

4. Fitting and setting up of personal radio aids

The UK Children's FM Working Group recommends using the FM Advantage protocol (part of the *Good Practice Guide for Radio Aids*) as the starting point for setting up hearing aids and implants with radio aids. This can be found on the UK Children's FM Working Group website.

There should be consultation between health and education professionals to ensure compatibility between the radio system and hearing aids or implants, and how appropriate they are in meeting the child's needs. Practicalities that must be addressed before the system is set up include:

- choosing hearing aids and implants that are radio aid compatible
- sharing details of the hearing aid or implant: for example, compression strategy and features activated
- adapting the hearing aid or implant's battery compartment where necessary
- appropriate activation of the direct audio input (DAI) feature within the hearing aid or implant software so that the radio aids can be used. The UK Children's FM Working Group recommends the FM+M programme as the default start-up programme for younger children.



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QS3

The personal radio aid must be set up with the child's individual hearing aids or implants to ensure that the radio signal provides the desired advantage.

- All individual components of the equipment must be checked before setting up the system.
- For hearing aids, follow the FM Advantage protocol and procedures in the *Good Practice Guide for Radio Aids*.
- For cochlear implants follow the cochlear implant/radio aid guidelines procedures in the *Good Practice Guide for Radio Aids*.
- Make a note of the required radio receiver settings and keep a copy of the results for a baseline reference. Send copies to other relevant professionals.

QS4

The child's listening response must be checked with the complete system in place.

- Check that speech is audible through the radio aid, both at close range and at a distance greater than 4m.
- Use close observation and an appropriate listening task to suit the developmental stage of the child.
- Choose an appropriate task to establish the sound quality experienced by children unable to report this easily themselves.

The Cochlear Implant team at the Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital in London and Phonak UK have developed a free downloadable resource for professionals, including Teachers of the Deaf, when considering radio aid provision with 4–7 year olds (it has also been used successfully with older and younger children). The resource helps children to develop the skills and language needed to judge and describe sound quality. Visit www.uclh.nhs.uk/OURSERVICES/SERVICEA-Z/ENTS/CIM/Pages/FMTrainingTool.aspx.

QS5

Training and written information about the personal radio aid system, its settings and its appropriate use must be agreed and shared with the child, parents, teachers and all those involved in supporting the child.

- As part of the fitting process a suitably qualified professional with day-to-day responsibility for the system, or another specialist agency, should teach key participants how to use the system and carry out basic troubleshooting.
- Review the above training when any change of hearing instrument or setting is made, if part of or all of the personal radio aid system is repaired or replaced, or new staff are involved.
- Information should include detailed practical instructions and it should be available in appropriate formats, including written instructions or videos.



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