING AFTER YOUR HEARING AID.

Second line should read "after in order to prolong their life ensuring continuous good sound quality from them"

ALSO; this section would benefit from a diagram (or drawing showing a complete hearing aid with hearing aid/tube /earmould suitably marked pointing them out to the User.)

(2) CLEANING.

Second line should read "Then rinse them. Leave them to dry completely before fitting them back onto your Aid."

Suggest that the reference to air puffer is omitted.

Bold Capitals for "NOT THE HEARING AID ITSELF"

Change wording under note 2. to read "do not unscrew, pull or tug the tube too hard when carrying this out since it is likely to come away from the earmould completely"

Under note 3 give an example of names of approved cleansing tablets from a pharmacist.

(3) FITTING YOUR HEARING AID

Delete reference to "whistling" since other factors are more likely to do this and this is adequately covered later on in the leaflet under a specific heading "IF YOUR HEARING AID IS WHISTLING"

Important suggestion: Telephoning for help on freephone, What about minicom, text or email? (These are all better mediums for the deaf or hard of hearing)

(4) BATTERY LIFE

Suggest second line should read "You may hear an intermittent beeping sound to warn you that the battery is about to expire"

Suggest seventh line should read "or distorted you should take the old battery out and replace with a new one of the same type"

(5) OBTAINING NEW BATTERIES

Line one to read "New batteries to be supplied free of charge to NHS patients."

Second line to read "You can get new batteries from several outlets in Stockport e.g local branch libraries" (IT IS IMPORTANT TO ADD OTHERS STATING THAT THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE)

(6) CHANGING BATTERIES TO YOUR HEARING AID

Amalgamate the points "Make sure the battery is the right way round, ensuring that when you close the battery compartment it swings shut easily"

Change the last point to read "To check that your complete hearing aid is working properly after you switch it on cup your open hand over all the Aid in your ear and it should make a whistling sound to show it is in working order"