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Innovation in technology for treating hearing difficulties with minimal hearing losses

A challenge that hearing healthcare professionals (HHPs) face every day is what hearing health recommendation to make with each client. Whether to recommend a hearing aid is often based primarily on the level of hearing loss as measured by the audiogram, possibly in combination with a speech test and needs consultation. Recent research, however, suggests that audiograms are insufficient indicators of need, leaving HHPs with the challenge of determining who to make device recommendations to. This is particularly challenging for clients who present with self-reported hearing difficulty but very little measurable hearing loss (PTA less than 25 dB HL).

This talk will answer two questions on this topic: Should HHPs recommend hearing devices to people with minimal hearing loss, and how well can hearing devices benefit people with minimal hearing losses? This discussion will include research findings at NAL into these questions and into the potential use of emerging technology innovations.