Hearing Aid Devices
Quick Reference Guide

Key Points:

- The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) requires initial testing results for hearing aids need to be submitted **within 2 business days** of the evaluation. Providers will order all hearing aids through the VA's national hearing aid contracts; therefore, no hearing aids shall be purchased under the Patient-Centered Community Care (PC3) or Veterans Choice Program (VCP). When a hearing aid is issued, medical documentation for follow-up appointments, such as fittings and adjustments, shall be returned **within 14 calendar days** of each encounter.

- Medical documentation and associated forms can be submitted to TriWest in one of the following manners:
  - **Preferred method for PC3 and VCP providers:**
    - Upload to the TriWest Secure Provider Portal at:
      www.triwest.com/provider
  - **Other available methods:**
    - Fax -1-866-259-0311

1. Once a determination that the Veteran would benefit from hearing aids has been made, the community-based audiologist should work with the Veteran to choose from devices available through VA-approved manufacturers (listed below), and then make appropriate impressions (ear molds).

2. The community-based audiologist should then:
   a. Mail the impressions to the Veteran’s VA Medical Center (VAMC); and
   b. Upload/fax the completed manufacturer-specific hearing device order form and test results to TriWest Healthcare Alliance.

3. An audiologist at the VAMC will update the Veteran’s medical record and place the order for the hearing aids using the form and test results downloaded from TriWest’s Provider Portal.

4. The VAMC will request the new devices be mailed to the community audiologist’s office.

5. Once the community-based audiologist receives the devices, an appointment should be scheduled with the Veteran for a fitting and TriWest notified of the appointment. The fitting must be performed by a licensed audiologist.

All hearing aid devices will be ordered and procured from a VA prosthetics service, using devices procured from the following manufacturers:

**Phonak** -

**Oticon** -

**Starkey** -
A completed manufacturer order form is required as a part of this evaluation.

Audiologists must verify hearing aid performance using probe tube (real-ear) techniques. Gain or sound pressure verification (e.g. real-ear aided response or real-ear insertion gain) is essential to ensure audibility and alignment with target gain values.

Audiologists must provide to Veterans the requisite fitting, orientation, instruction and training in the use of hearing aids. Under no circumstances will an audiologist mail a hearing aid to any Veteran without having performed the requisite fitting, programming, verification and orientation. Using default or manufacturer’s settings is not acceptable. Audiologists must administer a scientifically validated measurement instrument (e.g. IOI-HA, APHAB, or HHIE) to demonstrate the efficacy of treatment.

A hearing referral requires the following services be performed, when clinically appropriate:

- Full hearing history including, but not limited to: history of noise exposure, tinnitus, otalgia, ear surgery, aural fullness, previous hearing aid use and vertigo
- Prior to audiometry, routine otoscopy and cerumen removal, if necessary
- Comprehensive audiometry (includes pure tone testing for test frequencies from 0.25 kHz through 8 kHz for air conduction testing, 0.25 kHz through 4 kHz for bone conduction testing, speech reception threshold, speech recognition testing)
- Tympanometry (immittance) and ipsilateral and contralateral reflexes
- Reflex decay if indicated
- Selection of VA provided hearing aids, ear impressions if needed and, as appropriate, selection of wireless hearing aid accessories from VA-approved manufacturers listed below
- Hearing aid orientation, fitting, adjustment and initial programming
- Conformity evaluation (real ear measurement)
- Hearing aid programming adjustments, fitting issues, hearing aid orientation review

Resources

For questions related to the audiology process, please contact Provider Services Contracting at 1-866-284-3743. Additionally, these websites* may be helpful for billing:


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