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Can an improvement in the quality of supply be shown in the German Central Registry for Childhood Hearing Disorders?

The German Central Registry for Childhood Hearing Disorders (DZH) is an epidemiological registry that is maintained at the Department of Audiology and Phoniatics at the Charité. It includes nationwide data donations from patients with permanent hearing disorders >25 dB with onset before the age of 18. It currently comprises approx. 16,000 data records. When the registry was founded, the time of supply for children with congenital hearing disorders was generally well beyond the current Joint Committee on Infant Hearing's recommended interval of six months of age at the latest (or three months in countries that were able to meet the first target).

In a registry survey, the diagnostic and therapeutic intervals from the year of birth of 1990 onwards are evaluated retrospectively in five-year cohorts. The age of diagnosis and the interval until hearing aids are fitted have significantly been reduced since the introduction of statutory newborn hearing screening. However, there is still a need for further optimisation. The DZH can answer specific questions on the epidemiology and quality of supply for childhood hearing disorders.

This research was conducted in collaboration with Dr. Jonas Althaus, Friederike Wohlfarth and Prof. Dr. Dirk Mürbe.