



East Suffolk and
North Essex
NHS Foundation Trust

Severe to profound hearing loss

***Audiology Department
Colchester Primary Care Centre***

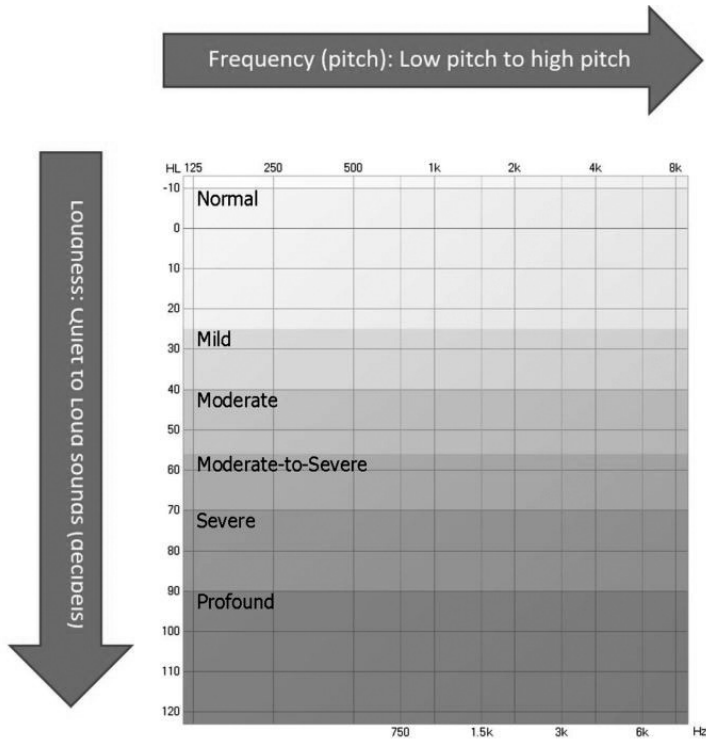
Tel: 01206 487142

Email: audiologycolchester@esneft.nhs.uk



What is a severe to profound hearing loss?

Hearing loss affects approximately 12 million people in the UK, of which over 600,000 have a severe to profound hearing loss.



The audiologist will be able to describe your hearing loss in more detail. Please ask them at your next appointment for more information or they can plot your hearing test on to the audiogram above.

If you have a severe to profound hearing loss you may only be able to access very loud sounds or speech if it is very loud.



What are the challenges I may face with a severe to profound hearing loss?

There can be many challenges to severe to profound hearing losses. If you have noticed your hearing is deteriorating this may be quite worrying especially if you are not able to communicate in ways you have done before. The impact of hearing loss can be different for everyone, but if you have had hearing loss for a short or a long time you may have noticed the following:

- communication can be stressful, with strangers and even with friends and family
- listening is tiring and you find yourself withdrawing from situations
- it can reduce your confidence and mis-hearing can be embarrassing
- you may grieve losing your hearing
- noisy environments may make it extremely hard to follow conversation and you may have to change the way you communicate with people
- telephone conversations are extremely difficult or even impossible
- you may find listening to and enjoying music more difficult.

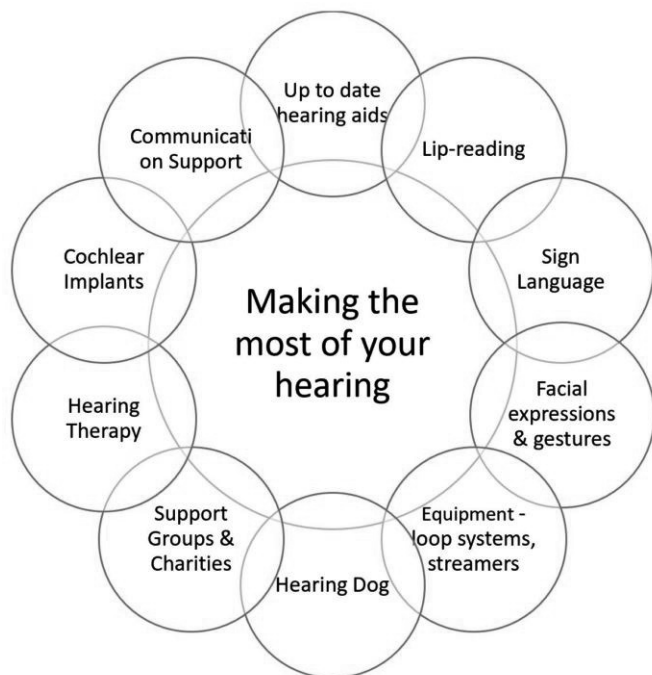
The good news is there are lots of practical steps you can take to get better at communicating and keep doing the things that are important to you.

