

HEARING SCREENING

INTRODUCTION

- It is important to identify children with hearing loss as early in life as possible. NHS Newborn Hearing Screening Programme (NHSP) ensures this happens for all newborn babies in England

INDICATIONS

Well babies

Who

- Unless **there is** unequivocal evidence of hearing impairment (e.g. unilateral or bilateral atresia), all babies must undergo newborn hearing screening
- For babies with unequivocal evidence of hearing impairment, arrange appointment for audiological assessment

How

- Local co-ordinator is responsible for discussing **screening/assessment** with parent(s) in conjunction with paediatricians and midwives

Where

- For well babies in an area that undertakes newborn hearing screening in hospital, complete as far as possible before discharge
- if process not completed in hospital, arrange outpatient appointment/primary care clinic appointment/home visit to complete
- Well babies in an area that undertakes newborn hearing screening in the community will be offered screening in a clinic/home visit
- Complete screening, as a rule, within 1 visit

Babies on NICU or SCBU for >48 hr

- Unless unequivocal evidence of hearing impairment (e.g. unilateral or bilateral atresia), all babies on NICU to **undergo** newborn hearing screening using NICU protocol
- Babies in 'transitional care' should undergo NICU protocol only if they have been on NICU or SCBU >48 hr; otherwise, follow 'well baby' protocol

TIMING OF SCREENING

Never screen before 34 weeks gestational age

- Screen as close to discharge as possible, when well enough to test and preferably once any major medical treatment, ototoxic or other drug treatment complete
- may not always be possible (e.g. babies on reducing doses of morphine may require testing on last day of drug treatment)
- Do not screen babies transferring to another NICU/SCBU unless they meet criteria described in **Indications**
- Complete screening of babies on SCBU or NICU >48 hr by 44 weeks gestational age

CONSENT AND INFORMATION

- Before screening, person performing screening or staff with national or local NHSP training should:
 - give NICU leaflet to parent(s) and provide information orally
 - obtain informed written consent
 - file consent/decline forms in baby's notes
- Offer parent(s) opportunity to be present and arrange suitable time
- Where parent(s) do not wish to be present, arrange a time to relay results in person
- if screener unable to give results in person, they may be given by another member of staff with national or local NHSP training who is able to contact local co-ordinator if further information required

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Detailed information available from NHSP website: www.hearing.screening.nhs.uk

Local details

Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley Staffordshire General Hospital Shrewsbury & Telford Hospitals New Cross Hospital, Wolverhampton	Carried out by health visitor in the community
Manor Hospital, Walsall University Hospital of North Staffordshire	Within hospital while inpatient, usually at bedside