



Hearing Accredited Programme Guide

The Hearing Accredited Workplace Programme will help you transform your organisation into one that is inclusive of employees & customers with hearing loss.



WHAT IS A HEARING ACCREDITED WORKPLACE?



THE BENEFITS OF THE PROGRAMME



WHAT DOES THE PROGRAMME INCLUDE?



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR Deaf & Hard of Hearing

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BECOME HEARING ACCREDITED?

The Hearing Accredited Workplace Programme is a nationwide initiative that will assist your organisation to become more aware of the experiences of hearing loss and to be inclusive of your valued employees and customers who are deaf or have a hearing loss. It is an opportunity for all employees within your organisation to learn a range of communication skills and new approaches to conducting business that better accommodate hearing loss.

Hearing loss needn't be a barrier to success. By becoming a Hearing Accredited Workplace, your organisation will be in a stronger position to retain experienced staff who have hearing loss and gain access to a new talent pool of employees who have hearing loss.

In Hearing Accredited Workplaces, everyone's hearing matters. The programme prioritises caring for all employees' hearing health. Employees will have access to information about hearing health 24/7 via our online Hearing Hub. They will also have access to annual on-site hearing screenings.

WHY BECOME A HEARING ACCREDITED WORKPLACE?

Of the 880,000 New Zealanders who have a hearing loss, 38% are aged between 18-64 (working age). Put another way, if your organisation employs more than ten people, the chances are at least one of your employees will have a hearing loss, and this number is increasing. According to the World Health Organisation, the global rate of hearing loss is set to double over the next three decades. For this reason, being hearing loss aware as an organisation is not only the right thing to do, it makes good business sense.

By becoming a Hearing Accredited Workplace, your organisation will be actively working towards creating a positive and inclusive environment for employees and customers with hearing loss. You'll also be doing your part to prevent noise-induced hearing loss by identifying and managing harmful noises in the workplace.

IMPACTS OF AN INVISIBLE DISABILITY

A lack of hearing loss awareness can cause communication barriers *within* your organisation, and *between* your organisation and its customers. The impact of this can be far reaching. When employees with hearing loss are not accommodated in the workplace it can affect their productivity, wellbeing and health and safety.

For many employees with hearing loss, working in an environment that does not recognise their disability can lead to experiences of feeling stressed, isolated, and anxious. The NZ Trak Report 2018 revealed that 90% of New Zealanders with hearing loss experience feelings of anxiety, isolation or hopelessness, and that 90% felt physically or mentally exhausted at the end of the day. Furthermore, the National Foundation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing survey in 2018 revealed that 78% of working New Zealanders with hearing loss reported not receiving adequate support from their employers. This needs to change.

By becoming more aware of hearing loss and making it part of the everyday conversation, organisations can do a lot to bridge the communication gap and help employees and customers with hearing loss to feel supported and engaged.

