

Severe to profound hearing loss

Guidance in an under-explored area



Severe to profound hearing loss occurs during different points in life (from congenital hearing loss to gradual or sudden onset as an adult), and with varied etiologies and audiometric configurations. Severe to profound hearing loss has been found to negatively affect quality of life¹ and to negatively impact activities of daily living.²³ This applies to 87 million people worldwide – 2 out of 10 of clients entering a hearing clinic are affected by severe or profound hearing loss.⁴

Impact of severe to profound hearing loss

- Several studies have identified higher levels of social isolation, anxiety, and depression among adults with severe to profound hearing loss.⁶⁷
- Young people are less likely to go to university or work full time.⁸
- Many affected by severe to profound hearing loss will have tinnitus.¹

Definition:⁵

Severe hearing loss: average
71-90 dB HL

Profound hearing loss: average
> 91+ dB HL

How to treat severe to profound hearing loss

Individuals with severe to profound hearing loss are likely to present with complex listening needs that require special considerations and practices to optimise their outcomes.⁸



Counselling on continuum of hearing technologies

These conversations are vital to understanding that hearing aids need not be the final stop on their hearing journey and in some cases cochlear implants will be considered.



Extra consideration when selecting and fitting hearing aids

In order to maintain audibility and support aided speech recognition, fitting approaches beyond the standard 'initial fit' are required.

Interesting to know:

Approximately 50% of clients with severe to profound hearing loss report tinnitus and addressing the hearing loss is the starting point for treatment.



Immediate consideration of remote microphones

Remote microphone technology should be considered at the same time as selection of hearing aids and/or cochlear implants.



Communication training and strategies

Beyond hearing technology, communication abilities can be enhanced with auditory skills training and communication strategies.



Successfully managing the complex needs of those with severe to profound hearing loss requires ongoing professional development. Our expertly trained team at Triton Hearing offers continuous support for clients with severe to profound hearing loss based on the latest best practice guidelines!

¹Carlsson, P., Hjalldahl, J., Magnuson, A., Terneval, E., Eden, M., Skagerskarand, A., & Jonsson, R. (2014). Severe to profound hearing impairment: quality of life, psychosocial consequences and audiological rehabilitation. *Disability & Rehabilitation, Early Online*: 1-8 ²Gopinath, B., Schneider, J., McMahon, C. M., Burlutsky, G., Leeder, S. R., & Mitchell, P. (2013). Dual sensory impairment in older adults increases the risk of mortality: a population-based study. *PloS one*, 8(3), e55054. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0055054 ³Turton, L., & Smith, P. (2013). Prevalence & characteristics of severe and profound hearing loss in adults in a UK National Health Service clinic. *International Journal of Audiology*, 52(2), 92-97. <https://doi.org/10.3109/14992027.2012.73537> ⁴Stevens, G., Flaxman, S., Brunskill, E., Mascarenhas, M., Mathers, C. D., & Finucane, M. (2013). Global and regional hearing impairment prevalence: an analysis of 42 studies in 29 countries. *The European Journal of Public Health*, 23(1), 146-152. ⁵World Health Organization (WHO) (2012). Promoting ear and hearing care through CBR Community-Based Rehabilitation. World Health Organization. Retrieved from <https://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/97/10/19-230367.pdf>, accessed December 13th 2021. ⁶Hallam, R., Ashton, P., Sherbourne, K., & Gailey, L. (2008). Persons with acquired profound hearing loss (APHL): how do they and their families adapt to the challenge? *Health*, 12(3), 369-388. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363459308090054> ⁷Grimby, A., & Ringdah, A. (2000) Does Having a Job Improve the Quality of Life among Post- Lingually Deafened Swedish Adults with Severe-Profound Hearing Impairment?, *British Journal of Audiology*, 34:3, 187-195, DOI: 10.3109/03005364000000128 ⁸Turton, L. (editor), Souza, P., Thibodeau, L., Hickson, L., Gifford, R., Bird, J., Stropahl, M., Gailey, L., Fulton, B., Scarinci, N., Ekberg, K., Timmer, B. (2020). Guidelines for Best Practice in the Audiological Management of Adults with Severe and Profound Hearing Loss. *Seminars in Hearing*, 41(3), 141-245.