



POSITION STATEMENT

DELEGATION OF THE CONTROLLED ACT OF PRESCRIBING A HEARING AID FOR A HEARING IMPAIRED PERSON

EFFECTIVE: AUGUST 22, 2017

Audiologists must not delegate¹ the controlled act of prescribing² a hearing aid for a hearing impaired person to other individuals because delegation of this controlled act may result in serious risk of harm to the patient. The risk of harm could arise from modifications that ultimately alter the output performance of the device when these modifications are not performed by authorized health professionals.

RATIONALE:

- Registered audiologists and physicians are the only persons authorized to perform the controlled act of prescribing a hearing aid for a hearing impaired person ([Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991 RHPA](#)).
- Although under s28 of the [RHPA, 1991](#), a regulated health professional may delegate any controlled act that he/she is authorized to perform, due to the high level of knowledge, skill and judgement required to perform this controlled act, audiologists must not delegate any aspect of prescribing a hearing aid that may ultimately alter the output performance of the device.

BACKGROUND

[The Regulated Health Professions Act \(RHPA\), 1991](#), is based on a controlled acts model. The model is rooted on the premise that some health care procedures have a more significant risk of harm than other procedures. The [RHPA](#) lists 14 procedures that, if not performed correctly and by a competent person, have a high element of risk. These are known as controlled acts.

Prescribing a hearing aid for a hearing impaired person has been listed as a controlled act because of the potential risk of serious harm to patients. Possible risks resulting in serious physical and/or mental harm include, but are not restricted to:

- hearing which is impaired further due to inappropriate and/or excessive amplification, painfully loud sounds
- under amplification, resulting in no measurable improvement in hearing

¹ Delegation is a process that transfers authority to perform a controlled act from an authorized regulated health professional to another professional.

² Prescribing is the act of issuing a prescription for the dispensing of a specific hearing aid for an individual based on a comprehensive evaluation.

- delayed appropriate treatment for a medically treatable condition
- negative impact on educational, vocational, emotional and psychological aspects of life.

Hearing aid prescriptions must be completed according to the [Practice Standards For the Provision of Hearing Aid Services By Audiologists](#).