

## SCHEDULE A

### HEARING AID PROGRAM SERVICES

#### 1.0 FITTING SERVICES

- 1.1 Potential WorkSafeBC Claims: In the event that a Contractor or a Service Provider is approached by a potential WorkSafeBC Injured Worker who has not yet initiated a claim, the clinic or Service Provider shall make the person aware of his/her possible hearing loss claim eligibility. The Contractor or Service Provider shall inform the potential WorkSafeBC Injured Worker that the Injured Worker may contact WorkSafeBC to discuss claim initiation and claim entitlement. The Contractor or Service Provider shall not make specific comments about claim entitlement, but may provide an application form and/or the teleclaim number (1 888 Workers) to the potential Injured Worker for the Injured Worker to complete. The Contractor or Service Provider shall not attach business cards or any commercial literature to the form. If a Contractor is in doubt about the status of an individual, he/she may check claim status online at [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com).
- 1.2 The Contractor is responsible for ensuring that an Injured Worker is entitled to hearing aid services before providing Services. Injured Workers with an accepted hearing loss claim will be issued a letter confirming the accepted claim.
- 1.3 It is the Contractor's responsibility to ensure that the Injured Worker is entitled to hearing aids prior to ordering hearing aids from a Manufacturer. If hearing aids are ordered and the Worker is not entitled, the Contractor is responsible for these costs.
- 1.4 The Contractor or Service Provider shall not accept any money from a potential WorkSafeBC Injured Worker for providing or assisting in filling out WorkSafeBC application forms.
- 1.5 The Contractor shall provide the Services described in Schedules A, A1 and C when fitting all Hearing Aids. WorkSafeBC shall reimburse the Contractor for the cost of fitting and maintenance of Hearing Aids as stated in Fee Schedule B.
- 1.6 WorkSafeBC shall purchase Hearing Aids directly from manufacturers, and not from the Contractor, except in exceptional circumstances as approved by a WorkSafeBC Board Officer or as part of the Cost Share Arrangement described in 6.2.
- 1.7 The Contractor shall track the delivery of all Hearing Aids between both the manufacturer and the Contractor and the Contractor and the Injured Worker. The Contractor shall investigate any products deemed delayed or lost in transit. This will apply for the initial purchase, any subsequent replacement/exchange of Hearing Aids and any return to the manufacturer for any reason.
- 1.8 Any Hearing Aid provided to an Injured Worker includes the manufacturer's twenty-four (24) month full parts and labour warranty.
- 1.9 If an inappropriate Hearing Aid, as determined by WorkSafeBC, is fitted to the Injured Worker the Contractor shall reimburse WorkSafeBC any costs incurred.

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- 1.10 The Contractor is responsible for providing the Education Pamphlet “Your hearing aids, your hearing aid clinic, and you” (Schedule C, 1.3.2, 1.3.7, 1.3.8 and 1.3.9) and explanation of its contents with each Hearing Aid Fitting Service.
- 1.11 The Contractor is responsible for detaching the Personal Release Consent Form from the Education Pamphlet, explaining its content and having the Injured Worker sign and date the form (Schedule C, 1.3.8) prior to sending the worker’s personal information to the manufacturer. The Personal Release Consent Form is to remain in the Injured Worker’s file.
- 1.12 The Injured Worker must provide a signature upon acceptance of the Hearing Aid(s) following the Trial Period as outlined in Schedule C – Hearing Aid Program Procedures and Standards, 2.4 and available on [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com). The Contractor shall maintain the signature in the Injured Worker’s file and be shall make the signature available for inspection by WorkSafeBC upon request.
- 1.13 The Contractor may invoice a first time fitting fee in addition to a fitting fee only for Injured Workers with a newly accepted claim who have never before received a Hearing Aid under WorkSafeBC Hearing Aid Program. This fee item is only billable once per Injured Worker in accordance with Schedule B.
- 1.14 It is the responsibility of the Contractor and/or Service Provider to take all reasonable steps to ensure that an Injured Worker fully understands the contents of any documents they are signing that relate to services and/or products for which a scheduled fee is payable.
- 1.15 Injured Workers, and/or Contractors must not sign declaration forms or invoices in advance of services received or rendered.

### **2.0 QUALIFICATIONS OF PROVIDER**

- 2.1 The Service Provider must be licensed and in good standing with the British Columbia Board of Hearing Aid Dealers and Consultants or any subsequent licensing body.

