

Cardiff & Vale University Health Board

DEPARTMENT OF AUDIOLOGY

Replacement of Lost Hearing Aid(s) Policy

Issue Date: April 2017

References: All Wales Lost Aid Policy (updated 2017)

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the steps to be taken when an adult patient contacts the Department due to a lost hearing aid(s). A charge has been levied, in accordance with the All Wales Charges for Lost Hearing Aid policy, since 2009. Exemption criteria are in place, and are outlined in this policy, and the appeals process is also covered. In all circumstances, a patient will be provided with replacement hearing aid(s), irrespective of whether or not he/she can pay.

Patients under the age of 18 are not charged for hearing aid losses.

2. PATIENT INFORMATION

All adult patients are informed at the time of hearing aid fitting (or replacement of lost aids) that the hearing aid remains NHS property on loan, and that they may be charged if they lose a hearing aid.

This information is also displayed on posters around the Department and on the Departmental inter- and intra-net sites.

3. DEPARTMENTAL PROCESS

- Patient contacts Department, or attends open repair session, and informs staff of loss of hearing aid(s).
- Staff member takes impression of ear(s) and adds notes in Journal that aid(s) lost and replacement needed.
- Staff member makes note in Earmould screen that earmould is to be posted to patient, who then attends open repair session for re-fitting.

- Replacement Open fittings can be carried out on day of attendance if time permits.
- Staff member reminds patient that a charge of £65 is due for replacement of each lost hearing aid, unless exemption criteria are met (see 3.1).

3.1 *Exemption Criteria*

Patient (or carer) should be asked whether they meet any of the following criteria:

- Recognised cognitive impairment, including Dementia
- War pensioner
- Under 18 years of age
- Terminally ill
- Registered Blind
- In Hospital or are resident in a Care Home at the time of the loss
- Victim of a house theft or mugging
- Hearing aid(s) lost in a house fire

If any of these criteria are met, the patient should be advised that they are not liable to be charged for replacement of hearing aids. This should be noted in the patient Journal.

If no exemption criteria are met, see 3.2

3.2 *Charging for Replacement of Lost Hearing Aid(s)*

University Hospital Wales

The patient is advised that they will be asked to visit the Cash Office at the end of the hearing aid fitting appointment, to pay the relevant charge.

West Quay Medical Centre

SATOs are able to take cash/cheques from patients in WQMC for replacement aids. Staff member pays into the cashier's office at UHW on return to the Hospital, and posts a receipt to the patient.

3.3 *Appeals Process*

If patients feel that they should not be charged, or are unable to pay, for the replacement of the hearing aid(s), he/she should be advised of the right to appeal.

Patients should be advised that they will automatically be fitted with a replacement hearing aid(s), and the appeals process will be followed outside of the Audiology Department.

If a patient wishes to appeal against the charge, he/she should be asked to complete an appeal form and the Staff Member should also complete the relevant section.

The form should be given, by the Staff Member, to the Head of Audiology, who will pass the appeal onto a panel independent of the Audiology service, who will carefully consider the circumstances of the individual case.

Patients should be advised that if the appeal is unsuccessful, they will be charged by the Health Board.

3.4 Hearing Aids Found After Payment

If a hearing aid is found, after payment has been made for replacement, the Audiology Department should be contacted and reimbursement arranged.