

## Digital hearing healthcare guide

Digital technology is critically important for addressing clients' needs remotely.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this guide is to introduce you to the suite of Phonak tools which can be used to provide digital hearing healthcare. This is not a replacement for the traditional face-to-face model of hearing healthcare. However, this guide provides suggestions for incorporating Phonak eSolutions into hearing healthcare when face-to-face visits are not possible.

During the COVID-19 crisis, Phonak has accelerated the delivery of new eSolutions and web-based services to deliver quality hearing care during the stay-at-home orders and social distancing. The global restrictions on movement call for agility and an alternative service delivery model. This guide describes how existing clients requiring ongoing care and potential new clients seeking immediate treatment for their hearing loss with or without previous audiometric data can be included into this digital pathway. It is recommended that clients visit their hearing care professional (HCP) for an in-clinic appointment at the earliest possible time for continued audiological care.

This guide is designed for clients who meet the following criteria:

- ✓ Have or are interested in compatible Phonak hearing aids
- ✓ Have a compatible smartphone (with access to 4G or Wi-Fi)\*
- ✓ 18 years and older

\* **Note:** Compatibility can be checked using the [Phonak phone compatibility checker](#)

Compatible Phonak hearing aids:

- Audéo Marvel
- Bolero Marvel\*
- Naída Marvel\*
- Virto Marvel\*
- Audéo B-Direct\*\*

\*Clients who already have a custom earmold or have an ear impression scan available can be considered for these new hearing aids

\*\*Only compatible in certain countries for the digital pathway

## The digital service delivery model has 5 steps:



Family-Centered Care is an approach to healthcare which is associated with better outcomes, that recognizes the vital roles families play in audiological treatment and rehabilitation.<sup>2</sup> Clients should consider having a family member, friend or caregiver accompany them on their digital hearing healthcare journey.

### 1. Needs assessment

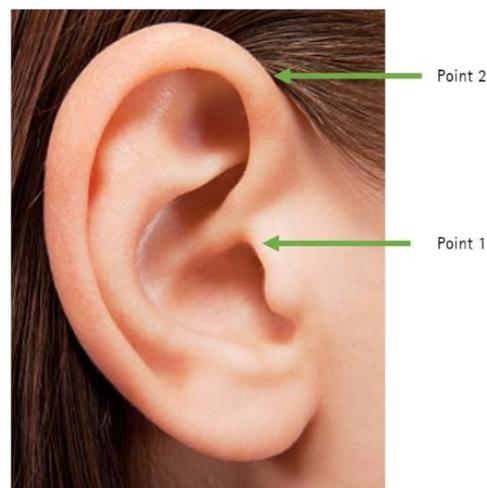
Schedule a consultation and invite the client to include a family member, friend or care giver in the call if appropriate. A video call might be preferred over an audio only call, as visual cues may improve understanding for those with hearing loss. During the consultation explain to the client the digital service delivery pathway and discuss, as well as evaluate, the following:

- Obtain informed consent from the client to follow this digital hearing healthcare pathway. Informed consent must also be obtained prior to ordering hearing aids.
- The most up-to-date information for your client's record, including an email address.
- Hearing aid candidacy and hearing health history using either:
  - **A valid audiogram or**
  - **Estimated hearing threshold results from the Phonak Hearing Screener**

The Phonak Hearing Screener is a tool that shows ear specific estimates for dBHL at specific frequencies. The Hearing Screener can be emailed to the client and the results sent back to you. It is not intended to serve as a diagnostic hearing assessment or to replace it. Instead, it is a way to identify individuals who may benefit from amplification, but unable to attend a face-to-face initial assessment. If the client proceeds with hearing aids, it is recommended that a full diagnostic assessment be performed as soon as the client is able to come in for an in-office appointment.

- Case history and consider using Consumer Ear Disease Risk Assessment (CEDRA). If you suspect a client needs medical clearance to proceed, refer to a medical professional.  
**Note:** The CEDRA is only available in English.
- Readiness for the digital hearing healthcare journey using the myPhonak app candidacy checklist.
- Hearing needs and goals using a hearing aid outcome measure such as the Client Oriented Scale of Improvement (COSI).

- Once you have evaluated the clients candidacy for amplification and this digital service pathway, select the appropriate hearing aids together with the client. Use the [At-Home Ear Measurement Guide](#) to determine the appropriate receiver or SlimTube length from client photo, see example photo below. Proper receiver or tube length should be visually confirmed at the first Remote Support session.



## 2. Order, pre-fit and ship

Place your order through the Phonak eStore or via customer service. Please indicate if you are completing the initial fitting using Phonak Remote Support, so that we can include the appropriate information to help get your client set-up.

