

## Methods of referral

Some patients are referred to us either through the NPICU for newborn screening.

The majority of our patients are sent to us by either Consultants in Audiovestibular Medicine or E.N.T Consultants and Surgeons. In turn referrals to these Consultants are made by Doctors in Primary Health care.



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## Audiology

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### For further information contact:

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## What is Audiology?

Audiology is a challenging and expanding field in clinical science and technology, involving the study of hearing and balance. As a healthcare profession, audiology also involves assessment, management and therapeutic rehabilitation of people with hearing and balance problems and associated disorders. This includes patients of all ages from newborns and children to adults and the elderly. New and exciting opportunities exist in this expanding field.

## The Audiology Unit

The Audiology Unit is located on the first floor level in the Outpatients Department, in Mater Dei Hospital and shares the same section as the Ear, Nose & Throat Department.

The unit has 7 Sound proof booths which are all equipped with the necessary and latest diagnostic equipment. 4 rooms are used for routine testing. 2 used for paediatric testing and the last one is used to advanced Audiological and Vestibular Testing. We also have a room for Paediatric Rehabilitation another for adult rehabilitation and a technical laboratory two consultant rooms are also available.

The staff compliment includes two Consultants in Audiovestibular Medicine, 1 Audiologist, 3 Audiological Assistants, 2 Paramedical Aids and 1 Hearing Aid technician.

## What services are offered?

- **Diagnostic Audiology**

Audiometry – A subjected method used to test one's hearing threshold.

Visual Response Audiometry (VRA) – same as previous but uses the concept of conditioning using a visual stimulus to be able to test children between 6 months to 24 months of age.

Conditioned Play Audiometry – same as VRA but a child is conditioned using a game. This is used to test children between 20 months and 4 year of age

Tympanometry / Stapedial Reflexes – A test for middle ear function.

Speech Audiometry – Another test to determine a person's hearing threshold as well as distinguish between sensory and neural hearing problems.

Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) – an objective test for Outer Hair Cell Function in the Cochlear, the organ of the inner ear.

Auditory Brainstem Response Audiometry (ABR) – An objective test which helps to determine either threshold of hearing or neurological problems by measuring the electrical responses from the cochlear to the brain.

Auditory Steady State Response Audiometry (ASSR) – An other objective test to effectively measure hearing threshold.

- **Vestibular Testing**

Used to diagnose problems with the balance system whether it is a peripheral problem or a central one.

- **Targeted Neonatal Screening**

Currently all New born Babies who are admitted to the NPICU ( Neonatal & Paediatric Intensive Care Unit) are being tested. Future plans include extending this to all babies born in

Malta to create a National Hearing Screening Programme.

- **Industrial Screening**

To test the damage to patients due to noise at work.

- **Aural Rehabilitation**

Different types of rehabilitation services are:

Fitting of hearing aids

Impression taking – a method used to measure the ear to produce a mould to go with the hearing aid.

Cochlear Implants – an Implantable hearing system used for patients who cannot use conventional hearing aids due to a profound hearing loss.

Bone Conduction hearing Aids – a type of hearing aid which is attached to the bone. It is used when conventional hearing aids cannot be used due to severe middle ear infections in some cases absence or deformity of the outer ear.



### Information sessions

- **Vestibular Rehabilitation.**
- **Hearing aid repair and Ear Mould Laboratory services.**