A NEW GENERATION OF HEARING LOSS

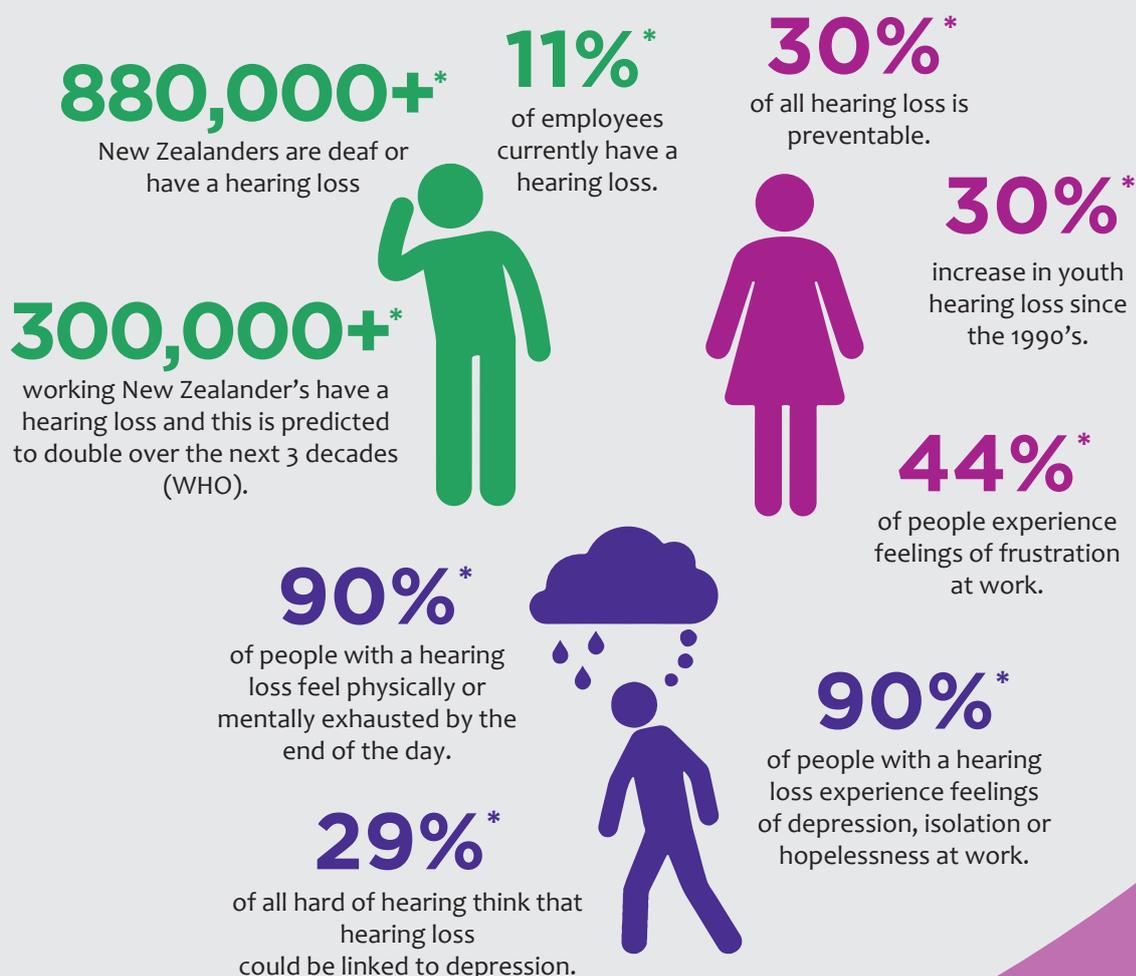
One in five young people under 24 years of age will be entering the workforce with a hearing loss. Are you ready for them?

Youth hearing loss levels have sky rocketed over the last 10 years. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), globally, one in five teenagers now have a hearing loss. This is a 30% increase since the 1990s. The main reason for this increase is due to prolonged exposure to unsafe noise (WHO, 2015). Many young people are damaging their hearing by listening for too long and too loudly to personal devices through headphones without realising the risks.

In New Zealand, we are seeing an increase in hearing loss in secondary schools. Many did not know they had a hearing loss until they were screened. As a new generation enters the workforce, New Zealand could see hearing loss levels in the workplace increase significantly.

Having the capability to work alongside employees and customers with hearing loss and being aware of the signs of hearing loss is increasingly important in the workplace. Hearing loss need not prevent anyone's ability to perform their role with excellence, and with the right support young employees with hearing loss can thrive.

HEARING LOSS BY THE NUMBERS



START YOUR HEARING ACCREDITED JOURNEY HERE

The Hearing Accredited Workplace Programme provides practical tools and training to assist your organisation to become more inclusive of employees, and customers, who have a hearing loss. As part of your annual membership, your organisation will have access to the following:

- **Two facilitated workshops:** These will assist you and your team to discover what is going well and where the gaps are. We then work with you to develop an Action Plan to improve awareness of hearing loss in your organisation, to remove communication barriers and to monitor noise risks.
- **Annual workplace hearing screenings:** These screenings help to ensure that any hearing losses are picked up and monitored. Up to 50 hearing screenings are included in the annual fee. 50 screenings typically take two days to complete.
- **24/7 access to our online Hearing Hub:** This is where you and your employees will be able to access our step-by-step Training Modules, General Workplace and Noise Risk Assessments, and information about support services and assistive technologies.
- **Helpline:** As part of your annual membership, we provide a helpline service that employees can call to be connected to providers who can offer additional support, including hearing therapy or rehabilitation.
- **Your Hearing Accreditation:** Upon submitting your organisation's Action Plan, your organisation will receive your partial Hearing Accreditation. You can use the Hearing Accreditation Mark on your website and in job advertisements to promote your organisation as a Hearing Accredited Workplace.
- **Annual Report and Accreditation:** National Foundation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing will produce an annual report and award a Hearing Accreditation Mark based on how well your organisation has met the criteria, as set out in your organisation's Hearing Accredited Action Plan.
- **Case studies:** Once your organisation is fully accredited, we look forward to shining a light on the changes your organisation has made by producing a case study that showcases your organisation's solutions that support employees and customers with hearing loss and manage noise safety issues. Case studies will be published on our website and via our social media channels.