### **3.0 PREMISES**

- 3.1 Premises must be designed and maintained so as to be in harmony with a clinic's professional health care function. Premises must have dedicated clinic space.
- 3.2 Premises must provide adequate space for a reception/waiting area, audiometric testing room and consulting room.
- 3.3 Consulting and testing rooms must be constructed in such a manner to ensure that proceedings between Service Providers and Injured Workers are confidential.
- 3.4 Premises must have wheelchair access.

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- 3.5 Injured Workers visiting the premises should have ready access to toilet facilities.
- 3.6 The full range of hearing aid services must be available at the site and must meet the requirements of the clinical standards. Injured Workers must be able to receive timely clinical services and obtain professional advice and support when needed. To ensure this level of customer service all Hearing Aid clinics must at minimum have a Service Provider available on site at least twenty-one (21) hours per week. The clinic must be open five (5) days per week during normal business hours, excluding statutory holidays. The support staff must be well trained and available to provide a quality service to Injured Workers. Exceptions to minimum clinic hours may be allowed at the discretion of WorkSafeBC. In situations where a qualified clinic reduces hours and no longer meets the minimum they can only continue to provide services on an exceptional basis. Exceptions must be requested in writing and if granted will be confirmed in writing in the form of a contract amendment. The contract amendment will identify the clinic site where reduced services have been granted. If an exception is not granted the contract will be terminated according to contract clause 27.1 (a).

### 4.0 REPLACEMENT

- 4.1 General Criteria:
- 4.1.1 WorkSafeBC will replace an Injured Worker's Hearing Aid(s) only when necessary. In all instances the requirements of 4.1.3 must be demonstrated. The frequency of replacement Hearing Aids will be audited by WorkSafeBC.
- 4.1.2 Hearing Aids will not be replaced while under manufacturer or repair warranty without prior authorization from WorkSafeBC.
- 4.1.3 WorkSafeBC may authorize a new Hearing Aid if:
- Hearing Aid is not functioning properly **AND** the cost of repair is no longer considered cost effective;
  - Hearing Aid fit is inappropriate **AND** the cost of a new shell is no longer considered cost effective;
  - Hearing Aid circuitry is inappropriate **AND** the cost of replacing the circuit is no longer considered cost effective; or
  - Significant change in hearing: audiometric test results show that the Injured Worker's hearing has changed by a minimum of 20 dBHL in three or more frequencies 500 Hz – 4000 Hz and affects audibility. The initial Hearing Aid fitting should accommodate any changes less than this.
- 4.1.4 Any other requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims Department.
- 4.1.5 The Contractor shall submit a cover sheet (83D110) with all audiograms, real ear measurements and manufacturer's invoices.
- 4.2 Replacement of Hearing Aids less than five (5) years old:
- 4.2.1 The Contractor must obtain prior authorization from WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims Department before proceeding with replacement. For new Hearing Aid(s) to be

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authorized the Injured Worker's present Hearing Aid(s) must be proven to be functionally inappropriate. In all instances the requirements of 4.1.3 must be demonstrated.

4.2.2 The Contractor must submit the following to WorkSafeBC **prior** to the commencement of a new Hearing Aid trial:

- Hearing Aid replacement information form (51W6) indicating reason(s) why the Hearing Aid(s) should be replaced; and
- A current audiogram with the cover sheet (83D110); and
- Verification measures with the cover sheet (83D110) indicating inappropriate function of current Hearing Aid(s). If sound field measures are used, an appropriate explanation for their use must be provided.

4.2.3 The Contractor shall be responsible for the cost of any hearing aid(s) ordered without pre-authorization.

4.2.4 If a Hearing Aid replacement is approved, the Contractor must submit the following at the time of replacement:

- Hearing Aid provision and Services invoice form (51W12); and
- Hearing Aid verification measures with the cover sheet (83D110), to include but not limited to: target created by recognized prescriptive method, multiple levels of input, frequency specific tolerance measures. If sound field measures are used, an appropriate explanation for their use must be provided at the time of replacement.

#### 4.3 Replacement of Hearing Aids greater than five (5) years old:

4.3.1 Generally these replacements may be made without prior approval from WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims Department but must meet the requirements listed in 4.1.3, WorkSafeBC's intent is not to automatically replace Hearing Aids every five (5) years, simply because this time period has elapsed.

