

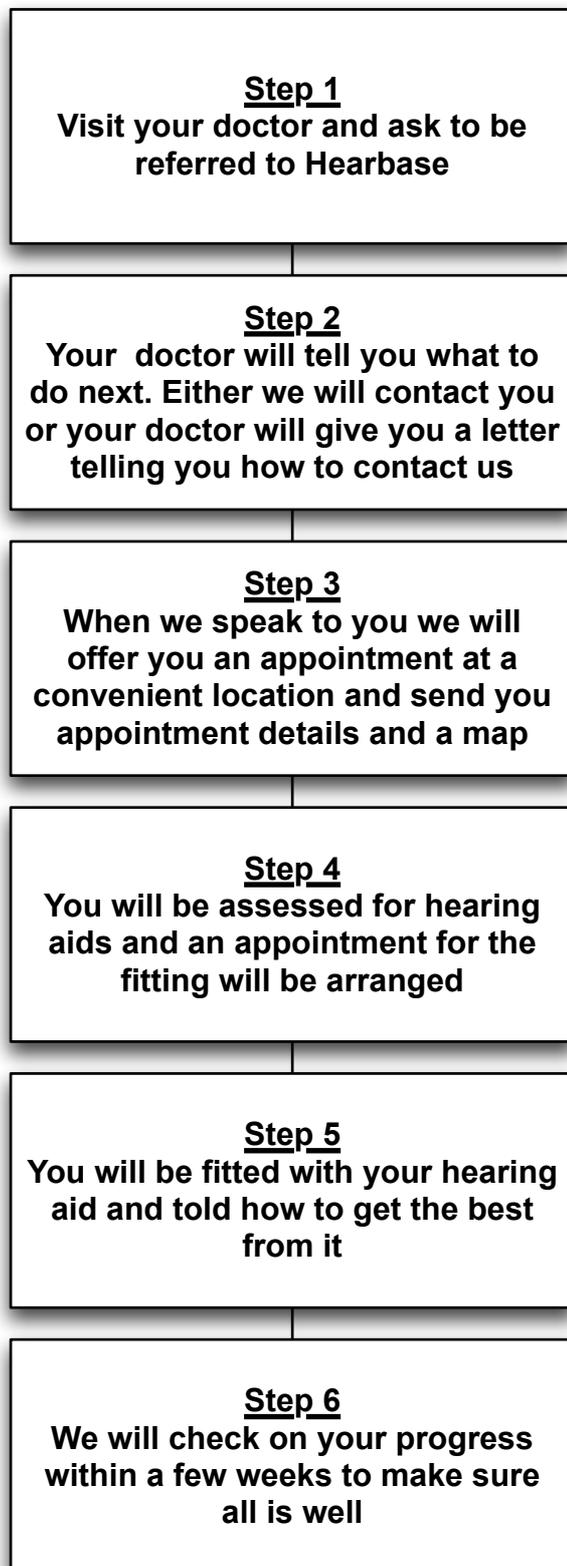


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How To Get A Free NHS Hearing Aid From Hearbase

Getting NHS Hearing Aids



After this you can see us whenever you need to for further advice or adjustments

How To Get A Free NHS Hearing Aid From Hearbase

A Summary

How do I get a free NHS hearing aid from Hearbase?

Visit your GP and ask to be referred to Hearbase. We will make an appointment for you to see one of our audiologists at your nearest clinic.

Why choose Hearbase?

We are Kent's largest independent hearing aid supplier and have been working in the field of audiology for more than 20 years. Since September 2007 we have fitted 5,000 NHS patients with free NHS digital hearing aids.

What happens at my appointment?

Your assessment will include a hearing test which will establish the extent of any hearing loss. If your test shows that you do not need hearing aids we will tell you at this stage. If you need hearing aids a fitting appointment will be arranged for a few weeks after your assessment.

What about after care?

The batteries for your hearing aids will be supplied to you free. Your hearing aid audiologist will explain how to get new batteries when you need them. Your audiology service will repair or replace your hearing aid free if it goes wrong. However, there may be a charge if it is damaged or lost through misuse or neglect.

How do I know if I need a hearing aid?

The most obvious sign that you need a hearing aid is asking for words, sentences or conversations to be repeated or mishearing certain words. Having the television louder than normal or so loud that it is a nuisance to others is also a clue.

What does the NHS provide?

The NHS will provide you with digital behind-the-ear hearing aids which are free on loan. They are yours for as long as you need them, but they remain the property of the NHS. The service from the NHS is good and there is no doubt that the quality of its hearing aids has improved dramatically over the past few years with the involvement of private companies such as Hearbase.