THE PROGRAMME IN 12 STEPS



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MODULES AND ASSESSMENTS

The Hearing Accredited Workplace Programme provides step-by-step Training Modules that walk you and your team through the key areas in the workplace. You can use these Training Modules in tandem with the General Workplace and Noise Risk Assessments, to create a Hearing Accredited Action Plan. All modules are available for download from the Hearing Hub.



TALKING ABOUT HEARING LOSS

Use this module to start a conversation with your team about being more aware of hearing loss.

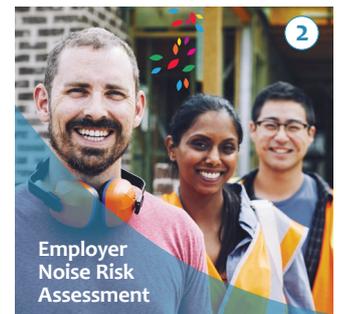
This module will help you to recognise the signs of hearing loss and how to talk to an employee about their hearing loss. It also walks you through simple tips and strategies for better communication with team members or customers who have a hearing loss.



GENERAL WORKPLACE AND NOISE RISK ASSESSMENTS



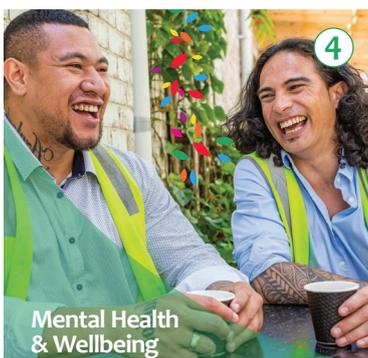
Use the General Workplace Assessment and the Noise Risk Assessment to discover what your organisation is doing well and to highlight any gaps. It's a great way to gain insights and gather information from your team to bring further clarity as to how hearing loss aware your organisation currently is.



HEALTH & SAFETY & HEARING LOSS

Use this module to consider how well your current health and safety practices accommodate employees with hearing loss.

This module will help you to understand your obligations and will walk you through a range of adjustments and assistive technologies that can improve the health and safety of employees with hearing loss. It also looks at the risks of work-related stress when employees with hearing loss are not adequately supported and provides advice on how to monitor and manage potential health and safety risks.



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Use this module to assist your organisation to become a positive and psychologically safe environment that is supportive of hearing loss.

This module covers the importance of being aware of employee wellbeing and outlines strategies to transform workplace culture to be more inclusive of employees with hearing loss. It outlines potential risks and the signs of poor mental health. Lastly, this module looks at how to work with your employees for shared success.



ADJUSTMENTS & ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES



With the right training and accommodations there are very few jobs that people with a hearing loss cannot do. There are a wide range of assistive technologies available to enable people with hearing loss to excel in the workplace.

This module provides a comprehensive overview of the assistive technologies and adjustments that can make a significant difference to employees with hearing loss.



HEALTH CARE & FUNDING



Accommodating hearing loss in the workplace can often be achieved with little or no cost. However, where costs are involved, you or your employee may be able to seek funding or a government subsidy.

This module provides information on how to access workplace subsidies and funding and how to care for your hearing. This includes, tips for managing some of the more common conditions, such as Tinnitus.



ACOUSTIC DESIGN ELEMENTS FOR WORKPLACES



This module will help you to consider the acoustic levels in your workplace and how to manage them.

It outlines the impact of workplace noise on employees and customers with hearing loss. It then walks you through how to plan for separate acoustic zones in your workplace and how to stay on top of noise overspill between zones.

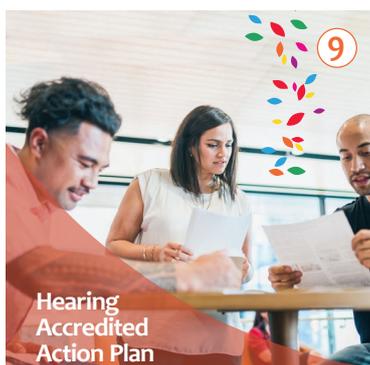


STAFF INDUCTION & RECRUITMENT



Going through the interview and induction process can be nerve wracking for anyone, but for candidates with hearing loss it can be fraught with difficulty.

This module provides tips on how to make your recruitment, interview and induction process accessible to prospective employees with hearing loss.



HEARING ACCREDITED ACTION PLAN



Once you and your team have completed the assessments and reviewed all the modules, it's time to create a Hearing Accredited Action Plan.

The Action Plan sets out short, mid and long-term goals that your organisation can work towards to receive your full Hearing Accreditation Mark.



**Helping you and your team to become more
inclusive of hearing loss in the workplace.**

**Contact: Lorien.Doherty@nfd.org.nz
Find out more at: nfdhearinghub.org.nz**



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