

Audiology Improvement Sites

Tinnitus pathway

- 1 Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- 2 Freeman Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust
- 3 University Hospital of Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust

Balance pathway

- 4 Sheffield Children's NHS Foundation Trust
- 5 St George's Healthcare NHS Trust, London
- 6 Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- 7 Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust
- 8 The National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery (UCLH), London

Adults - Age related hearing loss pathway

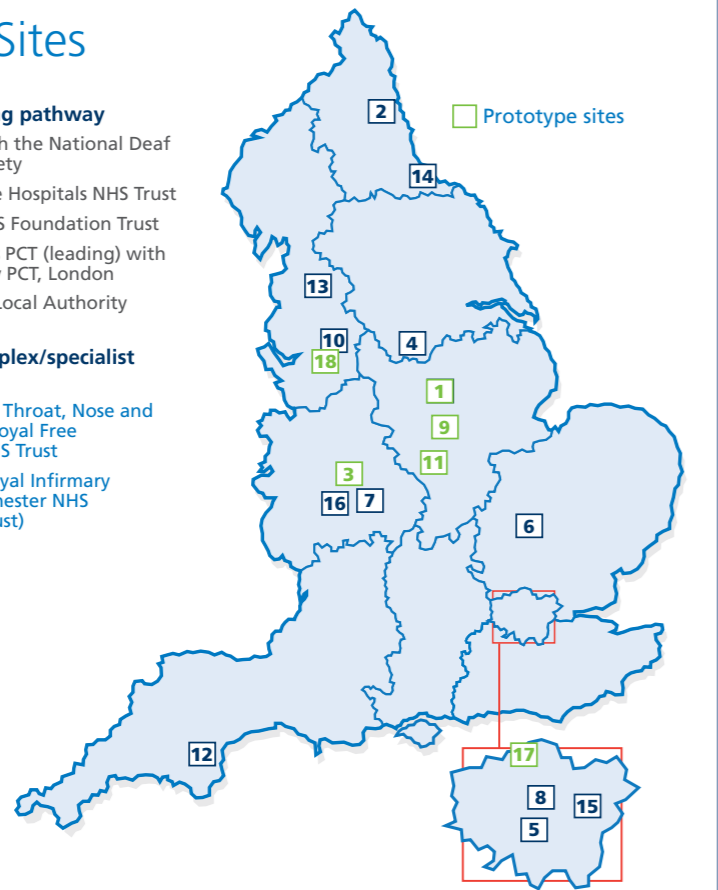
- 9 Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
- 10 Trafford Healthcare NHS Trust
- 11 University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

Children's hearing pathway

- 12 Devon PCT with the National Deaf Children's Society
- 13 East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust
- 14 South Tees NHS Foundation Trust
- 15 Tower Hamlets PCT (leading) with City & Hackney PCT, London
- 16 Warwickshire Local Authority

Adults with complex/specialist needs pathway

- 17 Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital (Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust)
- 18 Manchester Royal Infirmary (Central Manchester NHS Foundation Trust)



Physiological Sciences Services Accreditation

Standards for NHS physiological science services, including audiology, are being developed in conjunction with professional bodies, societies, colleges and patient representation, based on the highest level of knowledge and evidence. Physiological Sciences Accreditation (PSSA) involves a process of self-assessment and peer review using the standards, their criteria and evidence that are being developed in a systematic way

While accreditation will not be mandatory it will set a kitemark providing assurance of quality to patients and commissioners alike. PSSA seeks to drive up quality - aspiring towards excellence and aligns with the work of the NHS Commissioning Board in setting commissioning guidelines on the basis of clinically approved quality standards.

The standards, and the material that sit beneath them, have been developed by an advisory group of over 80 professionals and lay representation. The content, process and principles align with the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges core model along with other diagnostic accreditation programmes.

PSSA covers four domains - safety, patient experience, facilities resources and workforce which are common across all specialisms and a fourth 'clinical' domain which is specific to each specialism - these are closely aligned with plans for the NHS outcomes framework.

Over the last few years, two Quality Improvement tools have been developed for use in audiology services.

The Quality Rating Tool (QRT) was developed by a large group of different partners, including Quality Improvement Scotland, and has been published on the Scottish Government website. In England, the Department of Health and the British Academy of Audiology have developed the Quality Enhancement Tool, (QET). The accreditation programme builds upon the work and learning from the QRT & QET. The content from the QET is currently being mapped and translated into the accreditation material to ensure that the non-diagnostic, rehabilitative and re- rehabilitative aspects of audiology services are addressed.

PSSA will start piloting in vascular science in December 2010; early implementers in other specialisms will begin the accreditation process from spring 2011.