4.3.2 The Contractor must submit the following documentation to support justification for replacement:

- A current audiogram with cover sheet (83D110);
- Hearing Aid replacement information form (51W6) indicating reason(s) why the Hearing Aid(s) should be replaced;
- Hearing Aid provision and Services invoice form (51W12); and
- Hearing Aid verification measures with the cover sheet (83D110), to include but not limited to: target created by recognized prescriptive method, multiple levels of input, frequency specific tolerance measures. If sound field measures are used, an appropriate explanation for their use must be provided at the time of replacement.

#### 4.4 CROS-BiCROS:

4.4.1 The Contractor shall obtain Board Officer pre-approval for fitting CROS or BiCROS Hearing Aids, if the cost of the entire system exceeds the Hearing Aid Price Cap.

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#### 5.0 LOST OR DAMAGED HEARING AIDS

- 5.1 Replacement of Hearing Aid(s) lost or damaged beyond cost effective repair less than five (5) years of age requires pre-authorization from WorkSafeBC, unless there is no cost to WorkSafeBC. It is the injured worker's responsibility to obtain written pre-authorization by describing the circumstances surrounding the loss or damage. These will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and replacement may not be approved.
- 5.2 Replacement of Hearing Aid(s) lost or damaged beyond cost effective repair more than five (5) years of age can be replaced as per clause 4.3 above.
- 5.3 It is the Contractor's responsibility to confirm that the hearing aid serial number matches that of the serial number of the hearing aid purchased by WorkSafeBC prior to any repairs. If the serial number does not match, the Contractor must advise Health Care Services.
- 5.4 If replacement is authorized by WorkSafeBC, the Hearing Aid must be comparable to the original in terms of features, and cost, unless it can be established to the satisfaction of WorkSafeBC that there is a requirement for a different Hearing Aid which must be documented on the Replacement Form.
- 5.5 If a lost Hearing Aid is replaced after one year the Hearing Aid Fitting Fee may be invoiced. If a lost Hearing Aid is replaced prior to one (1) year, the Re-fitting Fee for Lost Hearing Aid may be invoiced.

#### 6.0 COSTS ABOVE FEE SCHEDULE

##### 6.1 Special Consideration:

- 6.1.1 WorkSafeBC, on a case-by-case basis may consider exceptional circumstances in which WorkSafeBC will cover the full cost of the Hearing Aid(s), and/or additional features (such as autocoils), which would cause the invoice cost to exceed the Hearing Aid Price Cap. In all such cases prior approval from WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims Department must be obtained. The Contractor must inform the Manufacturer that prior approval has been received from WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims in every instance when invoice costs will exceed the maximum WorkSafeBC limit.
- 6.1.2 The following shall be provided by the Contractor for consideration of exceptional circumstances:
- A statement of explanation outlining why such a device is required;
  - A list of situations where the Injured Worker encounters difficulty with current Hearing Aids;
  - Reasons why and how this instrument would better meet the Injured Worker's needs (for example the request for an autocoil must demonstrate why a regular telecoil is inappropriate to meet the Injured Worker's needs); and
  - A current audiogram (with the cover sheet) containing pure tone air and bone conduction thresholds, speech reception threshold, speech recognition scores in quiet and in noise, uncomfortable listening levels, and any relevant Hearing Aid evaluation measures showing to the satisfaction of WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims

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Department that the hearing loss cannot be reasonably addressed by alternative amplification.

#### 6.2 Cost Share:

- 6.2.1 If an Injured Worker chooses a Hearing Aid that exceeds the Hearing Aid Price Cap, and chooses to enter into a Cost Share Arrangement with the Contractor, the Contractor shall be invoiced by the manufacturer for the Hearing Aid chosen.
- 6.2.2 The Contractor may invoice WorkSafeBC for the fitting fee and Hearing Aid Price Cap (WorkSafeBC's Contribution). The Injured Worker will be invoiced the difference between the private pay price and the WorkSafeBC's contribution, as stated above.
- 6.2.3 WorkSafeBC's contribution as stated in Schedule B of the Cost Share Arrangement, applies to any purchase of Bone Anchored Hearing Aids (BAHA's).
- 6.2.4 For any Cost Share the Contractor must:
  - Allow WorkSafeBC Injured Worker the opportunity to try Hearing Aid(s) at price points within WorkSafeBC's maximum limits;
  - Take all reasonable steps to ensure that the Injured Worker fully understands the contents of the Cost Share Arrangement and the responsibilities of WorkSafeBC, the Contractor and the Injured Worker;
  - Not pressure the Injured Worker into trying Hearing Aids for which the Cost Share Arrangement applies;
  - Reimburse the Injured Worker any amount paid, should the Injured Worker return the Hearing Aid(s). The Contractor shall reimburse the Injured Worker within thirty (30) business days; and
  - Ensure all Hearing Aids have a manufacturer's full parts and labour warranty.

