

Phonak eAudiology

Clinical implementation guidelines

Remote Support

With Remote Support, patients can access virtual (video call) appointments and receive hearing aid adjustments in real-time, with no need to travel to the location of the Hearing Care Professional (HCP). A Remote Support session takes place over the internet using the client's Smartphone to connect to hearing aid fitting software in the HCPs office. Hearing aid adjustments can be made by the HCP in the client's own environment and maintenance, usage and general support counselling may also be provided in the same session.

Office infrastructure requirements

Wi-Fi/ LAN bandwidth of 5 Mbit/s:

- This ensures the best experience during audio and/or video call appointments
- To check your internet speed visit <https://fast.com/en/> or <https://www.speedtest.net/> or Phonak Target software

Hardware:

- Headphone/headset, PC, camera

Environment:

- A quiet room ensuring privacy

Regulatory requirements

eAudiology provides a new method to connect with and service your client's hearing needs, therefore there may be regulatory considerations in your country to be aware of before embarking upon this. It is recommended that you check with your professional governing/ licencing body for location specific information regarding:

- Licensing and certification:
State & federal licensing laws with respect to your practice location as well as the location in which the client will be receiving services.
- Billing:
If you plan to bill separately for these services, ensure you are up to date regarding reimbursement structures and requirements for data collection.

- Record keeping:
Which data should be stored and how, as well as documentation of informed consent.
- Privacy & security:
Is data encryption required to ensure client confidentiality and security?

Appointment setup

Options for managing online remote appointments include:

- Setting aside a fixed time on a given day(s) per week
- Integrated within your daily schedule
- Appointment length:
Remote support should not take longer than face-to-face appointments so it is recommended to schedule the standard amount of time for a follow up appointment. As with any new skill, there is a learning curve initially, so you may want to allow a few extra minutes to familiarize yourself with the procedure (e.g. 45 mins total).
Your clients will value and appreciate remote support services for the time-saving and convenience it provides them.

Staff readiness

- Onboarding:
All HCPs and Front Office Personnel should be appropriately trained
- Internal trial runs:
It is recommended that remote support appointments are trialled internally to ensure that your technology and service is fully ready to be offered to your clients

Patient selection

Almost all clients can benefit from remote support services however, for the best outcome, it is recommended that the following be checked:

- Hearing aids compatible with remote support
- Technological affinity:
The eAudiology Client Profiling Tool may be used as an appendix to your case history / client intake form
- Infrastructure: A Smartphone and 5 Mbit/s Wi-Fi or 4G is required
 - Clients can download the Speedtest App or check online at <http://www.speedtest.net/> or <https://fast.com/en/>

Acknowledgments:

Glista, D. (2018). Looking to get into eAudiology? The 10 things to consider first. Retrieved from, <https://audiologyblog.phonakpro.com>.