The [At-Home Ear Measurement Guide](#) can be used to determine receiver or slim tube length. Dome size and type must also be specified when ordering. Multiple dome sizes should be ordered and included in the shipment to the client in case adjustments are needed.

The [Getting Started with Phonak Remote Support user guide](#) and/or [myPhonak app user guide](#) should be emailed or included in your shipment to the client. These user guides include instructions on installing and using the myPhonak app including Remote Support.

Pre-fit or program the hearing aids using either a valid audiogram or an estimated audiogram based on Hearing Screener results. The MPO cannot be increased via Remote Support. When pre-fitting, it is recommended to raise the MPO by 3 clicks, using the double arrow button in Phonak Target, while also checking that MPO does not exceed 120 dBHL. This will ensure headroom is available during the Remote Support session if hearing thresholds have been underestimated and adjustments are required remotely. Verify the settings in a test-box coupler before shipping to the client and then perform AudiogramDirect at the first Remote Support session.

When programing the hearing aids do not exceed the estimated feedback threshold. Attach suitable receivers and domes, including additional dome sizes if needed, repackage and ship hearing aids to your client. Follow local guidance for information on how to safely repackage the hearing aids and materials before shipping.

Once the hearing aids have shipped, schedule a digital appointment with your client to support them throughout the unboxing and set-up process.

# For “Client in trial” start here

## 3. Setup for Remote Support

There are four steps for your client to get set-up for Remote Support. The first three steps can be completed by the client independently, although you may choose to do this together.

**Note 1:** Step three and four are only required for specific countries (United States of America, United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, France, Switzerland, Australia, Spain, Italy, Republic of Ireland).

**Note 2:** For other countries where the invite process is not required, to activate Remote Support in compatible hearing aids for an existing client, the hearing aids must first be connected to Phonak Target in the clinic. Upon saving the session, Remote Support is activated.

These are the steps your client may be able to complete on their own using the Getting Started with Phonak Remote Support user guide:

1. Downloading the myPhonak app
2. Pairing the hearing aids to the myPhonak app
3. Creating a myPhonak account (if required)

This final step must be completed with your help:

4. Send the Remote Support invitation to the client using the [Remote Support Fitting Guide](#) instructions (if required).

## 4. Remote Support Session(s)

The Remote Support Fitting Guide includes system and equipment requirements, set-up and step-by-step instructions which will support you in the initial programming and/or fine tuning of your clients' hearing aids remotely.

**During the Remote Support session the following steps should be considered:**

- Visually check the physical fit of the hearing aids in the ear
- Instruct your client on changing dome size. A [How to change the dome](#) video can be sent to your client to assist with this
- Consider using AudiogramDirect which has been enabled for Remote Support and offers in-situ hearing testing to confirm audiometric estimates obtained from the Phonak Hearing Screener or a past audiogram. See the [Phonak step-by-step guide AudiogramDirect with Phonak Remote Support](#) and [Phonak FAQs - AudiogramDirect with Phonak Remote Support](#) for further information.

**Note:** A full diagnostic assessment should be completed as soon as possible.

The Feedback & real ear test is disabled during a Phonak Remote Support session. If feedback is present, reconsider acoustic coupling or reducing gain. To check which frequency bands to reduce, change the view of the curve display to Output, select SPL real ear from the dropdown menu and tick show real time display.

**Explain hearing aid functions and handling, including:**

- Information about battery life and changing batteries or charging
- Hearing aid care and maintenance
- Multifunction button
- Bluetooth® connection for phone calls and streaming media
- Provide counselling and aural rehabilitation as appropriate

Schedule a Remote Support appointment within 48hours of the fitting.

Ongoing fine tuning may be completed using various features within the myPhonak app including [Hearing Diary](#) (as available).

## 5. Follow-up

Continued client support may include Remote Support and/or in-office follow-up sessions, as well as supporting clients' hearing goals and needs.

The digital pathway is not intended to replace traditional audiological care but can serve as a powerful tool to support your clients' hearing needs during this time of stay at home orders and physical distancing. Phonak recommends that a face-to-face audiological assessment be completed at the earliest possible time.

## Disclaimer

The different functionalities under the digital pathway do not replace or serve as a diagnostic hearing assessment. Please consider your local requirements and whether following this digital hearing healthcare journey entirely or partially, allows you to comply with applicable laws and regulations, including fulfilling the technical standards that apply to you as hearing care professional.

### References:

1 WHO guideline: recommendations on digital interventions for health system strengthening. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2019.

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2 Singh G, Barr C, Montano J, English K, Russo F, Launer S. Family-centered audiology care: Emotion and reason in hearing healthcare. *Hearing Review*. 2017;24(5):30-32