

### 3. Candidacy for receiving a personal radio aid

Personal radio aids are used by deaf people of all ages and in a range of settings – including pre-school and school-age children, students in education or training and working adults. This resource encourages you to consider how a radio aid may help with listening and learning.

The listening environment in most pre-schools, schools and homes is less than ideal and deaf children are likely to spend 40–50% of their listening time in noisy environments.<sup>8</sup> For this reason, young children as well as school-age children can benefit from using personal radio aids.<sup>9</sup>



The following 12 quality standards set out a common approach to ensure best outcomes.

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8. Jones, C., and Launer, S. Pediatric Fittings in 2010: The Sound Foundations Cuper Project. *A Sound Foundation Through Early Amplification*. 2010. Chapter 12: 187–192.

9. Madell, J., Flexer, C. *Pediatric Audiology: Diagnosis, technology and management*. 2014. (2nd edition). Thieme. New York.

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## QS1

**Every deaf child should be considered as a potential candidate for provision with a personal radio aid as part of their amplification package, at first hearing aid fitting. (See also QS10 on page 19.)**

This position requires that providers ask why a deaf child **should not** be considered as a potential candidate for a personal radio system, rather than which child **should**. It also highlights the need for a close working relationship between health and education teams.

Some children who have normal hearing thresholds, and who don't use hearing technology (for example, those with auditory processing difficulties), may also benefit from a personal radio aid.

**You should consider the following essential factors when determining suitable candidacy for a radio aid.**

- Recent research<sup>10</sup> suggests that even very young children and reluctant hearing aid users can get significant benefits from using radio aids.
- Children should be encouraged to understand the effect of distance on sound, and of localisation as part of their listening development whilst using radio aids.
- Appropriate support and training are needed to ensure those in the child's environment can support the best use of radio aid technology.

Contexts for candidacy and other factors for consideration can be found in the *Good Practice Guide for Radio Aids*.

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## QS2

**There is an identified budget and clear accountability for funding personal radio aids where the candidacy criteria are met.**

Education and health services should work together to jointly commission and provide hearing technology for deaf children and to promote technological innovations such as hearing aids and implants with integral radio aid receivers.

Government guidance universally emphasises the importance of early intervention. A full amplification package, including a radio aid, should therefore be put in place for each deaf child at their first hearing aid fitting. This package should be reviewed regularly and it should develop and change as the child develops and their listening needs change.

The current split of provision between health and education service providers is unhelpful and fails to ensure that all deaf children have access to radio aids. In England, there is a duty on education and health to jointly commission services for children with special educational needs and disabilities.<sup>11</sup>

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10. Mulla, I., McCracken, W. *Frequency Modulation for Pre-Schoolers with Hearing Loss*. Seminars in hearing. 2014. 35(3); 206–216.

11. Department for Education (DfE). Children and Families Act. 2014. [www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted) (accessed 24 January 2017).