

Hearing Services Referral Pathways

Target Audience	All Clinical Employees
Jurisdiction	Primary Health Care Remote CAHS; Primary Health Care Remote TEHS
Jurisdiction Exclusions	N/A
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The attributes in the above table will be auto-filled from the PGC System. Do not update in this document.

Scope

The way that hearing health referrals are made has changed recently in order to reflect the current service delivery model and referral pathways. The Hearing Health Program (HHP) is an outreach service providing ear and hearing care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the Northern Territory. HHP coordinate and deploy three outreach services;

- Teleotology: a store and forward ENT telemedicine service
- Audiology Outreach: Diagnostic Audiology
- Community level support of Primary Prevention and Early Intervention

New referral addresses have been created in PCIS and Communicare to provide direct referral pathways to these services.

Teleotology¹ has expanded remote health's access to ENT services and has begun to address an area of significant need. Teleotology outreach services are run in conjunction with the Royal Darwin Hospital ENT department in the top end. All referrals to the teleotology outreach service require medical officer referral through either PCIS or communicare, please ensure that the referral is also sent to the relevant hospital ENT department as a 'cc'. The referral needs to be an ongoing referral without time restrictions. Please see below chart on how to refer to teleotology.

Audiology Outreach services are provided by the Hearing Health Program and in some instances NT Hearing. Referrals for audiology services can be provided directly to the HHP. Referrals for audiology can be completed by remote health staff through PCIS.

Clinical Nurse Specialist – Hearing Health (CNS) support families and Primary Health in providing the best pathway of care for children under 5 who have been identified as having Otitis Media (OM). CNS's are fundamentally important for supporting Primary Prevention and Early Intervention for infants and young children with OM. There has been a new referral address created to allow Primary Health to refer directly to CNS's to access this support.

¹ Teleotology is well implemented in the top end. Provision of services is implemented in Central Australia and Barkly but not under an integrated model of care. Contact HHP for further information.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to clearly outline hearing health referral pathways in the NT and to provide guidance for Remote Health around how to access each of the Hearing Health services in the Northern Territory.

Definitions and Search Terms

Preferred Term	Description
Diagnostic Audiology	includes relevant audiological assessments and is the service required in the first instance to establish the need for tertiary intervention, ie, Rehabilitative Audiology, education support.
Rehabilitative Audiology	a tertiary service required for those who have already been established as having a significant bilateral hearing loss (+35dB in the better ear). This service is provided by Australian Hearing
Teleotology	store and forward ENT telemedicine. Information is captured in community and sent to ENT Specialist. Service includes an ENT Specialist review and an Audiology consult.
Case Management	coordination and support for families and Primary Health to help improve outcomes for high priority children with established complex ear disease.

NOTE: When primary health refer to Audiology Outreach they are requesting a diagnostic service. Primary health should not be referring to tertiary services (Australian Hearing) in the first instance.

Summary Table of Hearing Health Referrals for Remote Health

Referral Address	Service Eligibility	Who Can Refer	Referral Address	Referral Type	Clinical Referral Recommendations
Audiology Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATSI • All ages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medical Doctors - Audiologists - Speech Pathologists - HHP clinicians - RAN's - AHP's <p style="text-align: right;">} CARPA</p>	<p><i>Search term: 'Hearing'</i> Double click on Hearing Health Program, select 'Audiology Outreach' and press 'to'</p>	Audiology	<p>CARPA / OATSIH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OME longer than 3 months - Speech and Language delay - Family / School concerns - Audiologist will refer as required to allied health (Speech Pathologist, Australian Hearing)
<p>Teleotology (ENT telemedicine service) <i>Note: This service includes Audiology</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATSI • Aged 21 and under • Routine ear related ENT conditions only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medical Doctors - Hearing Health Program Clinicians (ENT Nurses, Audiologists, Clinical Nurse Specialists and Aboriginal Youth Hearing Health Coordinators) through the RMP 	<p><i>Search term: 'Hearing'</i> Double click on Hearing Health Program, select Teleotology, ENT Outreach' and press 'to', <i>Search term: Relevant hospital. Double click on hospital name. Select Ear nose Throat and click 'cc'</i></p>	Hearing Health	<p>RDH ENT DEPT 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Persistent OME - Bilateral for >3 months with hearing loss (>25dB) (ages 0-21) - Recurrent AOM - 3 episodes in 6 months / 4 episodes in 12 months (ages 0-21) - for surgical consideration - CSOM longer > 3 months - Clearance for Hearing Aid fitting <p>NOTE: All children under 5 years of age to be reviewed within 6 months of referral date otherwise OPD referral to be arranged by CNS</p>
ENT- Hospital OPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All ages and demographics • All ENT related conditions • Any 'urgent' conditions • A Medicare referral, required for all hospital events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medical Doctors 	<p><i>Search Term: Relevant hospital ie RDH, GDH, KH</i> Double click on hospital name, select Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist and press 'to'</p>	Ear Nose and Throat	<p>ANY REFERRALS FOR ENT AT DOCTORS DISCRETION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All those aged 22 years and over (ie not eligible for Teleotology) - Any non-ear related ENT conditions - Urgent/unsafe ear conditions
Clinical Nurse Specialist – Hearing Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ATSI • Aged 5 and under • Requires case management due to chronic and complex middle ear disease 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Medical Doctors - RAN's - AHP's 	<p><i>Search term: 'Hearing'</i> Double click on Hearing Health Program, select <i>Child Hearing Health Coordinator (Clinical Nurse Specialist – Hearing Health)</i> and press 'to'</p>	Hearing Health	<p>FOR CASE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Priority 1: Infants under 12 months with recurrent AOM or CSOM or abnormal NHS findings³ - Priority 2: Children aged 1 to 3 years with recurrent AOM, persistent OME or CSOM - Priority 3: Children aged 3 to 5 years with recurrent AOM, persistent OME or CSOM

