

# Public Summary

The following descriptions should be a combined half to one-page summary of the project in non-technical terms. It may be used for participant recruitment or education, marketing purposes, info for the NAL website or a summary update to executives.

**Project Code & Title:** G20.07 Assessing the use of the ‘My Hearing Explained’ tool to align communication strategies between adults with hearing loss and their communication partners.

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## Project Goals

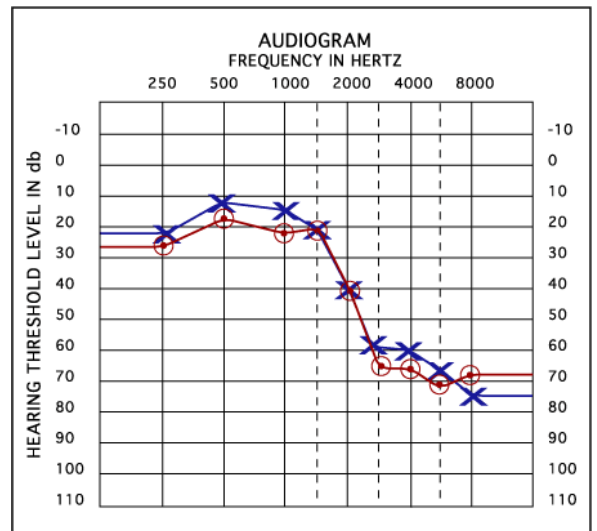
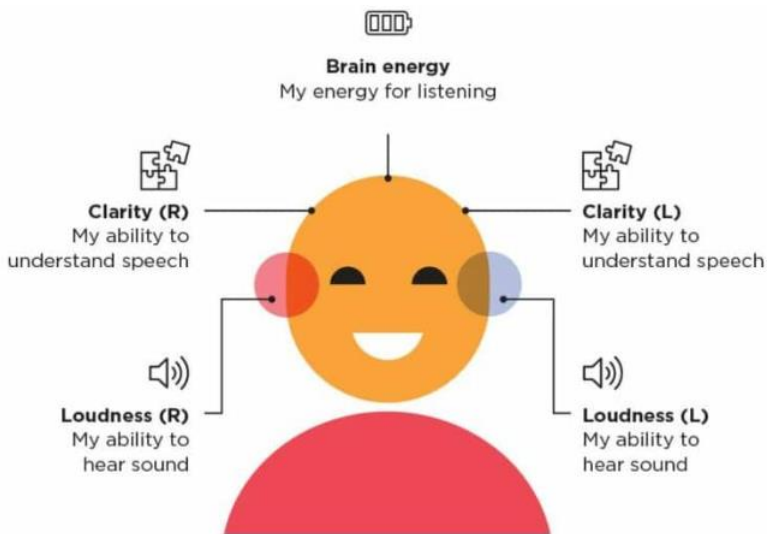
The overall objective of this study was to assess the role of the My Hearing Explained (MHE) tool in facilitating discussions between people with hearing loss (PHL) and their chosen communication partners (CP) regarding the hearing loss of the PHL and its consequences, with the goal to improve the CP’s understanding of the PHL’s hearing difficulties.

The study also utilised the behavioural insights concept of a pre-commitment contract, where a person is asked to sign a contract, committing to the change in behaviour. This has been used in other fields to improve a person’s willpower, which is further improved by sharing that commitment with a close family member or friend. The goal of the pre-commitment contract was to increase the success of the PHL achieving their communication goals.

## Results

Data collection ran from April 2021 to July 2022. This study involved eight participant pairs consisting of a person with hearing loss (PHL) and their chosen communication partner (CP). The communication partner could be anyone chosen by the PHL, including a spouse, partner, friend, or sibling.

Each participant was interviewed separately about their understanding of the PHL’s hearing difficulties. The PHL also received a full hearing assessment, and the results were explained to them using either the standard audiogram or the MHE tool. The PHL and the CP were then encouraged to set communication goals together. Half of the pairs were also asked to sign a pre-commitment contract, pledging to discuss their goals weekly.



According to our analysis, the MHE tool is at least equal to the standard audiogram when it comes to the CP understanding the PHL’s hearing difficulties and facilitating goal discussion. There was no clear preference for one tool or the other, with some participants’ suggesting that the two results methods were different and complementary and could be used together to give a full picture of the persons hearing. In particular, the MHE’s brain energy metric was noted as an additional useful measure that the standard audiogram was lacking.

The precommitment contract showed positive results, in line with the research from other fields. Pairs who received the pre-commitment contract were more likely to talk informally about their goals and, more likely to have a formal discussion about their goals. They were also more likely to have achieved their goals by the post-intervention interview.