

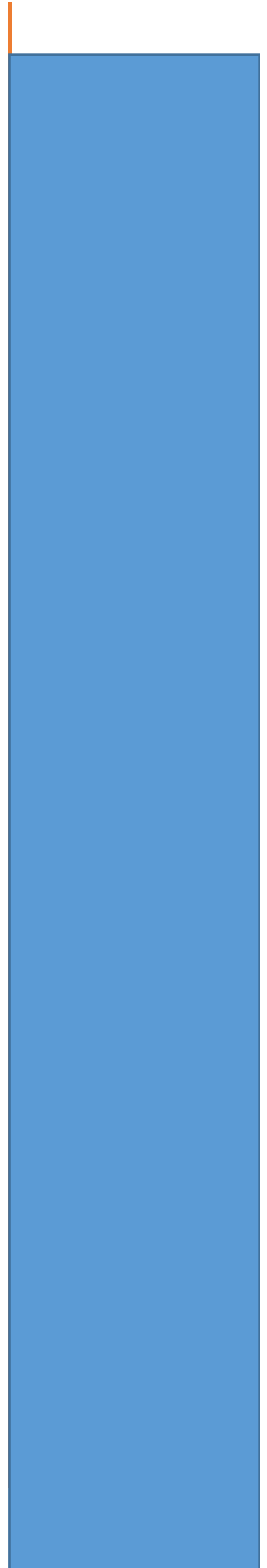


Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust



PAEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGY HEARING AID INFORMATION

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Hearing Aids

Once your child has a diagnosis of hearing loss we will most likely want to go ahead with fitting hearing aids – for this we need to get a suitable ear mould made.

We will need to take an impression of your child's ear so we can ensure the ear mould is a perfect fit. Impression taking involves putting some soft playdough type material into the ear, after a few minutes the material hardens, and we have an accurate cast of the inside of the ear. This does not cause any discomfort but it may be a strange sensation. The cast impression is sent to a specialist company to be made into an individual ear mould for your child. We will ask if you would like to have any pictures, glitter or color added to the earpiece.

Below is an image that shows the Ear Mould, the Hearing aid and the plastic tubing that attaches them. In the below example the child had chosen to have gold and silver glitter in their ear mould.



In the Belfast Trust, we are currently fitting Oticon and Phonak hearing aids for pediatrics. Within these main types, we have Minis, standard, power and superpower hearing aids. The strength of hearing aid we fit depends on the severity of your child's hearing loss.

We also offer a range of 'fun' colours, which include silver, pink, blue, purple and red.

Most of our hearing aids are now Bluetooth compatible with some devices.

The information we have regarding degree and frequency response of hearing is used to program the hearing aid. This means each hearing aid is specific to each child and each ear. We will also carry out a real ear measurement (predicted or ear level). This measurement uses information from your child's ear to help program the hearing aids as accurately as possible.

Ear Mould



The ear mould allows sound delivery directly to the ear canal by housing a hollow tubing through which the sound from the hearing aid passes into the ear. It also keeps the hearing aid securely on the child's ear. They are custom made and will need to be re-cast quite regularly as your child grows. Babies quickly out grow their moulds due to rapid growth; regular visits to the Audiology department for ear mould impressions are therefore needed. Typically once a baby is around 5-6 months old the growth rate of the ears slows and less frequent visits are required.

Connecting tube



This connects the hearing aid and the mould and allows the sound to travel from the hearing aid through the mould and into the ear. In order for the tubing to be effective, it needs kept clear of moisture, wax and dead skin. When new moulds are received, they need to have the tubing trimmed to the correct length so the aid sits correctly on the ear.

Hearing Aid



This amplifies sound so your child can hear better. It is programmed according to the level of hearing your child has and the main aim is to make speech sounds audible so you child can hear and develop speech. The hearing aid is battery operated.

There are different types of batteries and they are colour coded. The most common types are Orange –13, Brown – 312 and Blue – 675.

