

## Managing expectations during Cochlear Implant referral counselling: a guide for referring clinicians

For around 50% of adults referred, a CI is not found to be the best treatment option<sup>1</sup>. Given this figure, expectations should be managed from the start of the pathway to avoid feelings of disappointment.

The table below has been developed and agreed by BCIG and BAA Service Quality Committee to support appropriate counselling and ensure clinicians can provide suitable information whilst still ensuring patients understand that following the assessment process, they may not be suitable and/or benefit for a CI.

One in 4 adults referred to a CI team score better than 50% on aided AB words<sup>2</sup>. Aided speech testing is useful for determining benefit from hearing aids and therefore managing expectations. A score of >50% on AB words suggests adequate benefit with hearing aids<sup>3</sup>. Discuss with your referring CI centre if they would welcome speech testing pre-referral and agree local referral scores (e.g. refer all suitable candidates scoring 60% or less on the AB test?)

**Table 1: Counselling statements to consider using, and those to avoid.**

<b>Counselling statements to consider using</b>	<b>Counselling statements to avoid</b>
Hearing aids may not be the only option for you.	An implant is your only option.
An assessment by the implant team will show if an implant is a better option than hearing aids for you.	Hearing aids cannot help you anymore. Hearing aids are not the right technology for you.
An implant <i>may</i> help you to hear better.	An implant <i>will</i> help you to hear better.
We won't know if an implant is the best option for you until after your assessment.	An implant is much better than hearing aids.
The assessment will inform which ear is most suitable, in some cases it's the worst hearing ear and in other cases it's the better hearing ear.	They will implant your XX ear
If a CI is shown not to be the best option for you and you feel worried, come back to see us so we can support you with your hearing aids, counselling and assistive listening devices.	We cannot do any more to help you.
Even if you won't benefit from a CI now, you may in the future. Having your assessment by the implant team is just the start of the process.	This is your last chance to hear better
Some of your good hearing can be maintained after the operation for some people, but there is no guarantee.	Any good hearing you have will be lost because of the operation

1. BAA/BCIG (2020) An introduction to CI. CI Champions training. BAA members area (Cochlear implants, resources, March 2020 resources).

2. MFT (2019) The Richard Ramsden Centre for Hearing Implants. Annual report 2018-19. Available at <https://mft.nhs.uk/app/uploads/2019/07/ANNUAL-REPORT-2018-2019-Final.pdf>

3. NICE (2019) Cochlear implants for children and adults with severe to profound deafness. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ta566>