



Services for children with cochlear implants

A cochlear implant may be suggested as an option for infants and children who have a severe or profound hearing loss and receive little or no benefit from hearing aids.

Australian Hearing provides services to eligible clients with cochlear implants. These services include assessment of unaided, aided and cochlear implant assisted hearing, and listening and communication activities.

Children and young adults under the age of 21 are entitled to Government subsidised services from Australian Hearing.

How can we help?

You need to visit a cochlear implant clinic to assess whether your child would benefit from an implant. This is covered by private and State health funds.

Although Australian Hearing does not provide surgery, we play an integral role in providing a range of services to children with cochlear implants, including maintaining the parts, providing complimentary hearing devices (such as hearing aids and FMs) and offering advice about the development of your child's hearing.

Cochlear implant MAPping (programming) and other implant-specific activities are conducted by cochlear implant clinics.

What maintenance services are available?

We can help you maintain your child's cochlear implant to ensure it's providing the maximum benefits. We can provide:

- Non-warranty repairs and maintenance of your child's device
- Replacement parts for your child's cochlear implants
- Batteries for your child's speech processor.

Our audiologists will discuss your options with you and may recommend using a hearing aid or FM system in conjunction with the cochlear implant.

Listening with a cochlear implant and a hearing aid

Many people now benefit from wearing a cochlear implant on one ear and a hearing aid on the other. This is called 'bimodal hearing' and is particularly helpful for managing hearing losses that are moderate-to-profound in degree or worse.

Bimodal hearing can maximise the use of residual hearing in the opposite ear to the implanted one, and make the most of the available hearing technology, especially for those who struggle to manage with hearing aids alone.

At Australian Hearing, we can fit a hearing aid to the non-implanted ear, optimising the fitting to ensure the best possible listening when the implant and hearing aid are worn together.

Using an FM system with a cochlear implant

Often the benefits of cochlear implants and hearing aids are limited because of the effects of background noise, reverberation and distance. To help reduce these problems, we can provide your child an FM radio frequency system which can be connected to your child's cochlear implant and hearing aids.

FM systems are made up of a microphone and transmitter worn by the teacher or parent and a receiver worn by the child.

Sound is transmitted directly from the teacher or parent to the child's own hearing aids. As long as the child is within the transmission range of the FM, the teacher's or parent's voice will be as loud and clear as if they were standing a metre away from the child.

Your child can be assessed and fitted with FMs at Australian Hearing.

If your child uses a speech processor

We recommend using rechargeable batteries with your child's speech processor. Ideally, you should use a battery charger that fully discharges the battery prior to recharging. We can provide you with a charger.

We can also provide your child with technological upgrades for speech processors. We receive specific Commonwealth funding to supply children with more advanced speech processors when they become available.

And we will replace your child's speech processor if it's lost or damaged beyond repair.

How to start benefiting from our maintenance services

You will need to get a Hearing Services Card (HSC) for your child to access services from Australian Hearing.

The annual cost of the HSC is \$26.25 for children (and between \$31.50 and \$34.65 for adults). You can get a HSC from your local Hearing Centre.

You must show a current Hearing Services Card to receive maintenance services from Australian Hearing. We'll send you an annual reminder to renew your card.

Contact Australian Hearing on 131 797 if you have questions about these or any other services we provide.