

State of Iowa Department of Corrections

Policy and Procedures

Policy Number: HSP-631

Applicability: Institutions

Policy Code: Public Access

Iowa Code Reference: N/A

Chapter 6: Health Services

Sub Chapter: Acute/Specialty Services

Related DOC Policies: HSP-608

Administrative Code Reference: N/A

Subject: Hearing Disabilities – Audiology Services

ACA Standards: 5-ACI-6A-40, 5-ACI-6C-05

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Authority:

1. PURPOSE

To provide access for patients within the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) to hearing screening.

2. POLICY

It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Corrections to provide hearing screening and services for patients that are hearing impaired.

3. DEFINITIONS

- A. Hearing Screening - an audio test to assess a patient's hearing.
- B. Hearing Aides - a small device that fits in the ear to amplify sound, worn by a partially hearing impaired person to amplify sound.
- C. Hearing Amplifiers - device designed to improve hearing by making sound audible to a person with hearing loss.

- D. Video Telephones - Video Relay Service (VRS) facilitates telephone communication between a deaf and a hearing individual in different locations through the use of videoconferencing technology. The deaf person connects with an interpreter via a videophone and a high-speed internet connection. The hearing person connects to the interpreter using a regular voice telephone.
- E. Qualified Interpreter - an interpreter who is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary.
- F. On-demand Video Remote Interpreting - Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) facilitates communication between deaf and hearing individuals who are in the same room with a video interpreter taking the place of an in-person interpreter.

4. PROCEDURES

- A. As part of the initial and periodic health appraisal, if there are clinical findings suggesting hearing loss, the medical practitioner may refer a patient to the Nursing Director or designee to conduct on-site hearing screening.
- B. Results of the on-site hearing screening will be reviewed by the medical practitioner. The results will be scanned into the EMR once signed off by the medical practitioner. If the results of this screening demonstrate clinically significant hearing loss, the practitioner will take steps to mitigate the hearing loss. Patients may be provided assistance in ADL's, hearing amplifiers, hearing aids or be referred to University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics as indicated.
- C. Hearing Amplifiers may be provided for less severe hearing loss. Hearing Aids may be required for patients with severe hearing loss. All practitioner recommendations for Hearing Aids require prior approval by an IDOC committee. This committee will consist of the IDOC Health Administrator, IDOC Medical Director, and the IDOC Nursing Administrator. All such requests should include all pertinent history and physical findings, the results of all hearing tests, any specialty consultations and any other relevant documentation from the medical record. The committee shall review each case for final recommendations.

- D. Reasonable accommodation(s), barring undue hardship, will be made available to patients with hearing disabilities to enable effective communication with the same ease as nondisabled patients.
- E. Institutions will develop a procedure to ensure that those patients who cannot speak or are hearing impaired are provided interpreting services with a qualified in person interpreter or a contracted on-demand video remote interpreting service provider. Interpreting services will be provided at all of the following: Orientation, Health Services evaluations/appointments, disciplinary proceedings, classification meetings, Board of Parole hearing, and during all rehabilitative, educational, or transitional programs.