The Contractor shall obtain the Worker's signature indicating that they have been made aware of other options and have chosen to enter into a Cost Share Arrangement and keep this in the Worker's file.

- 6.2.5 In Cost Share Arrangements the Contractor is responsible for the delivery to and receipt of the Hearing Aid to the Injured Worker. Hearing Aids delayed or lost in transit between the manufacturer and the Contractor or the Contractor and the Injured Worker shall be the responsibility of the Contractor. This applies to both the initial purchase and any subsequent replacement/exchange of cost share Hearing Aids.

### 7.0 DOCUMENTATION

#### 7.1 Injured Worker Records:

- 7.1.1 The Contractor shall create and maintain an accurate and complete Injured Worker record for each Injured Worker. The Contractor shall include in this record, details of referrals and procedures carried out, clinical histories, and reports. It should be clear what product and or service was provided to the Injured Worker. The Contractor shall document all Hearing Aid Services provided.
- 7.1.2 Clinic notes must be dated and initialed by the individual who provided services. Fact and expression of opinion are to be clearly differentiated.

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- 7.1.3 Any form, chart notes, photocopy or reports that are submitted by the Contractor to WorkSafeBC must be legible, have all mandatory fields completed and meet WorkSafeBC's e-file scanning requirements. WorkSafeBC will not reimburse the Contractor for illegible and/or incomplete documentation.

#### **8.0 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

- 8.1 WorkSafeBC will conduct regular performance assessments to determine the quality of Services provided by the Contractor.
- 8.2 The Contractor is expected to provide timely reports and invoices containing complete and accurate information.
- 8.3 WorkSafeBC will periodically conduct a clinic site visit at its discretion to ensure the Contractor is adhering to all Service requirements as stated in this Agreement, the Qualification Standards and The Hearing Aid Program Procedures and Standards (Schedule C, Revised December 2007).

#### **9.0 HEARING AID PROGRAM PROCEDURES AND STANDARDS**

- 9.1 The Hearing Aid Program Procedures and Standards is the procedural reference for Services under this Agreement and is presented in Schedule C. WorkSafeBC shall post this reference on its website [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com). It is the Contractor's sole responsibility to obtain an updated copy of the reference document. It is the Contractor's sole responsibility to ensure they monitor the website for updated information.
- 9.2 WorkSafeBC reserves the right to revise procedures within the Hearing Aid Program Procedure and Standards, Schedule C should operational, legislative or technological changes occur.

#### **10.0 WORKSAFEBC HEARING AID PROGRAM BILLING GUIDE**

- 10.1 The WorkSafeBC Hearing Aid Program Billing Guide is the procedural reference for invoicing under this Agreement. WorkSafeBC shall post this guide on its website [www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com). It is the Contractor's sole responsibility to obtain a copy of the guide.
- 10.2 WorkSafeBC reserves the right to revise procedures within the guide should operational, legislative or technological changes occur.
- 10.3 The Contractor is responsible for maintaining the guide, incorporating any updates and communications (e.g. bulletins) from WorkSafeBC, and informing all personnel involved in the delivery of the Services, including any subcontractors.

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#### **11.0 PERFORMANCE ISSUES ESCALATION**

- 11.1 Where the Contractor fails to meet the performance standards as described in 8.0 above, WorkSafeBC will consult with the Contractor for corrective actions.
- 11.2 Upon confirmation of the Contractor's failure to meet the performance standards, WorkSafeBC shall review the situation and where the Contractor's performance is determined to be a breach of the performance standards, WorkSafeBC may terminate this Agreement pursuant to clause 27.1 Termination for Breach or issue a Notification of Default pursuant to clause 27.2 and remedies therein.



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### 1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 WorkSafeBC occasionally refers Injured Workers to a private practice Audiologist for a diagnostic evaluation, which assists the adjudication process of a claim.
- 1.2 A diagnostic evaluation is requested by a WorkSafeBC Board Officer for adjudication and is not part of the Hearing Aid fitting.

