

Special Olympics

Healthy Hearing



Healthy Hearing Virtual Education and Hearing Self-Assessment

Background and Overview

In light of COVID-19, and the limited ability of Programs to host in-person events, Healthy Athletes and Healthy Hearing objectives remain the same. However, we recognize we need to explore new ways to deliver content and engage athletes. The Healthy Hearing virtual education offers individual athletes the opportunity to better understand what hearing loss is, the causes of hearing loss and some potential remediation. The goal of the self-assessment is to present the athlete with a series of questions that will help them identify any risk factors for middle ear problems and temporary or permanent hearing loss. The responses to the questions will help guide recommendations for follow-up. Support and engagement from the local Healthy Athletes Program Staff, Clinical Directors, families/caregivers and coaches is critical for the successful implementation of this virtual program. This procedure is not meant to replace in person screenings or diagnostic evaluations but rather identify emergent issues needing immediate attention and to use data to inform the need for further testing when in person events are reinstated.

The model outlined below has been developed for use on smart phones, tablets and computers under the supervision of trained Clinical Directors. The format to be used is zoom or similar platform. The virtual education section provides the athlete with baseline knowledge to be able to answer the self-assessment questions. The sections can be presented at the same time or as two separate sessions. Response data are captured through Zoom polling and should be reviewed by the Clinical Director following the session to identify any required follow up and the timing of that follow up. This data will not be linked to the Healthy Hearing HAS data. Zoom has the feature to use polls during your zoom meeting. This can be a great way to engage your audience! Click [here](#) to learn more about how to use polls.

Tips:

- Don't reuse meeting ID's and don't use your Personal Meeting ID to schedule meetings.
- Don't publicly share Zoom Meeting ID's or meeting links on social media.
- Familiarize yourself with managing participants, namely removing participants, muting and turning off video: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005759423-Managing-participants-in-a-meeting>
- Consider adding a password to Zoom Meetings

If you have questions related to the implementation of a Virtual Healthy Hearing event, please contact the SOI Healthy Hearing Inbox healthyhearing@specialolympics.org

Athlete Identification

- Athletes are invited to register by the local Healthy Athletes (HA) Coordinator
- HH Clinical Director (CD) and HA Coordinator coordinate the date and time.
- Athletes' complete disclaimer (program option)

Athletes sent link to virtual session (i.e., Zoom)

- Athletes are presented the educational HH section.
- HH CD gives the athletes an opportunity to ask clarifying questions.
- Key educational messages will be discussed.

Athletes begin Self-Assessment Questions

- HH CD presents assessment questions and clarifies any athlete questions.
- HH CD monitors results as they are entered and received.

Follow-up, referrals and evaluation

- Criteria for urgent referral - Sudden hearing loss/Sudden dizziness; Pain in the ear; Draining ear
- Provide a contact for the HH CD/HA Coordinator for private consultation after the session.

Note: General follow up recommendations

AUDIOLOGICAL CARE	PERSON WITH ID IN GENERAL	PERSON WITH DOWN SYNDROME	PERSON WITH ID ELIGIBLE FOR HEARING DEVICE
EARWAX REMOVAL	Annual	2x/ year	2x/ year
HEARING SCREENING	Neonatal Hearing Screening	Neonatal Hearing screening	2-4x/year < age 6
	Annual screening < age 6	2x/ year < age 6	
	Every 3 years from age 6 to 18	Every 2 years from age 6 to 18	2x/year ages 6 < 10
	Every 5 years from age 18 to 50	Every 3 years from age 18 and 35	Annual hearing evaluation > age 10
	Every 3 years > age 50	Annual > age 35	
Annually if 8h/ day noise exposure (>75dBA)			

Reference: www.efas.ws

1. Athlete Engagement and Invitation:

After deciding on the date(s) and times for the virtual Healthy Hearing (HH) education and hearing self-assessment, the local Healthy Athletes (HA) Program Staff will identify and contact approximately 10-15 athletes for each session. More athletes than that make it difficult to poll and answer questions. The power point will be forwarded to the HA Program Staff in advance so that it can be loaded and ready for the Zoom platform. Athlete families/caregivers, coaches and any other support person for the athlete are encouraged to attend. The athletes do not need to prepare in advance for the sessions. The HA Program Staff should track who has registered and who has attended. It is also recommended to obtain a post session evaluation from the attendees.

The Health Assessment Education event is coordinated by the Program and will be led by a Clinical Director and/or clinical volunteers. Additional clinical volunteers may help to implement the event and/or to lead breakout groups if needed for large groups of athletes.

2. Session Flow

Program staff or a Health Messenger can introduce the session, explain the purpose, and thank the participants for attending.

The HH Clinical Director can provide additional information about how the session will proceed and remind the athletes that all responses will remain confidential.

It is important to build in time for athlete questions as the HH Clinical Director proceeds through the slides. The HA Program Staff can help keep the questions on track with what is being presented.

Depending on the athlete's input and discussion, the session will take approximately 1 hour. The HH Clinical Director can decide how to handle questions via the chat box, a raised hand or other method. Not all questions have to be handled on the spot. The response can go out later to the group if research or more information is needed.

- Introduction
- Part 1: Healthy Hearing Education
- Part 2: Zoom Poll of Hearing Questionnaire (11 Questions)
- Part 3: Healthy Hearing Advice

3. Part 2: Hearing Questionnaire

The HH questionnaire contains 11 questions about sudden, temporary and permanent hearing loss. The questions are meant to assist in determining the nature of the hearing loss and the need for immediate follow up. It is recommended to ask the questions through a Zoom poll. The educational session provides some guidelines on how to identify hearing loss as well as to mitigate the negative social and emotional impact of hearing loss. If the education session and assessment session are presented at different times, a quick review of the main educational information should be reviewed before the assessment questions are presented. Data collected during Zoom polling should be stored by the Special Olympics Program following the event. Individual athlete data doesn't need to be shared with SOI at this time.

4. Follow Up

Once the polling has been completed, the athletes will be instructed that the results will be reviewed by the HH Clinical Director and will be contacted if any follow up is recommended. A follow up private call will be arranged with the athlete and HH Clinical Director by the HA Program Staff if there is an issue that needs immediate attention. Athletes not needing immediate attention will be advised to visit HH when in-person events resume.

Future Healthy Hearing Sessions

Athlete questions and discussions on various topics may indicate opportunities for additional information, education, and programming. The HH Clinical Director and staff should look for and listen for such opportunities. For example, athletes may be interested in learning more about how to clean their ears, noise exposure and the impact of noise on hearing or devices that are available to help with hearing. Contact the HH Program Manager and/or Global Clinical Advisors to access additional education resources.

5. Reporting

- Individual athlete data doesn't need to be shared with SOI at this point but should be stored by SO Program
- Program or CD should use the following report to provide feedback:
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/ceb465fb74194c7ca5f3e9536b019d5d>