Trouble shooting

When you turn the hearing aid on and cup your hand over it, you should hear it whistling. This lets you know there is power. This should be checked every time you are inserting the hearing aid. We will provide you with a care kit to help you look after the hearing aids and do some trouble shooting at home, so it is not always necessary to visit the department.

If there is no power to the hearing aid, first change the battery.

If there is still no power check for blockages e.g. wax blocking the end of the mould. This can be cleared using the puffer or something with a point on the end e.g. a pin. If there is moisture in the tubing take the tubing off the hearing aid and clear with puffer.

If you are still unable to get the hearing aid to work-, please contact the audiology department.

It is also a good idea to listen to your child's hearing aid so you can keep an eye that is amplifying as well as it normally does. We will usually supply you with a listening clip for you to listen to the hearing aid. We suggest you do this once a week so you can keep an eye of any faults that may develop especially while you child is too young to tell you. When testing the hearing aid please take care to not damage your own hearing as the sounds with be very loud in some cases.

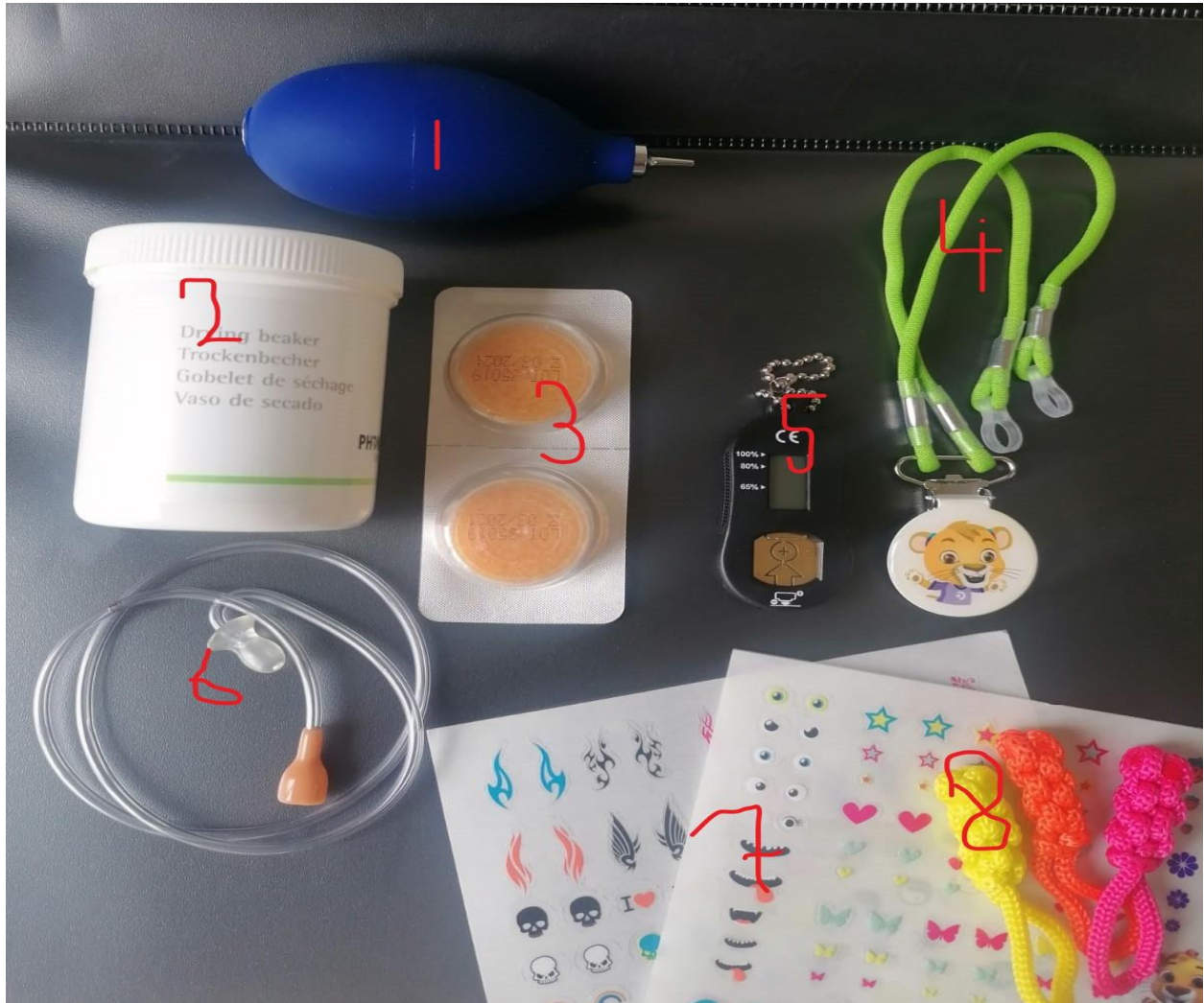
If the hearing aid gets wet it may still work when dried out. We will have provided you with a tub and some drying capsules. Immediately dry the hearing aid and put it in the tub with a drying capsule overnight. Check the hearing aid and if it is functioning well then carrying on using it, if you are not happy with it please contact the audiology department.

