

Public Summary

Project Code & Title: G19.26 Defining Outcomes for the Hearing Services Program
Project Lead: David Allen
Department Head overseeing project: Mel Ferguson

Project Goals

The overall aim of this research was to develop and deliver recommendations on evidence-based outcome measures for implementation of a client outcomes-focused program for those receiving hearing devices in order to measure the success and cost effectiveness of the Hearing Services Program.

The specific objectives were to:

1. seek views and consensus from a range of key stakeholders to define which standardised client-centred outcome measures should be used, when and how in the HSP.
2. identify current and future potential mechanisms and systems to standardise the collection of data and reporting of outcomes, which will enable comparison across clients and contracted service providers
3. scope the potential for a national outcomes database and its benefits
4. identify how the recommendations of this outcomes program need to be modified for other populations such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, adults with specialist hearing needs and children up to the age of 26 years.

Results

This study resulted in seven overarching recommendations, with four sub-recommendations.

- Recommendation 1: Target the outcome domain “communication ability”
 - Recommendation 1a: Use Part 2 of the Glasgow Hearing Aid Benefit Profiles (GHABP) as a measure for communication ability
- Recommendation 2: Target the outcome domain “well-being”
 - Recommendation 2a: Develop a short question set to assess well-being, and validate in hearing rehabilitation
 - The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale is a validated, generic measure and may be a useful starting point. A hearing-specific measure may be more sensitive
- Recommendation 3: Target the outcome domain “personal relationships”
 - Recommendation 3a: Develop and validate a measure of the impact of hearing interventions on personal relationships
 - There are no good measures available.
- Recommendation 4: Target the outcome domain “reduction of participation restrictions”
 - Recommendation 4a: Develop a short question set to assess reduction of participation restrictions, and validate in hearing rehabilitation
 - The Social Participation Restrictions Questionnaire is a validated measure and would be a useful starting point



- Recommendation 5: Measure outcomes at baseline and then no earlier than three months following the conclusion of the rehabilitation program
- Recommendation 6: Establish an independent body to develop a standardised outcomes instrument and mechanism for outcomes collection
- Recommendation 7: Conduct stakeholder engagement processes to explore and reach consensus on the application of outcomes among the client groups currently seen under the Community Service Obligation (CSO)