



Consumer guidance factsheet

This factsheet supports customers to make informed choices about their hearing care and the hearing services available to them through the program.

Achieving your hearing outcomes

Establishing an effective relationship with your chosen hearing service provider is an essential part of making sure you receive the right level of care, as a client of the Australian Government Hearing Services Program (*the program*). You should feel confident at the end of your appointment that the services and support discussed are the right ones to help you manage your hearing loss. Here are some suggestions to help you get the most out of your hearing appointments.

All Hearing service providers under the program are contracted to provide set services and supports to eligible clients of the Australian Government Hearing Services program.

Before your appointment

-  Discuss your hearing concerns with your doctor to ensure your hearing is not affected by a treatable medical condition. **Please note that you will need a medical certificate** from your doctor stating whether there are any medical contra-indications to fitting you with a hearing device before you can receive services under the program.
-  Contact your nearest Bay Audio location to arrange an appointment. Call 1800 229 283 and enter your post code for your nearest location.
-  Ask for assistance such as an interpreter (if required).
-  Ask someone to attend the appointment with you, as support from a family member or friend can assist you to choose the right solution. The experiences of those closest to you in relation to your hearing loss may be important.
-  Prepare and bring with you a summary of your hearing concerns and any questions.

During your appointment

-  Your most convenient Bay Audio location can apply for the program on your behalf – prior to providing any services.
-  You can expect to be asked for comprehensive details about your lifestyle, including the situations when hearing is difficult for you or frustrating for those close to you.
-  You can expect to undergo initial tests, such as a hearing assessment.
-  You should be given time to ask questions regarding specific services, such as:
 - What services can I expect to receive under the program?
 - Will I have any out-of-pocket costs under the program?

Hearing Solutions

As a program customer, if the results of your assessment indicate that a Hearing Solution would be of assistance to you, your Bay Audio hearing services professional will ensure you are informed about your options of suitable hearing solutions to manage your hearing loss. One of these options will include a fully subsidised (*free to client*) hearing device, which will meet the basic performance and technical requirements prescribed by the program. It will also include at least one or more partially subsidised options. Partially subsidised options will require a co-contribution but may provide increased functionality and automation which you may find benefit your lifestyles and listening situations. You have no obligation to purchase a partially subsidised hearing solution, it is ultimately a personal choice based on your lifestyle and hearing rehabilitation goals which will be discussed with your Bay Audio hearing services professional.

If you choose to purchase a partially subsidised hearing solution, your Bay Audio hearing services professional will ensure that you fully understand how much the program will contribute and how much you will need to contribute towards the cost of the solution.

You will be provided with a written quote that includes the solution details and cost, as well as any ongoing costs that may be applicable.

You are encouraged to consider this choice within your own time and to consult family or friends as appropriate.

You will only need to sign this quotation if and when you have decided to proceed with a purchase that involves you in a cost contribution to the solution you have selected.

Important disclosure: You should be aware that Bay Audio practices profit sharing with its hearing service professional and customer service team.

Bay Audio's policy is that we will offer you the best range of options to meet your needs.

The existence of any commissions and preferred supplier arrangements must be disclosed to you, as they may influence the price, type and brand of hearing aid being recommended to you. Here are some example questions you may wish to ask your hearing service provider about hearing devices:

- 👂 Do I really need a hearing device? What are the alternatives?
- 👂 Do you receive commissions or other benefits or have preferred supplier arrangements for certain hearing devices?
- 👂 Why will the partially subsidised hearing devices suit my needs better than a fully subsidised one?
- 👂 Can I trial the fully subsidised device?
- 👂 Can I trial the partially subsidised device before committing to buy it?
- 👂 What happens if the hearing device doesn't assist as much as I expected?
- 👂 What is the manufacturer's warranty period for the hearing device?¹
- 👂 Will I receive detailed information about ongoing maintenance for my hearing device and how much will that cost after the warranty period?

¹ We encourage you to confirm with your Hearing service professional what the warranty or extended warranty includes over and above the consumer guarantees that you will have automatically under the Australian Consumer Law. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) website has further information about consumer guarantees and extended warranties which may assist you. Remember, you can always request a second opinion and/or quote from another hearing service provider.



At the end of your consultation

- 👂 You should be given the opportunity to clarify anything you do not understand.
- 👂 You should ask for copies of any test results, details of any devices recommended and any other recommended ongoing management.
- 👂 You should be given a written quote for partially subsidised hearing solutions if these are recommended. This should be signed and returned to your Hearing services professional only when you decide to proceed with the purchase. Ensure that you keep a copy for your records.
- 👂 If you need services and supports that are not available under the program, you should expect to receive advice on how to access these and what it will cost you.
- 👂 Take your time to make any decisions – it is ok to say no. You should never feel pressured or rushed into making a decision – especially a financial decision.

After your appointment

- 👂 You should make a follow-up appointment to ask further questions.
- 👂 Alternatively, you may wish to seek a second opinion from another hearing service provider using any written advice, test results or quotes you have received.
- 👂 If you are not satisfied with the service and supports you are receiving from your hearing service provider, please contact the Hearing Services Program by email to hearing@health.gov.au, or call 1800 500 726 or (National Relay Service) 1800 555 660.

Information in this factsheet has been altered from the original ACCC document to help our customers better understand their options.

What we do

- 👂 Hearing tests
- 👂 Hearing devices
- 👂 Hearing accessories
- 👂 Hearing loss prevention
- 👂 Hearsavers - custom made ear plugs

Find us

We have stores throughout Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and the ACT. To find your nearest location or to make an appointment for yourself, a family member or a friend, please visit www.bayaudio.com.au or call on **1800 BAY AUDIO (1800 229 283)**.



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