

# Program of Care for Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL) Quick Reference



## Program Elements

### *Audiometric Assessment*

The NIHL POC sets an expected standard for audiometric assessments conducted for WSIB workers:

- Worker must be out of noise (occupational and recreational) for 12 hours prior to assessment
- Assessment includes manual puretone audiometry, 25-word standard list speech recognition.

### *Treatment Plan*

- Clearly outlines the technological and non-technological interventions for each worker:
  - Technological interventions-make/model of hearing aid
  - Non-technological interventions-education, expectation management, orientation to hearing aid use.
- Approved by the prescriber and forwarded to WSIB.
- **NIHL Assessment Summary & Treatment Plan Form** must be completed and submitted to the WSIB.

### *Device Selection*

- Includes hearing aid evaluation and complete hearing aid specifications.
- All pertinent information must be kept in the chart notes for the worker.

### *Hearing Aid Dispensing, Fitting and Verification*

- All steps required in the process of procuring the prescribed hearing aid, fitting it to the worker, verifying its performance electroacoustically and instructing the worker on proper use and care of the hearing aid.
- All technical procedures must be in full compliance with all relevant American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards.

### *Noise Induced Hearing Loss Rehabilitative Needs Assessment*

The NIHL Rehabilitative Needs Assessment ensures that non-technological supports are properly assessed for use in individualized program planning. This may include:

- Perceived listening/communication limitations, needs and priorities.
- Vocational/social hearing demands.
- Initial use of COSI™ (Client Oriented Scale of Improvement)\*
- Assessment of relevant physical & cognitive functioning, communications support systems, personal adjustment to hearing loss and expectation management related to the use of a hearing aid.

### *Trial Period Follow-up*

Must occur no later than 30 days after fitting the hearing aid.  
Includes:

- Assessment with COSI.
- Delivery of non-technological supports to worker.
- Review of potential barriers to worker use of hearing aid and address as required.

- **NIHL Trial Period Follow-up Form** must be completed and signed by the provider AND the worker and then submitted to the WSIB.

### *NIHL Rehabilitative Follow-up*

Occurs no later than 6 months after fitting of the hearing aid.  
Includes:

- Evaluation of outcomes using COSI.
- Problem-oriented counselling related to COSI outcomes.
- Any required adjustments to the hearing aid.
- Review of potential barriers to worker use of hearing aid and address as required.
- **NIHL Rehabilitation Follow-up Form** must be completed and submitted to WSIB.

### *Periodic Assessment and Problem-driven Follow-up*

Depending on the nature of the case, a periodic assessment or problem-driven follow-up appointment may be required. This may include:

- Audiometric assessments and possible medical referral.
- Cleaning and maintenance of the hearing aid.
- Verification of prescription and modification if necessary.

## Communication with Employer

When a worker is returning to work with a hearing aid, the employer must receive an information package clearly outlining the proper use of hearing aids at work and any functional limitations that the worker may have directly resulting from the NIHL.

### For More Information

All Program of Care documents, including forms can be downloaded from the WSIB website: [www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca), select “Health Professionals”, then click “Programs of Care”. Forms may also be photocopied. For questions or to obtain an information package, call the Health Professional Access Line: 1-800-569-7919 or (416) 344-4526, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm.

\**Australian Hearing is the holder of the copyright and trademark in the COSI Questionnaire.*