Use of State-of-Art Technology in the Fitting of Digital Hearing Aids in Persons with Severe and Profound Hearing Loss

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ABSTRACT

Adaptability in the use of communication strategies among individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing has been shown to be an important asset in upward mobility on the job (Foster & MacLeod, 2003). As a strategy, some students choose to optimize their residual hearing with use digital hearing aids for both classroom and professional settings. Exact measurements must be made to ensure optimal benefit. Also, there is a need to establish if digital hearing aids are indeed beneficial to individuals with severe and profound hearing loss. Important new technology, e.g. Verifit® and NOAH®, allow for precise measurement of hearing aid performance in an individual’s ear. This poster session will show how these tools are used to make measurements of hearing aid performance in the ear for the following stimuli: quiet, average and loud speech; high level noise; and music. All performance measures can be viewed in the context of target prescriptions that can be seen by the user on a computer screen. The adequacy of the hearing aid’s performance (n=10 subjects) can also be viewed to allow for better understanding of the capabilities and the limitations of the devices.

SUMMARY

All subjects were questioned six months after dispensing via e-mail. All subjects report a high level of user satisfaction. Most subjects were using aids every waking hour. For these experienced hearing aid users, the Verifit® seemed to be a useful tool in achieving a satisfactory hearing aid fit.