The Service Improvement Toolkit for NHS Teams

The Audiology Improvement Programme is developing a suite of free tools for teams to access and use in developing local audiology services. Although not exhaustive, these resources will enable teams to:

- Manage effective projects
- Process map services

- Understand baseline and develop improvement metrics
- Use data to improve and monitor service
- Engage patients and carers in improvement work
- Manage service demand and capacity

- Use lean methodologies to improve the quality and efficiency of a service.

The toolkit will be available in December 2010. Please visit www.improvement.nhs.uk/audiology for more information.

New Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention (QIPP) website

A new comprehensive resource designed to help NHS teams meet and deliver the QIPP challenge has been launched by NHS Improvement. It is easy to navigate and provides access to a wide range of useful information and tools to enable sustainable improvement for NHS services. Please visit: www.improvement.nhs.uk/qipp to find out more.

Audiology Improvement Programme Contacts

To discuss any of the project work, please contact any member of the team.

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This newsletter is produced by NHS Improvement in conjunction with the Department of Health Scientific Services Management Group to support the Audiology Programme. An e-Bulletin is produced bi-monthly.

The e-bulletin is available for information to members of the audiology community and anyone working in health or social care with an interest in audiology improvement and can be accessed from our web site www.improvement.nhs.uk/audiology. The bulletin is provided on an opt-in basis, and to subscribe or unsubscribe contact Alyson Banks-Davies at: alyson.banks-davies@improvement.nhs.uk

The Audiology Improvement Programme 2010/11

Following the success of the 18 pilot sites across England, as part of the Department of Health National Audiology Programme 2009/10, six of the sites have been identified to work closely with NHS Improvement Audiology Programme, until March 2011. Sites will further test innovative ways to improve the quality of the patient experience, increase productivity and sustain improvements. The aim of the programme will be to focus on the prototyping, primarily across the adult services, to provide further evidence to support the emerging principles. The primary goal will be to see an improvement in quality of service and up to 20% efficiency gain.

Pushing the Boundaries: Evidence to support good practice in audiology

This publication includes improvement stories from the 18 pilot sites across England and demonstrates how sites have redesigned hearing, balance and tinnitus pathways to improve the quality of the patient experience, increase productivity and sustain improvements. The full report and case studies can be downloaded from the website at: www.nhsimprovement.uk/audiology



Transition of hearing impaired young people from children's to adult audiology services: Moving forward

Following the success of the pilot sites, work with testing new models and pathways for transition of young people from child to adult audiology services, sites are meeting in January 2011. Sites will share learning to date and establish some winning principles of models for transition services

which may help to inform the wider NHS across these and other disease areas. The summary report will be available shortly and further presentations will be available after the event at: www.nhsimprovement.nhs.uk/audiology



Project leads/ SHA audiology leads meet to discuss initial findings

SHA audiology leads continue to meet nationally to enable spread of good practice and develop clinical communities of audiology practice. SHA leads are planning to meet with prototype project

sites on 30 November 2010 to share findings to date and to critically analyse pathway development and emerging principles. Issues and challenges will be discussed and learning

spread via SHA leads. Presentations will be available on the website after the event.

NHS Trusts, NDCS and NHS Improvement working in partnership

NHS Devon working in partnership with NCDS - progress update

Jonathon Parsons reports that NHS Devon continues to work with NCDS and is making good progress with their transition from child to adult pathway plans. In preparation for the new term they held their first training day for Connexions staff, which was delivered jointly by audiology and NDCS in Exeter. They have developed a new consent form to assist with data sharing between the agencies. Progress is being shared with the South West Audiology Group and their poster is being presented at the BAA conference. For more information please contact Jonathon Parsons (jonathon.parsons@nhs.net).

'Over to you' project - Understanding the needs of deaf young people NDCS working in partnership with Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney PCT

Have you ever wondered how deaf teenagers feel about attending audiology appointments? Are you confident that they understand what is going on during the appointment? Are you positive they are making the most out of their appointment? Are you worried about when your patients transition from children to adult services?

Through the NDCS 'Over to you' project, we're asking deaf young people aged 13-18 years old what their experiences are with audiology services.

This one year project will see NDCS working in partnership with Tower Hamlets, Newham and Hackney PCTs to improve the experiences of deaf young people accessing audiology services. We are also supporting service providers to have a better understanding of the needs of deaf young people and be more confident in involving them in the design and shaping of their service.

