

Cerumen management and impression taking

Masterclass Facilitators:

- Kaushalya Troy, Director, Audire Hearing
- Meg Bumpstead, Director, Clear Ears
- Rebecca Wood, Head of Audiology, Bernafon Australia
- Domenica Goncalves, Consultant & Account Manager, Sanibel Supply

CPD Points: 3 points (Category 2)

Overview:

Cerumen impaction is a common presentation to Audiologists in the audiology clinic. Cerumen production is normal and does not require treatment unless it is symptomatic. In most cases, ears are self-cleaning of cerumen. However, some individuals may have ear canals that do not enable the migration of cerumen or have excessive cerumen production. In these instances, cerumen management is required using either curette or suction techniques. As it currently stands GPs remove cerumen using syringing with water which has negative implications for at risk patient groups.

Excessive ear wax also restricts taking correct ear impressions and hence reduces hearing aid acceptance/tolerance due to management issues (ear wax stuck in microphones/filters/receivers/tubing. While off the shelf hearing aids are most common, taking ear impressions for custom hearing aids and custom earplugs for swimming and noise protection which require deeper impressions (to the second bend) is a skill that needs to be developed.

Learning Objectives:

- Review ear canal pathologies and provide a theoretical basis for safe ear canal management including cerumen extraction
- Understand advantages and disadvantages of different cerumen management techniques and choosing the appropriate technique depending on cerumen type and blockage
- Participate in various cerumen management techniques under supervision with emphasis on extraction of foreign bodies (hearing aid domes, beads, cotton tips, insects etc) and impression taking requirements
- Understand practice management issues including, setting up your clinic, ethical issues (including informed consent), infection control and billing options (10952 item number vs private billing)
- Consider a range of factors when taking ear impressions including material selection, ear examination, impression taking and final evaluation
- Participate in active deep ear impression taking exercises