### 2.0 QUALIFICATIONS OF PROVIDER

- 2.1 The audiologist must be working in a clinic with a current WorkSafeBC of BC Hearing Aid Provider Agreement.
- 2.2 The Audiologist must have a minimum of one (1) year of diagnostic experience.
- 2.3 The Audiologist must be registered and in good standing with British Columbia Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (BCASLPA) and certified by the Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA).
- 2.4 The Contractor must provide WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims Department, with a list of each clinic's providers meeting the qualifications as stated in 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 above. Any changes to the listed qualified providers must be reported to WorkSafeBC Hearing Claims Department within five (5) business days.

This information can be faxed to: (604) 279-7490

### 3.0 DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION

- 3.1 All assessments must include:
  - 3.1.1 Otoscopy:
    - A statement of whether ear canals are clear, no abnormality detected (NAD), or Tympanic Membrane unobservable due to wax, and;
    - Description of Tympanic Membranes if not normal.
  - 3.1.2 Immittance Audiometry:
    - Ipsilateral and contralateral reflex thresholds, and;
    - Evaluation of reflex decay.
  - 3.1.3 Air conduction thresholds at .25, .5, 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8kHz:
    - If masking is required, masked thresholds, unmasked thresholds and masking levels must be recorded;
    - Note sensorineural pure tone average of .5, 1, 2 kHz;
    - Note type of earphone (inserts vs. supra-aural) used.

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- 3.1.4 Bone conduction thresholds at all relevant frequencies, including 250 Hz:
  - If masking is required, masked thresholds, and masking levels must be recorded.
- 3.1.5 Word recognition scores:
  - Including presentation levels and masking levels, if required.
- 3.1.6 Statement of reliability.

#### 4.0 REPORTING

- 4.1 Audiological Diagnostic Reports must be submitted using the 51D4 Form. Reports must be received within five (5) business days after the completion of the evaluation.
- 4.2 Accompanying Audiograms, real ear measurements and manufacturer invoices must be submitted using the 83D110 form (cover sheet).
- 4.3 All forms can be downloaded at [worksafebc.com](http://worksafebc.com) under 'Forms' – 'Health Care Providers'.
- 4.4 WorkSafeBC will not reimburse the Contractor for illegible and/or incomplete documentation.

#### 5.0 INVOICING

- 5.1 Services must be invoiced using the payee number assigned to the Hearing Aid Service Provider.

## **SCHEDULE C**

### **HEARING AID PROGRAM – PROCEDURES & STANDARDS**

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## SCHEDULE C

### HEARING AID PROGRAM – PROCEDURES & STANDARDS

#### SERVICE DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS

##### **1.0 CLINICAL STANDARDS**

This section outlines the standards of service to be applied to Injured Workers by Contractors and Service Providers with respect to all clinical services provided to Injured Workers receiving Hearing Aid(s) under the WorkSafeBC's Hearing Aid Program.

The following standards are minimum requirements for Injured Worker services in which the Service Provider must investigate and accurately identify the presence, nature and extent of the Injured Worker's hearing problem, recommend appropriate amplification Hearing Aid(s) and provide aftercare service. The Service Provider must be compliant with current legislative requirements governing hearing assessment and Hearing Aid dispensing.

All the elements of a successful Hearing Aid fitting must be addressed with each Injured Worker according to their individual needs. The elements are not necessarily in sequential order or intended to imply a particular appointment structure.

##### 1.1 Test Environment

1.1.1 A sound treated room meeting the current ANSI Standard for Maximum Permissible Ambient Noise Levels for Audiometric Test Rooms is required. Service sites that do not comply with this standard must be identified and made known to the WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims Department by the clinic and/or Service Provider.

1.1.2 Test equipment must conform to the current Canadian Standards Association (CSA) and/or American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards. The following must be available.

- Clinical or portable audiometer capable of air, bone, masking and speech testing (must be calibrated annually);
- Probe microphone measurement equipment;
- Electroacoustic Hearing Aid analyzer;
- Stethoscope;
- Otoscope;
- Hearing Aid & earmold modification tools;
- Sterilization System; and
- Appropriate Hearing Aid fitting hardware and software.

##### 1.2 Assessment

1.2.1 Clinical History: The Service Provider must identify the Injured Worker's specific hearing needs including social and communication needs, the degree of current problems, and the level of the Injured Worker's expectations.

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- 1.2.2 Medical Conditions: Should a WorkSafeBC Injured Worker have any of the following conditions, commonly referred to as “red flag conditions”, medical clearance prior to Hearing Aid fitting is mandatory and he/she must be referred to a physician. If the condition is found to be non-compensable, WorkSafeBC is not liable for the medical costs and they should be billed through the Injured Worker's medical plan.