You may benefit from powerful hearing aids and we will do our best to make sure they are optimised for your hearing




loss. However, they cannot return your hearing to normal and you will still need to use good communication tactics and alternative strategies to make the most of your hearing.

Hearing aids – they are only part of the plan...



Cochlear implants

A cochlear implant is a potential alternative to conventional hearing aids for people with severe to profound hearing loss. Your audiologist may struggle to provide you with the best available sound via a conventional hearing aid due to the extent of your hearing loss. Some people may be able to hear more with a cochlear implant.

A cochlear implant is a hearing device that is made up of an electrode that is surgically implanted into your inner ear and a processor that you wear over your ear like a hearing 

aid. A cochlear implant bypasses the damaged inner ear hair cells and sends electrical signals to the brain, where they are interpreted as sound.

Your audiologist should discuss this with you if you are a potential candidate. But, if you are interested in finding out whether a cochlear implant may be suitable for you please ask us.

The nearest centre for cochlear implants is the Emmeline Centre at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge. Please visit the Cambridge University Hospitals website at www.cuh.nhs.uk/our-services/ear-nose-and-throat/emmeline-centre-for-hearing-implants/ for more information.

The British Cochlear Implant Group at www.BCIG.org.uk also has lots of useful information.

If you are considering a cochlear implant assessment, it can be very helpful to speak directly to someone who has already received an implant. Advanced Bionics (www.advancedbionics.com), one of the companies who manufacture cochlear implants, runs a mentoring programme, through which you can be put in touch with someone similar to you who will share their cochlear implant experience.

Hearing therapy

We have dedicated hearing therapists who can arrange to see you and your family. Their input involves listening, and helping you with the emotional effects of your hearing loss, as well as lots of practical things like lip-reading skills and communication tactics, goal setting and increasing independence with skills and equipment.



The hearing therapists can also help with applications to external agencies and charities such as the Access to Work Scheme, social services and the sensory team.

Communication strategies

There are a number of things that you, and those who are communicating with you, can do to increase your chances of understanding speech.

- Ask people to get your attention before they speak to you.
- Tell people that you need lip reading to be able to understand them; ask them to speak clearly and slow down if necessary.
- Consider asking people to say something in a different way if you are finding it hard to understand them.
- Try to keep calm. If you get anxious about not hearing it will usually mean you are less able to concentrate on understanding.
- Reduce any competing background noise when possible – for example, wait for the kettle to stop boiling or mute the TV.

Lip reading

Most people lip read a little bit without realising, but it can be very beneficial to improve your lip reading skills by attending classes. If you have a severe to profound hearing loss you will usually need some level of lip reading skills to be able to communicate effectively as hearing aids are unable to provide access to all speech sounds.



It may help build your confidence and you will have the opportunity to meet other people with severe to profound hearing loss.

ATLA are a registered charity who organise lip reading classes across the country. Visit their website at atlalipreading.org.uk to find the details of a class near you.

You might also like to work through lip reading exercises online at your own pace. You can access exercises and information at www.lipreadingpractice.co.uk/ and storiesforlipreading.org.uk/

British Sign Language (BSL)

British Sign Language (BSL) is the sign language used in the United Kingdom and is the first or preferred language of some deaf people. There are 125,000 deaf adults in the UK who use BSL. Most people who use BSL are born deaf, but for people who lose their hearing later in life learning BSL and the use of facial expressions and gestures can be helpful to aid communication.

Local online courses are run by Colchester Institute and Phillip Morant School. For more information go to www.british-sign.co.uk

Equipment

There is a wide range of equipment that may be useful for you. Some equipment supports independence at home and other equipment works with hearing aids to overcome problems caused by background noise. There are also devices that can give you access to entertainment. Detailed information on equipment can be found on the Connevans website at www.connevans.co.uk



If you are interested in any of the products and would like further information or advice, please ask your audiologist or you can arrange an appointment with the hearing therapist by contacting us.

