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Adoption and outcome for adult hearing aid users one-year post fitting

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Background and Aim: Information about adoption and help-seeking after the hearing aid (HA) fitting can provide insight into the rehabilitation journey of HA users. The study aimed to understand the effect of time taken to get used to the HAs, the timeline, and the number of HA adjustments performed over a year of rehabilitation on self-reported HA outcomes.

Method: The responses from 690 HA users to a non-standardized questionnaire on the time taken to get used to the new HAs and information about HA adjustments performed over a year of rehabilitation were analyzed. The users were stratified according to the time they took to get used to the HAs, the number of HA adjustments, and the timeline at which the HA was adjusted. The relationship between the stratified group of users to demographics, hearing loss, and other user-related factors was examined. A stepwise multiple linear regression was used to determine the effect of time taken to get used to the HAs and HA adjustments on the self-reported HA outcome.

Result: Most of the HA users (64%) got used to the HAs within two-month of use. There were 91 (13%) HA users who did not get used to HAs at all. Twelve percent (84) of the HA users did not get their HAs adjusted over the whole year of rehabilitation, and 7% (49) got the HAs adjusted four or more times. Fifty-seven percent (390) of the participants had adjustments only during the two-month follow-up visit. The stepwise multiple linear regression results suggest that a lower self-reported outcome may relate to the longer time to get used to the HAs and multiple HA adjustments.

Conclusion: The study showed that a group of HA users, even with multiple adjustments, had lower outcomes than users with a limited number of adjustments or no adjustments throughout the year. The study also indicated the effect of getting used to the HAs on long-term self-reported outcomes.

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Keywords: Hearing aid adoption, Getting used to hearing aids, Hearing aid adjustments, Self-reported outcome

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