Red Flag Conditions:

- Visible congenital or traumatic deformity of the ear;
- History of active drainage from the ear within the previous one (1) year;
- History of sudden or rapidly progressive hearing loss;
- Acute or chronic dizziness;
- Asymmetrical hearing loss of greater than 30 dB at any frequency;
- Audiometric air-bone gap equal to or greater than 15 dB at 500, 1000, and 2000 Hz;
- Visible evidence of significant cerumen accumulation or a foreign body in the ear canal; and,
- Pain or discomfort in the ear.

- 1.2.3 Otoscopic Examination: Results of an otoscopic examination must be recorded.

- 1.2.4 Audiometric Assessment: When hearing tests are required for Hearing Aid recommendations, complete and accurate audiometric tests are required. The assessment must include:
- Air conduction thresholds at 250, 500, 1000, 2000, 4000, 8000 Hz and inter-octave frequencies where the difference between adjacent octave frequencies is 20 dB or greater; and 3000 and 6000 if the Injured Worker presents with a history of hazardous noise;
  - Bone conduction thresholds when abnormal air conduction thresholds exist at any frequency from 500 Hz to 4000 Hz;
  - Appropriate masking must be used in all situations where interaural attenuation levels have been exceeded;
  - Speech reception thresholds and word recognition testing as appropriate; and
  - Any other test required for the Hearing Aid selection procedure.

### 1.3 Injured Worker Involvement and Education

- 1.3.1 This component must provide the Injured Worker with the skills to effectively manage their Hearing Aid. The Injured Worker and, whenever possible, family members, should be advised about the reasonable expectations of Hearing Aid benefits. As part of this process Injured Workers must be given relevant information to assist them to:
- Decide if a Hearing Aid will help them, and whether they wish to be fitted with a Hearing Aid;

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- Decide what is the most appropriate type of Hearing Aid to meet their needs. Careful consideration must be given to the degree of hearing loss versus purely cosmetic consideration;
  - Recognize the benefits and/or limitations of the Hearing Aid;
  - Recognize the potential benefits of various features including a telecoil, and/or directional microphone; and
  - Reach an agreement regarding the action to be followed, guided by the specific needs identified in the history. Realistic goals should be set with an indication of the improvement likely to result from the action agreed to.
- 1.3.2 Information both verbal and written, (including the Educational Pamphlet) on hearing loss, Hearing Aids, and listening and communication tactics should be provided to the Injured Worker, their family and/or friends. The Injured Worker shall be made aware of local services, the existence and location of local support groups and their relevance to Injured Workers with hearing loss.
- 1.3.3 The appropriate operation, limitations and use of the Hearing Aid (including the earmold) must be explained, demonstrated and practiced. Where the Injured Worker is not able to manage the Hearing Aid independently, instruction must be provided to a caregiver whenever possible.
- 1.3.4 The effective operation of all user controls, must be explained, demonstrated and practiced. Re-instruction and retraining on any issues identified during the initial fitting and trial period must be given by the Contractor as necessary. During the trial period any further evaluation and follow-up must be documented, including measures of subjective and objective benefit.
- 1.3.5 Telephone instruction should explore appropriate options with the Injured Worker including information, demonstrations and training with telephone products and the use of Hearing Aid alone.
- 1.3.6 Hearing Aids and Hazardous Noise: Due to potential risk to hearing, Injured Workers must be instructed against wearing Hearing Aids in hazardous noise. Any inquiries or additional information on hearing protection selection, are to be directed to an Occupational Audiologist at WorkSafeBC.
- 1.3.7 The Educational Pamphlet must be distributed to all Injured Workers who have received a Hearing Aid Fitting. The goal of the Pamphlet is to provide additional communication, improve consistency of education, and improve Injured Worker's expectation regarding Hearing Aid rehabilitation.
- 1.3.8 The Educational Pamphlet contains a Personal Information Release Form which is to be detached, signed by the Worker and included in the Worker file. The release form only needs to be signed once, but must be signed by each Injured Worker before any information is provided to Hearing Aid Manufacturers (including orders for repairs or new hearing aids) and kept in the Worker's file. If the Worker declines to sign the form, please contact Health Care Services prior to sending information to the manufacturers.

