



How to make the most of your hearing device

A hearing loss can be helped by using a hearing device, but it is only one part of the overall solution. A hearing device can make sounds around you louder so you are able to hear them better, but it cannot cure the underlying permanent damage to your ear. For example, you should expect that you may not hear well in certain situations, despite wearing a hearing device. This means that a hearing device can only be an “aid”, and even while wearing your device you will still experience difficulty hearing at times.

To hear as well as you can, it will be important to learn how you can assist yourself to hear better and get the most of out of your hearing device.

The Australian Government Hearing Services Program (the program) recognises the importance of this kind of assistance and has given hearing services provider the opportunity to assist clients in developing these skills through a program called “Rehab Plus”.

What is Rehab Plus?

Often people will wait many years before deciding to do something about their hearing loss. In this time, they will compensate for the hearing loss in lots of different ways. Some people might find themselves cutting back on social activities where it is likely to be noisy, or find they have stopped talking with certain people whom they struggle to hear well. They may no longer watch the television shows or listen to the radio programs they once enjoyed. Others may find themselves frustrated with how their friends or family members react when they mishear what has been said, or feel resentment that the people they talk with regularly don't understand what it is like to have a hearing loss.

Rehab Plus is a program that aims to address these kinds of issues. Everybody will have different situations where they struggle with their hearing, so Rehab Plus programs can be customised to meet your particular needs. It is an opportunity for you to learn the skills you need to use your hearing devices well. Your hearing services provider can help you identify the situations you find difficult to hear in and discuss strategies to work on these difficulties with you, to give you the best possible chance of hearing well. If you wish, your family or friends can also be involved, to find out what they can do to help you hear.

How do I access the Rehab Plus Program?

After you have been fitted with your first hearing device, your hearing services provider will discuss with you whether you are eligible for Rehab Plus. You are eligible for Rehab Plus if you have been fitted with a fully subsidised hearing device for the first time.

How does Rehab Plus work?

Rehab Plus is available to people who are being fitted with a fully subsidised hearing device for the first time. If you are eligible, your hearing services provider will work with you to put together a plan that suits you.

You are eligible to have two appointments of this type within the first 12 months of being fitted with your hearing device. Your appointments can be with a group of people so you can talk with others who can relate to what it's like to have a hearing loss, or you may like a one on one appointment with your hearing services provider.

Are there other options?

Rehab Plus is an optional program. Hearing services providers recognise that a hearing device will make a difference for a person with a hearing loss, but you can better manage your hearing loss by learning other communication strategies in addition to wearing your hearing devices.

If you choose not to take up the option of Rehab Plus appointments, or if you are not eligible for Rehab Plus, your hearing services provider will still be able to assist you in getting the most out of your hearing devices. To find out more about what options you have, please talk with your hearing service provider.