

What's Next After Confirmed Hearing Loss?

After your hearing assessment confirms the type and degree of hearing loss, the next step is to consider **appropriate rehabilitation tailored to your needs**. Everyone's hearing loss is unique, so personalised approaches yield better results. It's essential to seek professional advice.

Here are some common scenarios and recommended actions:

Scenario 1: Hearing Loss Requiring Medical Diagnosis or Treatment

Your assessment may reveal issue in your ear or hearing system that need medical attention. Depending on the test results and your medical history, your audiologist may recommend consulting an ear, nose, and throat specialist, neurologist, or general practitioner.

If medical or surgical treatment is available, follow-up hearing assessments will be necessary to monitor outcomes.

Scenario 2: Non-Medical Hearing Intervention

For most people with permanent hearing loss due to age, noise exposure, or other factors, medical treatment may not be required. In these cases, your audiologist can guide you on suitable hearing options, including:

- **Hearing technology:** Assistive listening devices for everyday listening needs and professionally fitted hearing aids based on your hearing test results.
- **Implantable devices:** Cochlear implants, middle ear implants, or bone-anchored hearing aids. These require a specialised team, and decisions should consider your overall health and hearing ability.

Some audiologists/clinics offer comprehensive rehabilitation programs that may include:

1. **Counselling:** Support to address and manage the impact of hearing loss on lifestyle, relationships, and wellbeing.
2. **Communication training:** Strategies to improve your communication and help those around you communicate effectively.
3. **Ongoing support:** Guidance to maintain your communication skills, adapt to changes in hearing or environment, and stay updated with the technology being used. Your audiologist may suggest various programs and supports that you can engage in both at the clinic and at home.

Peer Support

Joining a support group can also be very helpful. Hearing loss mostly occurs as a slow decline over time, but it can occur suddenly as a result of illness or injury. Without the right support, it can make communication with family, friends, and colleagues more difficult, and may lead to feelings of isolation, frustration, depression, or other health conditions. Being able to talk with others who understand makes a world of difference. That's what peer support is all about.

Remember: Hearing rehabilitation is a lifelong journey. While it may present challenges, it can be an incredibly rewarding and significantly improve your quality of life. On this journey, you are not alone!

Watch Lived-Experience story sharing interviews produced by HMA

Link: <https://www.hearingmattersaustralia.org/services/peer-to-peer-support>

To hear inspiring and heartfelt stories from individuals living with hearing loss.



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