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- 1.3.9 The Educational Pamphlet will be provided by WorkSafeBC, at no cost to the Contractor including shipping. In return it is the Contractor's responsibility to ensure an adequate stock of the Education Pamphlet is maintained to mirror the average pattern of patient volume per location. The Educational Pamphlet is the property of WorkSafeBC and must be returned to WorkSafeBC when requested.

#### **2.0 HEARING AID SELECTION**

- 2.1 When a Hearing Aid has been recommended the following components must be included. Injured Worker records should refer to the following considerations and indicate reasons for choice.

2.1.1 **Consideration of Hearing Aid Type, Style and Features:**

- Appropriate style for the individual Injured Worker (e.g. BTE, ITE, ITC, CIC aid);
- Appropriate acoustic features to meet Injured Worker needs taking account of hearing loss and manageability; and
- Telecoil and/or directional microphone requirements.

2.1.2 **Earmold and Hearing Aid Shell Selection and Fitting:**

- The earmold and Hearing Aid shell must be made from accurate individual ear impressions using appropriate techniques. Due regard must be given to the safety of the Injured Worker in taking impressions;
- The earmold or Hearing Aid shell must be comfortable for the Injured Worker and appropriate adjustments made where necessary;
- The earmold or Hearing Aid shell must be properly fitted to eliminate feedback under normal conditions of use;
- Appropriate venting and plumbing options must be available and applied as required; and
- A range of earmold and Hearing Aid shell styles and materials must be available to meet individual needs and particularly to overcome any allergic reactions an Injured Worker may have to a particular material.

2.1.3 **Selection of Electroacoustic Characteristics:**

- The electroacoustic characteristics of the Hearing Aid must be selected and fitted according to a recognized prescriptive method;
- Two-cc coupler gain should be determined which will yield desired real-ear aided gain (REAG)/real ear insertion gain (REIG);
- Maximum Power Output: An accepted type of supra-threshold judgment (frequency specific) must be used to determine an appropriate maximum output of the Hearing Aid. If the Injured Worker is unable to perform such judgments, a research based predictive method should be used to determine the OSPL90 setting; and
- Any other Hearing Aid selection tests as appropriate: e.g. most comfortable listening level.

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- 2.2 Verification of selected electroacoustic and performance characteristics:
- 2.2.1 Upon receipt of the Hearing Aid and prior to fitting the Injured Worker, electroacoustic measurements according to current ANSI standards must be completed to verify that the hearing aid functions according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- 2.2.2 At fitting Hearing Aid verification measures must be completed, to include but not limited to: target created by recognized prescriptive method, multiple levels of input, frequency specific tolerance measures. If sound field measures are used, an appropriate explanation for their use must be provided at the time of fitting.
- 2.2.3 Verification measures must be labeled appropriately (multiple levels and multiple programs must be identified).
- 2.3 Performance Assessment of Hearing Aid Characteristics on the User:
- 2.3.1 The fitting of the Hearing Aid (including the earmold) should be evaluated to determine if the Hearing Aid and settings selected for the Injured Worker optimize Injured Worker benefit. This must include the following:
- **Comfort:** The Service Provider must ensure that the Hearing Aid is comfortable and make any necessary modifications to achieve this. Modifications to improve comfort during the trial period must be documented;
  - **Operational Proficiency:** The Service Provider must ensure that the Injured Worker is able to operate the Hearing Aid;
  - **Setting and Verification of OSPL90:** The Service Provider must verify that the selected maximum power output level does not exceed the Injured Worker's tolerance. Modifications to optimize electroacoustic characteristics during the trial period must be documented;
    - The OSPL90 should be set to an appropriate level based upon earlier measurements. Verification of the OSPL90 setting for prevention of loudness discomfort and over amplification must be performed on each ear;
    - Determination of the maximum output for the Hearing Aid can be undertaken through a variety of methods, the preferred being the Real Ear Saturation Response (RESR). Other options include the presentation of controlled signals in sound field (speech and/or frequency specific signals) to saturate the Hearing Aid.
  - **Verification of Desired Real-Ear Gain/Frequency Response:** The Hearing Aid must be adjusted to approximate as closely as possible the previously determined target values for each ear. If the REAG or REIG does not match within 5 dB of the target values an appropriate explanation of why this has not been achieved must be recorded:
    - The verification method of choice to determine that the real ear frequency response and gain closely match the Injured Worker's target



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values, is probe microphone measures. If this is not used, an explanation must be provided on the verification results;

- Hearing Aid verification must be done on each ear individually;
- The Service Provider must ensure adequate reserve gain.
- **Telecoil Assessment:** The Service Provider must ensure adequate telecoil strength for use with the telephone; and
- **Directional Microphone Assessment:** For each Hearing Aid with directional microphone(s), it is recommended that the Service Provider confirm that directionality is present. This measure can be obtained by documenting REAG or REIG measured with sound source in front of Injured Worker at 0 degrees (standard verification response) and measured with sound source in back of Injured Worker at 180 degrees (response with Hearing Aid in directional mode). The directional mode verification measure (180 degrees) should be labelled and submitted with the standard REAG or REIG verification measure.

