

Improving the quality of life for residents with hearing loss in care homes. A call to action.



Executive summary

This paper highlights research and literature that supports an evidence-based response to the challenges faced by care home residents with hearing loss. The problems are outlined and solutions are proposed based on research papers and almost 10 years' experience of Engage's hearing loss projects in over 35 care homes. The paper has been written in close cooperation with Nightingale Hammerson where the Engage project has been running for over two years.

The recommendations are:

- Carry out hearing loss environmental audits
- Implement protocols for supporting residents with hearing aids
- Provide experiential hearing loss training to care workers
- Appoint Hearing Loss Champions
- Ensure amplifiers are available for interim use when hearing aids are lost or broken, or as an alternative to hearing aids for those who can't tolerate them
- Provide residents and relatives with information on assistive equipment
- Improve access to hearing tests, audiology services, and earwax removal (microsuction)

As single entities, care homes have only limited influence, but by uniting, the care home sector can be a force to lobby for change.

The paper not only outlines the ethical necessity of addressing the issues residents with hearing loss face but also indicates the business and financial advantages of homes being able to provide outstanding hearing loss support.

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