As part of this project, NDCS is developing a number of resources for professionals and deaf young people. We want to make sure that the resources are relevant to your work with young people and that they meet the needs you have. We would be really keen to know what you think about these resources so please come and visit NDCS at stand 29 and let us know or visit our website: www.ndcs.org.uk/professional_support/over_to_you.html

From pilot to prototype improvement projects

Following the launch of the new programme in July 2010, sites met to rescope projects using A3 problem solving techniques and to value stream map whole pathways. Details of projects are summarised below.

GP triage; a new pathway to identify patients requiring 'one stop' assess and fit hearing aid service

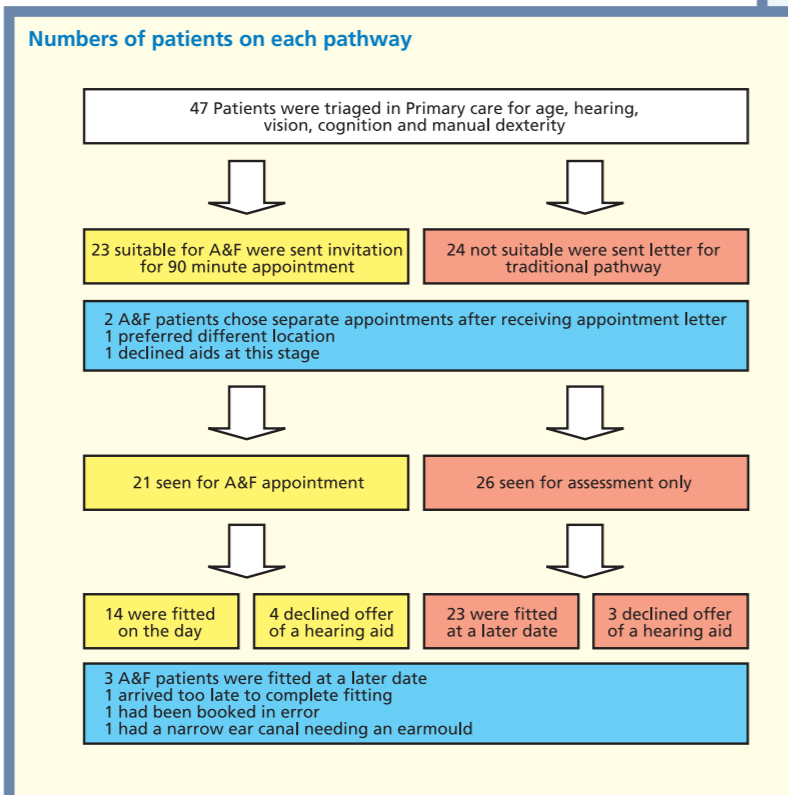
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

The pilot work at Leicester Royal Infirmary Hearing Services involved working with GPs to use a patient questionnaire and a simple hand held screening device to assess patient's suitability for having their hearing assessed and aid fitted in one appointment. Previously these patients required two appointments. This saved on time and travel costs, while still providing high quality hearing aids.

During the past twelve months hearing services have seen over 2,000 new patients directly referred from GPs for hearing aids. 15% of these referrals could potentially be seen as a one stop service, saving 30 minutes on previous appointment times. Over 180 hours of clinical time can be potentially saved each year.

The scope of the prototype project will be to roll out this screening service to more GP practices in the catchment area and explore other methods of triage to improve uptake of patients through the 'one stop' service.

For further information contact **Pauline Smith**, Clinical Scientist - Audiology, pauline.smith@uhl-tr.nhs.uk, telephone: 0116 258 5824



Complex Hearing Needs Clinic/ Regional Network Development

Central Manchester University Hospitals Foundation NHS Trust

The pilot project at Manchester Royal Infirmary focused on the development of a Complex Hearing Need Clinic, in addition to patients seen in existing learning disabilities clinic. Complex hearing was defined beyond the scope of profound hearing loss. Clear referral and triage guidelines were agreed with internal referrers ENT, BAHA clinic, Cochlear Implant programme and other stakeholders to enable timely access to the service. Patients are seen and followed up by a experienced core team to enable continuity of care.

The development of a Complex Hearing Loss Network across the region, in February 2009, has enabled local discussions regarding meeting the needs of patients with complex hearing needs, identified thresholds of referral of patients to specialist tertiary services, established a complex hearing need link person for each provider and identified opportunities for shared learning and training.

The scope of the prototype project is to improve compliance with internal referral processes to ensure that patients are identified early and referred into the clinic and that patients report improved outcomes.