Any Questions – call our NHS Helpline 01303 256995

How Do I Get A Free NHS Hearing Aid From Hearbase?

Almost 10 million people in the UK are deaf or have a hearing loss ranging from slight to severe. Any hearing loss should be taken seriously and be professionally diagnosed and treated.

The good news is that NHS waiting lists are now much shorter. This is because private companies who have met the necessary quality standards are allowed to work with the NHS to increase capacity, reduce waiting times and increase patient choice.

Hearbase is one of those companies and has been delivering NHS services since 2007, initially in south east Kent and more recently in Bexley and Bromley.

Ignoring a hearing loss can lead to social isolation as it makes it hard to follow and join in with conversations. In addition, sufferers often fail to hear vital alarms such as doorbells, telephones and smoke detectors.

If you are struggling to hear properly it makes no sense to delay getting help as you can now get FREE digital behind-the-ear hearing aids from us within eight weeks of being referred by your doctor.

How do I know if I need a hearing aid?

The most obvious sign that you need a hearing aid is asking for words, sentences or conversations to be repeated or mishearing certain words. Having the television louder than normal or so loud that it is a nuisance to others is also a clue, as is constantly telling people to speak up or to stop mumbling. Often people are reluctant to admit they have a problem but hearing aids are easier to get used to when you are younger and more adaptable and when your hearing loss is relatively mild.

Try answering these questions to see if you could be losing your hearing:

- Do other people seem to mumble rather than speak clearly to you?
- Do people often have to repeat things for you before you understand what they say?

Any Questions? – call our NHS Helpline 01303 256995

How do I know if I need a hearing aid (cont.)

- Do you have difficulty understanding what is being said in noisy places, such as pubs or restaurants, even though other people manage to have conversations?
- When you are talking to people in a group, is it hard to keep up with the conversation?
- Do you find it tiring to listen to conversations because you have to concentrate hard?
- Do other people think your television or music is too loud but you can't hear it properly if they turn it down?
- Do you often have difficulty hearing on the telephone?
- Have other people told you that you don't hear well?

If you answered yes to most of these questions you could be losing your hearing and should think seriously about getting it checked.

What does the NHS provide?

The NHS will provide you with digital behind-the-ear hearing aids which are free on loan. They are yours for as long as you need them, but they remain the property of the NHS. All the batteries for your hearing aids will be supplied to you free. Your hearing aid audiologist will explain how to get new batteries when you need them.

Are NHS hearing aids any good?

The service from the NHS is good and there's no doubt that the quality of its hearing aids has improved dramatically over the past few years. Although no hearing aids can give you perfect hearing they should help you to hear everyday sounds such as the doorbell, the telephone ringing and the kettle boiling. They should also help you to follow what people are saying so that conversation becomes much easier and more relaxed.

Digital hearing aids, regardless of brand or type of technology, can never replace normal hearing in all listening situations and expecting results that cannot be achieved will only lead to frustration and dissatisfaction. However, if you know what to expect you'll be free to enjoy the great improvements they can make to your life.

Any Questions? – call our NHS Helpline 01303 256995

Are NHS hearing aids any good? (cont.)

Most hearing aids are designed to reduce certain kinds of background noise, such as the rumble of traffic or the whir of a fan. This makes listening more comfortable but you may still struggle to pick out one voice from the general chatter. Wearing an aid in both ears may help you to focus better on what you want to listen to. Using a hearing aid won't make your hearing worse.

If you have cosmetic concerns about wearing a hearing aid keep in mind that increasingly, younger people are wearing hearing aids, hearing aids are getting smaller and more discreet and there shouldn't really be any stigma in wearing a miniature computer behind your ear, which is effectively what you are doing. The increasing use of mobile phone earpieces and personal stereos means that walking around with all sorts of things in and on our ears is becoming more commonplace. Of course, if you feel that despite all of this you still want a hearing aid that is going to be completely unnoticeable you may want to consider an in-the-ear device, but you will not be able to get this from the NHS and you will need to investigate our private services.

How easy is it to get used to a hearing aid?

It takes a bit of time to get used to a hearing aid. Some benefits are immediate. For example, if the TV is too loud for other people you should be able to turn it down as soon as you get your hearing aid, but listening in a noisy place is more difficult. You need to get used to hearing sounds that you may not have heard for a while. Bear in mind that the older you are and the worse your hearing, the more difficult this adaptation process can be, but you can get used to a hearing aid at any age and almost all patterns and degrees of loss can be helped.

