

BAA President Blog – 20th January 2025

Towards the end of last week the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) in England put out a press release announcing that they would be actively encouraging companies to sell ‘ground breaking new hearing aid devices’. We would normally call these Over The Counter (OTC) devices, and they include Apple’s ear pods with hearing test and hearing aid functionality. In the statement the DHSC seemed rather excited about this, calling it revolutionary.

To some extent buying OTC devices in the UK has been possible for a while, and there has not been a change in any regulation that preceded this announcement. In due course we will be drawing up a position statement on the subject, in particular we will be calling for further, high quality, research to be carried out to assess their effectiveness.

For those of you who attended conference and heard Brent Edwards, Director of NAL, you will remember he was a little underwhelmed by the impact the Apple ear pods had made so far.

Whilst I don’t necessarily share the DHSC’s feelings that this move is revolutionary, I don’t feel this is a significant threat to our profession. We should be making it clear when people should be seeking the advice and skills of a qualified audiologist, we need to ensure all devices are safe but what if OTCs are the gateway devices to people seeking out high quality amplification that we have both on the NHS and through the Independent sector?

As ever, you can contact me or any of our board directors here: admin@baaudiology.org

Take care

Claire

BAA President

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