There are now many applications (apps) that may be helpful to you. You don't need any special kit – just download the app from the App Store or Google Play onto your smartphone, tablet, or computer. Here are a few suggestions:

Relay UK: Previously known as TypeTalk, the assistant relays the phone conversation in real time and types back the other person's conversation. See www.relayuk.bt.com for more information.

Live Caption: free speech-to-text app. Ask someone to speak into this app and their words will appear as text on your screen.

Text Hear: speech-to-text app that can also couple to landline corded phones for captioning output. Free demo.

Sound Hound: free app that listens to music and brings up artist, song, album and will also display synchronised lyrics.

Registering with the emergency services

If you pre-register with the emergency services as a text user in advance of needing to use the service, your text will be treated with the same urgency as a phone call to 999. If you do not pre-register, your text in an emergency situation will be prioritised behind phone calls.

To pre-register, text the word 'register' to 999 and follow the instructions that will be sent to you by return text.



Essex County Council has a specialist sensory team of workers who are trained and experienced in working with people with a visual, hearing and dual sensory impairment. Essex County Council has a specialist sensory team of workers who are trained and experienced in working with people with a visual, hearing and dual sensory impairment.

Essex Sensory team can also do an assessment with you to see if you would benefit from additional equipment or devices at home. They work with the Fire Service to fit specialist smoke alarms and can also provide pager systems and other alerting devices such as door bells.

You can self-refer to this organisation – for further advice and information, contact ECL Sensory Service Essex:

Telephone: 03330 133262

Text phone: 01245 261715

Text: 07921 397547

Email: sensoryservices@essexcares.org

Website: www.ecl.org/services/sensory-service

Hearing Dogs

Hearing Dogs for Deaf People are a charity that provides trained assistance dogs to help people with hearing loss.

Hearing dogs can help alert you to sounds, accompany you to public places and provide constant companionship.

You can apply for a hearing dog no matter what the level of your hearing loss or your personal circumstances. To find out more visit their website at **www.hearingdogs.org.uk**

Communication support

Communication professionals support deaf people and those with hearing loss in a range of situations. You may need communication support for job interviews or work, education or training courses, medical appointments or when using legal services.

This could include speech to text reporters or note takers, lipspeakers and BSL interpreters.

To find out more please visit The Royal National Institute for Deaf People's website at rnid.org.uk/information-and-support/communication-support/

Support groups and charities

Ever thought of joining a friendly group run by and for people with a hearing loss? Ever wanted to get more information or support from others with hearing loss?

Hearing Link

Their vision is for a world where everyone can enjoy life and participate fully and confidently, whatever their level of hearing.

Tel/Text: 01844 348 111

Website: www.hearinglink.org

Colchester Deaf Club

Website: colchesterdeafclub.weebly.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/colchesterdeafclub

Essex Deaf Ramble Club

Website: essexdeaframblegroup.weebly.com



Hearing Help Essex

Provides support to Essex residents living with hearing loss. Supporting local NHS audiology services by running hearing aid support and maintenance sessions and run regular information, advice and guidance sessions across the county.

Tel: 01245 496347

Text: 07950 406173

Email: info@hearinghelpessex.org.uk

Website: hearinghelpessex.org.uk

The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)

Charity working to make life fully inclusive for deaf people and those with hearing loss or tinnitus.

Tel: 0808 808 0123

Textphone: 0808 808 9000

Email: information@rnid.org.uk

Website: rnid.org.uk

Hear 2 Meet – RNID

RNID befriending and peer support, information and signposting service. This service can support you and your loved ones at all stages of the hearing loss pathway.

Tel: 07442 538 939

Email: angela.baker@rnid.org.uk

Royal Association for Deaf People (RAD)

RAD provides services to deaf people in their first language, usually British Sign Language (BSL) and supports mainstream providers to be more accessible to deaf people.

Telephone: 0300 688 2525

Textphone: 0300 688 2527

SMS: 07851 423 866

Email: info@royaldeaf.org.uk

Website: www.royaldeaf.org.uk



Your experience matters

We value your feedback. Please help us improve our services by answering a simple question, in our online survey – “Overall, how was your experience of our services?”

This survey is known as “The Friends and Family Test”.

You can either scan this QR code with a smart phone camera:



Or type the following web address into your browser:
www.esneft.nhs.uk/get-involved/your-views-matter/friends-and-family-test/

Thank you very much.

Please ask if you need this leaflet in an alternative format.

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East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
Colchester Hospital, Turner Road, Colchester CO4 5JL
www.esneft.nhs.uk



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