If the hearing aid is making a 'whistling' or 'squealing' noise when it is in your child's ear this tells us that some sound is escaping. Reasons this may be happening:

- The ear mould is not inserted correctly.
- The ear mould has become loose in your child's ear.
- There is a buildup of wax in the ear.
- There is a loose connection.

Hearing aid batteries typically last 7-10 days if the aids are worn all day. There is a warning beep to let you know when the battery is low. If your child is too young to communicate this to you we suggest changing the hearing aid on the same day every week so it does not run out during the day. It is also worth noting if your child has a FM system in school they may run down quicker as the ear level FM system draws power from the hearing aid battery.

Hearing aid care kit



1. Puffer

2. Drying Tub

3. Drying Capsules

4. Toddler Clip

5. Battery Checker

6. Listening Clip

7. Decorative Stickers

8. Decorative Stickers

Communication and Good Listening Environments

Developing good communication skills is very important for all children and their families. Doing this from an early age will have a positive impact on all areas of their development, for example, their social and emotional skills. Developing these skills early is essential and starts the same way as a hearing child. Facial expressions, voice, gesture, eye contact as well as singing, playing and talking to your child. As your child becomes a little older it can be a good idea to use more age appropriate gesture, for example, thumbs up or clapping and even some signs if that is what you decide.

If you wish to find out more about signs or introducing sign language, you can discuss this with any of the professionals involved with your child's hearing. There is also information on the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) and British Deaf Association (BDA) websites.

When communicating with your child, you should always try to obtain a good listening environment (where possible).

Tips to create a good listening environment

- Keep still and have good light on speakers face
- Keep eye contact
- When in a group only one person talking at a time.
- Speak clearly and take your time.
- Do not be too far away from your child.

Contact and Appointment Information

Batteries are always available at the entrance to the department, which is accessible weekdays 8am -7pm. Alternatively contact us and we can arrange for postage.

If your child's hearing aid has got broken or become faulty, you can drop it into the department for repair or post it to us. There is a hearing aid repair drop off box at the entrance to the department. Please note if using the postal service you will be without the hearing aid for an extra few days.

If you feel there has been a change to you child's Hearing that is something other than that associated with cold or congestion please contact us to make an appointment for a hearing test.

When your child requires a new mould, contact us and we will arrange an appointment as soon as possible.

If you require tubing or any replacement supplies for your care kit please contact us and we will arrange for them to be posted to you or left for collection.

If you have any ENT concerns or queries you will need to contact the Paediatric ENT secretaries or appointments who should be able to advise you on ENT appointments.

Contact Information

Audiology Department 028 96 151070

Text only - 07385386987

Level 7D reception 028 96 150408

ENT secretaries 028 96 156814

Appointments office 028 96 159800

Waiting list office 028 96 151400

Postal Address

Paediatric Audiology Department

Royal Victoria Hospital

Outpatient Department Level 7D - EENT

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Belfast

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