#### 2.4 Trial Period and Acceptance of Hearing Aid(s):

2.4.1 Workers are entitled to a sixty (60) calendar Trial Period to assess if the hearing aid is acceptable to him or her. The Worker may accept the hearing aid at anytime during the trial period.

2.4.2 Upon acceptance of the hearing aids, the Injured Worker must provide a signature confirming that they have read and agreed with the language below. This document must be maintained on file and be readily available to WorkSafeBC upon request.

*“I realize that I had up to sixty (60) days to assess my hearing aid(s). I now find that my hearing aid(s) are beneficial to me and have decided to keep them. I understand that my hearing aid(s) will be replaced only if necessary. If problems arise with my hearing aid(s) I will return to the Service Provider in a timely manner.”*

### 3.0 MAINTENANCE AND AFTERCARE STANDARDS

#### 3.1 Solicitation:

After the Hearing Aid Manufacturer warranty, fitting and service fee time limits have expired, Contractors and/or Service Providers may not solicit WorkSafeBC Injured Workers for services in which a fee may be claimed and/or Injured Worker travel costs incurred to WorkSafeBC.

Further service provision may be initiated by the Injured Workers only.

#### 3.2 Hearing Aid Maintenance:

The term Hearing Aid includes all parts necessary for the operation of the Hearing Aid(s) (e.g. earmolds for BTE’S, cords for CROS or BiCROS). The clinic and/or Service Provider shall be responsible for maintaining that Hearing Aid in working order.

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#### 3.2.1 All repairs must:

- be adequate to restore the Hearing Aid to its original physical condition but allowing for normal wear and tear;
- result in appropriate electroacoustic characteristics and any other features prescribed by the Service Provider as is considered reasonable for the age and normal wear and tear condition of the Hearing Aid;
- provide replacement earmolds as required to keep the Hearing Aid in good operational condition. Should this exceed the frequency limit as designated in the Fee Schedule, prior authorization is required from WorkSafeBC;
- be attended to at the time the Injured Worker presents with the problem; and
- be available at each location during regular business hours.

#### 3.2.2 If the Hearing Aid is not repaired at the clinic and needs to be sent to another location to be repaired, it should be available to the Injured Worker within ten (10) business days. If the Hearing Aid will not be available within this time period the Contractor must contact WorkSafeBC Hearing Loss Claims Department to advise of the circumstances causing the delay.

#### 3.2.3 It is the Contractor's responsibility to track the shipping of any Hearing Aid(s) sent to the Manufacturer for repair or return. The cost of any Hearing Aid(s) lost or damaged in transit will be the responsibility of the Contractor.

### 3.3 Aftercare Services:

#### 3.3.1 Minor Clinical Services: Adjustments to the Injured Worker's Hearing Aid fitting, including the earmold, may be necessary from time to time and will be undertaken as part of the general aftercare services.

## **4.0 DIAGNOSTIC SERVICES**

WorkSafeBC occasionally refers Injured Workers to a private practice audiologist for a diagnostic evaluation, which assists the adjudication process of a claim. The Audiologist should approach these Injured Workers accordingly, as these evaluations are used for medico-legal decisions.

#### 4.1 Testing Criteria: The minimum requirements are stated in Schedule A1, however additional testing may be necessary at the Audiologist's discretion.

#### 4.2 Claim Decision: Once a decision has been made on a claim, the Injured Worker is notified by WorkSafeBC in writing indicating the benefits, if any, to which he/she is entitled. Therefore, the Audiologist must not assume that if a WorkSafeBC Injured Worker is referred to their clinic for a diagnostic assessment that he/she will return for a Hearing Aid fitting. Ear mold impressions should not be taken at these appointments, nor should any discussion be entered into with the Injured Worker regarding amplification on WorkSafeBC's behalf. Service Providers should not comment on cause and effect relationship between work history and hearing loss.