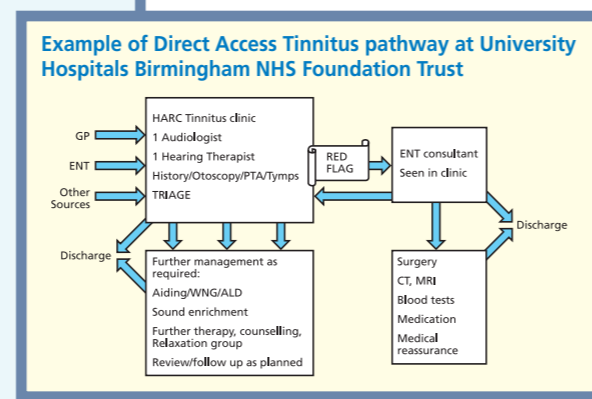
For further information about this work please contact **Martin O'Driscoll**, Head of Audiology, martin.o'driscoll@cmft.nhs.uk, telephone: 0161 276 4417

- Definition of Complex Hearing Need**
- Fluctuating hearing loss (e.g. Meniere's Disease)
 - Acoustic Neuroma (diagnosed)
 - NF2 (diagnosed)
 - Auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder (ANSO)
 - Ski-slope audiogram
 - ≥50 dB octave difference between 0.5 and 4 kHz
 - Severe-profound hearing loss
 - ≥80 dB HL at 2 and 4 kHz
 - Not CI candidates
 - Conductive hearing loss
 - BC ≤20 dB HL with air-bone gap of ≥50 dB
 - Not BAHAA/USB candidates
 - Mixed hearing loss
 - AC ≥60 dB HL with air-bone gap of ≥30 dB
 - Not BAHAA/USB candidates
 - Frequent (≥3) follow up/fine tune attendees
 - Suspected non-organic hearing loss

Direct Access Tinnitus Service

University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust & Sherwood Forest Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

During the pilot project phase both sites focused on implementing a GP Direct Access Tinnitus Management Clinic via Choose and Book. Each site demonstrated improved access of patients to tinnitus management therapies and improved patient satisfaction. The clinic delivery model varied. At Birmingham the clinic is managed by a senior audiologist and hearing therapist, whilst at Sherwood Forest the clinic is managed by a senior audiologist with skills and competencies in tinnitus management.



The scope of the prototype project is to improve compliance of GPs referring into the Direct Access Audiology service, rather than via ENT pathway, and to test the efficiency of the whole pathway model. This new clinical pathway has the potential to improve clinical outcomes, improve access to management therapies, and release both audiology and ENT outpatient capacity to enable effective capacity management.

For further information about this work please contact: **Michelle Booth**, Chief Audiologist, michelle.booth@sfh-tr.nhs.uk, telephone: 01623 622515 ext 3036
Huw Cooper, Consultant Audiology Scientist, huw.cooper@uhbt.nhs.uk, telephone: 0121 627 1627

Hearing aid reassessment appointment triage – Moving care into the community

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

The pilot work involved redesigning the care pathway for patients who routinely require hearing aid reassessment. The team achieved this by developing new protocols and pathways and moving care into the community, closer to the patient's home. With the introduction of a triaging type appointment and streamlining of the pathway, they were able to reduce the appointment time in clinic for the majority of patients and improve the department's ability to manage waits, thereby improving capacity and increasing efficiency within the service.

This innovative piece of work improved accessibility and provided a service that is delivered safely in a community location, whilst maintaining clinical quality within a shortened appointment time. The team managed to achieve a 46% reduction in the number of attendances each patient has to make and a 43% reduction in the time spent in clinic, which enabled them to manage a greater number of patients all within the existing resources. A patient survey demonstrated that patient satisfaction had increased and that 97% of patients from the pilot group prefer a service that is local to them.

The scope of prototype project will be to increase the number of community locations and test the feasibility of an Associate Audiologist delivering this service.

For further information about this work please contact **William Brassington**, Consultant Audiologist/Head of Audiology, william.brassington@nuh.nhs.uk, telephone: 0115 948 5550

Direct Access Tinnitus and Balance Service

Royal National Throat Nose and Ear Hospital (RNTNEH), Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust

The pilot project identified the need for a direct access service by auditing ENT Otological referrals. Approximately 40 patients per week could be seen by an experienced audiologist. The pilot validated senior audiologist skills by operating a triage assessment clinic in parallel to an ENT outpatient clinic.

The scope of the prototype project is to operationalise a Direct Access Tinnitus and Balance Service, via Choose and Book, with initially a planned daily capacity of four slots per day. This would enable streamlining of pathways and assist with patients to be managed by audiologists or to be seen by the appropriate professional in ENT or the Audiovestibular Department. RNTNEH are working with NHS Camden to develop specification for service to enable future tariff development.

For further information about this work please contact **Zena Butt**, Senior Audiologist, Adult Neuro-Otology, zena.butt@nhs.net, telephone: 0207 915 1300