The sophistication of modern hearing aids means that they can be set to a fully automatic setting, so that means no volume to adjust or other controls to manage if you would prefer it this way.

Why are private companies working with the NHS?

Private companies who have met the necessary quality standards are allowed to work with the NHS to increase capacity, reduce waiting times and increase patient choice. Hearbase is one of those companies and we have been working with the NHS in Kent and South East London to reduce waiting lists for hearing aids. If you think you need a hearing aid and live in Kent, Bexley or Bromley ask your doctor to refer you to Hearbase.

Any Questions? – call our NHS Helpline 01303 256995

Why are private companies working with the NHS? (cont.)

You may not have to visit a hospital because, as Kent's largest independent hearing company, we have clinics in High Street locations.

Why choose Hearbase?

We are a Kent-based company and have been working in the field of audiology for more than 20 years and have been delivering NHS services since 2007. We strive to make sure all our patients are treated with courtesy, consideration and sympathy at all times. Our clinical team is well trained and experienced and all hold degrees in audiology.

We will treat your hearing loss with the seriousness it deserves. Since September 2007 we have fitted 5,000 NHS patients with free NHS digital hearing aids. We offer an alternative to traditional hospital hearing aid provision while working to the same high clinical standards that have always been provided by the National Health Service.

How do I get an NHS hearing aid from Hearbase?

Getting an NHS hearing aid from Hearbase is simple and quick. Visit your GP who will be able to talk things over with you and refer you to an NHS provider such as Hearbase. If your GP refers you by **fax or letter** we will contact you within a day or two, normally by telephone, to arrange an assessment at one of our locations. This may be at one of our main sites, a hospital or a local GP surgery. Once we have agreed an appointment time we will send you a confirmation letter with a map and a simple questionnaire about your hearing. You should fill this in and bring it to your appointment.

If your GP refers you by **Choose and Book** you need to contact us. This is very important as we do not know that you have been referred until you call. Your doctor will give you a letter with our contact details. This will also have your NHS number and a password which you will need to tell us. Once we have this information we will arrange an assessment at one of our locations. This may be at one of our main sites, a hospital or a local GP surgery. Once we have agreed an appointment time we will send you a confirmation letter with a map and a simple questionnaire about your hearing. You should fill this in and bring it to your appointment.

Any Questions? – call our NHS Helpline 01303 256995

What happens next?

You will be given a hearing test by one of our audiologists and if you need hearing aids, a fitting appointment will be arranged for a few weeks after your assessment. Once your hearing aids have been fitted we will provide the batteries and look after them for you. You can make an appointment to come back and see us at any time. You can contact us direct for this as you do not need to be referred by your doctor for follow-up appointments

You will also be given an instruction booklet with our stamp on it for your hearing aids which the audiology service staff, Hi Kent or Age Concern will need to see when you are given batteries and so forth. You should always bring the book with you when you come to the service for anything to do with your hearing aids. Your audiology service will repair or replace them free if they go wrong. However, there may be a charge if they are damaged or lost through misuse or neglect. Your audiology service will tell you about their arrangements for repairs.

**.Don't suffer in silence. See your GP and ask to be referred to
Hearbase for your free NHS hearing aids**

Hearbase NHS clinics are at the following locations

South East Kent:

Ashford: St Stephen's Health Centre, St Stephen's Walk, Ashford. TN23 5AQ

Canterbury: Hi Kent, 46 Northgate, Canterbury. CT1 1BE

Dover: White Cliffs Medical Centre, 143 Folkestone Road, Dover. CT17 9SG

Faversham: Newton Place Surgery, Newton Road, Faversham. ME13 8FH

Folkestone: Hearbase main office, 140 Sandgate Road, Folkestone. CT20 2TE

Thanet: Spencer Private Hospital, St Peter's Road, Margate. CT9 4AN

North Kent and South East London:

Bexleyheath: The Albion Surgery, 6 Pincott Road, Bexleyheath. DA6 7LP

Bromley: Bromley Park Surgery, Daly Drive, Bickley, Bromley. BR1 2FF

Erith: Slade Green and Colyers Lane Medical Centres, 156 Bridge Road, Slade Green, Erith. DA8 2HS

Farnborough: Summercroft Surgery, 1c Starts Hill Road, Farnborough. BR6 7AR

Hayes: The Pickhurst Surgery, 56 Pickhurst Lane, Hayes, Bromley. BR2 7JF

Welling: Westwood Surgery, 24 Westwood Lane, Welling. DA16 2HE

West Wickham: Station Road Surgery, 74 Station Road, West Wickham. BR4 0PU