

Modelling hearing aid coverage across the world

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Prevalence of hearing loss is well established in many countries. The scientific literature on this topic is abundant and the consensus is that up to 25 % of the population in most countries have some degree of hearing loss. WHO states that 5 % of the population suffers from a disabling hearing loss. It is also well known that the coverage with hearing aids vary considerably from country to country although very little solid information on this topic exists. The differences can arise from economic, cultural or other factors.

Data on unit sales is being monitored and published in a number of countries and for countries without public data, reasonably accurate estimates can be made, but that is still only part of the answer. Factors like bilateral fitting frequency and hearing aid replacement patterns are important to know in order to translate unit sales to coverage. Since 2009, Eurotrak surveys have been conducted in many different countries around the world and have been repeated regularly in certain countries. The EuroTrak surveys provide estimates of coverage for each country and using data from these countries, a model linking hearing aid unit sales to coverage has been developed. Using this model the hearing aid coverage can be estimated for any country with a reliable estimate of unit sales. The results show a clear connection between GDI and hearing aid coverage. The highest coverage rates are found in Northwestern Europe and Australia, whereas coverage rates in other high-income countries are much lower. This work will be explained and the results presented.

The results reported are partly based on data collected by the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA). The data is publicly available on the website www.ehima.com.

Podium only

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