SUMMARY OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

DIAGNOSTIC AUDIOLOGY SERVICES

Remote (Outreach visiting specialist service)**1. Hearing Health Program (HHP)**

- Deploys all Outreach Audiology services for adults and children to remote communities. Offers regular service to all major communities and homelands
- REFERRALS: are made to hearing health addresses outlined above and can be sent via SEMS or Fax to be received by HHP head office at Block 4, RDH
- CONTACT: Hearing Health Program Manager, Block 4, RDH
ph: (08) 8985 8023, fax: (08) 8985 8016

2. Australian Hearing

- Provides **rehabilitative** Audiology for those with established significant hearing loss bilaterally
- REFERRALS: Should not be made from Primary Health. HHP audiologists refer to Australian Hearing
- CONTACT: Darwin: ph: (08) 8920 5900, fax: (08) 8945 5522

Urban**Northern Territory Hearing Services (NTHS)**

- Diagnostic Audiology service
- Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (NHS) Service, NHS Screener: ph: (08) 8922 8922
- REFERRALS: are via Fax, Phone or self referral
- Offices based in major urban centres:
 - ~ Darwin ph: (08) 8922 7110, fax: (08) 8922 7444
 - ~ Katherine ph: (08) 8973 8587, fax: (08) 8973 8620
 - ~ Tennant Creek ph: (08) 8962 4215, fax: (08) 8962 4207
 - ~ Alice Springs ph: (08) 8951 6728, fax: (08) 8951 6727
- CONTACT:
Manager and Principal Audiologist
Amarjit Anand- Amarjit.anand@nt.gov.au, ph: (08) 8922 7113

ENT SERVICES

Remote (Outreach visiting specialist service)**1. Teleotology - ENT Telemedicine**

- Deployed by HHP and RDH to provide ENT outreach service via store and forward telemedicine to those aged 0-21 years. Offers regular service to all major communities and homelands in the Top End hospital regions.
- REFERRALS: are made to hearing health addresses and ENT department as outlined above and can be sent via SEMS or Fax to be received by HHP head office at Block 4, RDH
- CONTACT: Hearing Health Team Manager, Block 4, RDH
ph: (08) 8985 8023, fax: (08) 8985 8016

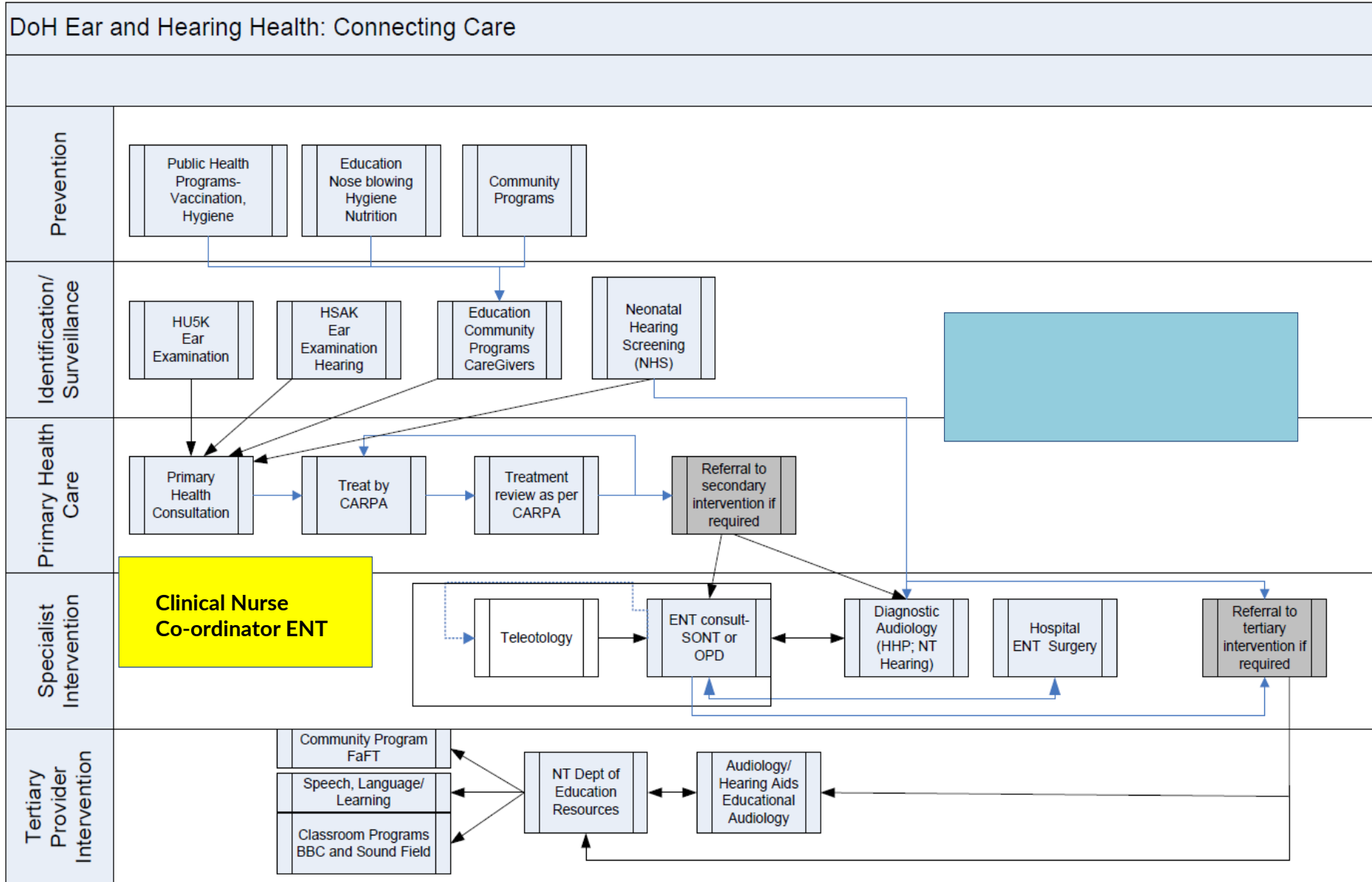
2. SONT (Specialist Outreach NT) - ENT Specialist outreach

- REFERRALS: are captured by hospital systems from ENT OPD referrals and HHP referral pathways
- CONTACT:
Clinical Nurse Consultant, ENT
Susan Mc Minn (89441372) or Kellyanne Coyle (89441372)
Susan.mcminn@nt.gov.au or Kellyanne.coyle@nt.gov.au

Note: Contact HHP for information regarding Teleotology in Alice Springs / Tennant Creek regions.

Urban**Hospital Outpatients Services**

- REFERRALS: For all ENT hospital OPD and surgical events, a Medicare referral from a medical doctor is required. Use existing OPD referral procedures.
 - ~ RDH
 - ~ GDH
 - ~ KH
 - ~ ASH
- Provision of ENT services at GDH and KH is provided by RDH ENT Specialists. Services are provided every second month for up to one week which includes OPD and Surgery. Services are provided with assistance from HHP and RDH clinical Nurses.



Document Quality Assurance

	Method	Responsibility
Implementation	Document will be available for all staff via the PGC and the Remote Health Atlas.	Health Policy Guidelines Program & Atlas Development Officer
Review	Document will be reviewed within a period of 4 years or as changes in practice occur.	Continuous Quality Improvement Manager, Hearing Health Program
Evaluation	All adverse events relating to the referral of clients to the Hearing Health Program are to be reported to the Quality Improvement Manager.	All employees

Key Associated Documents

Key Legislation, By-Laws, Standards, Delegations, Aligned & Supporting Documents	N/A
References	N/A

Evidence Table

Reference	Method	Evidence level (I-V)	Summary of recommendation from this reference
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A