



## Health Career Directory

### Audiologist

#### Overview

Audiologists prevent, assess, diagnose and provide treatment and counselling for hearing and balance disorders.

Audiologists provide diagnosis and treatment for the communicatively impaired or disabled. Audiologists diagnose, evaluate, and treat hearing disorders and impairment and their effect on communication.

Audiologists work with both children and adults.

#### Main Roles and responsibilities

Audiologists may work with a particular age group (for example, infants, preschoolers, and the elderly). Or they may work with people of all ages. In general, they:

- use specialized instruments and electronic equipment to test and measure hearing abilities and balance disorders
- determine the degree, type, and location of hearing or balance problems
- recommend, select, fit, or teach clients how to use appropriate assistive listening devices (for example, hearing aids, cochlear implants, telephone adaptors, visual alarms)
- plan and implement management programs (for example, auditory training, instruction in speech reading, treatment for tinnitus)
- help parents and others (for example, teachers, employers) facilitate communication for people who have hearing impairments
- keep client records
- consult with and advise other health professionals.

Audiologists sometimes work in teams with:

- speech-language pathologists
- hearing aid practitioners
- physicians
- psychologists
- social workers
- nurses

- teachers
- occupational therapists
- physical therapists.

For example, teams may be involved in the assessment and rehabilitation of hearing abilities through the prescription of hearing aids, speech reading instruction, or teaching strategies. Or they may be involved in studying and improving measures for hearing conservation in work, school, and leisure settings.

Some audiologists:

- develop and supervise hearing screening programs
- plan and implement hearing conservation programs
- work with clients who have problems with balance or tinnitus
- educate and supervise students, professionals, and support personnel in a variety of work settings
- participate in research related to hearing and balance
- work in the hearing aid manufacturing and sales industries
- teach in universities and colleges.

Audiologists use sophisticated equipment to measure hearing loss. They also select, fit, and dispense hearing aids for patients. Audiologists may play a public role educating interested groups and professionals on hearing loss prevention. They may also develop and administer hearing screening tests for schools and industries, and promote community noise reduction. In addition, audiologists play a role working with individuals who receive cochlear implants, and those with balance disorders.

### **Who is suited to become an audiologist?**

Audiologists require good communication and problem solving skills, as well as a high level of independent problem solving.

Audiologists must be good at math and science, and be comfortable with technical detail. Thoughtfulness and empathy are also needed in order to help patients and their families understand the nature of the communication problem, and the likely outcome of treatments. Continual upgrading of knowledge in the field is also crucial.

Audiologists are most effective when they have the following skills and characteristics:

- excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- discipline and perseverance required to complete the training
- sensitivity to client needs
- the ability to concentrate and pay close attention to details
- an appreciation for precision instrumentation
- an ability to work in a team environment.

Audiologists should enjoy working with people, exploring problems in depth, and operating equipment.

### **Who employs audiologists?**

The majority work in hospitals, schools or community clinics. Other working environments include rehabilitations centres, colleges and universities, health departments, government agencies and research laboratories. Some choose to work in private practice and in their own offices.

Audiologists may work with individual clients or groups of clients. Those in the hearing aid manufacturing and sales industries work primarily with other audiologists and engineers.

Audiologists generally work standard weekday office hours.

Most audiologists work in clean, well-lit, and well-equipped offices. Some audiologists provide home health care which requires a lot of daily travel, especially in small communities.

Full-time professionals in this group generally work a 36-hour week. This may include working evenings and weekends to meet clients' needs.

Job satisfaction in these occupations is generally high, due in part to the variety, challenge, and independence that are common in this field. Audiologists tend to stay in their fields for long periods of time.

### **Salary**

Salary Range - \$62,084 – \$84,715

### **Training and education required to become an Audiologist**

In Canada, the minimum education requirement for audiologists is a master's degree in science with a major in audiology. Admission to master's degree programs generally requires an acceptable grade point average in a four year bachelor's degree program (with specified courses). In the United States, the minimum education requirement is a doctorate in audiology (AuD). AuD programs may be offered in Canada in the next few years.

An internship in a hospital, private hearing clinic, rehabilitation centre or health care facility is required before graduation.

Before enrolling in a program, prospective students should consult the institutions offering master's degree programs regarding course requirements.

For current information about programs, admission requirements and mature student admission policies please check post-secondary calendars or websites.

Certification by the national professional association, the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA), involves an examination and review of educational accomplishments. The College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of BC requires all professionals in BC to have a master's degree and to successfully complete the CASLPA examination.

The College of Speech and Hearing Health Professionals of BC regulates hearing instrument practitioners. In order for audiologists to dispense hearing aids, they must be registered as a hearing instrument practitioner. This requires specialized training/education and successful completion of two exams administered by the College. However, an individual does not have to be audiologist to become registered as a hearing instrument practitioner.

Workers already licensed or certified in another province or territory in a provincially regulated occupation will have their credentials recognized in BC For more detailed information, contact the provincial regulator. A list of provincial regulators can be found at:

<http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/labourmobility>

## **Career Advancement**

Recent graduates often find positions in public health clinics and non-profit child development agencies.

Audiologists may specialize in a specific treatment area or age group. Some may also teach, consult, or do research.

Advancement of audiologists to supervisory, management, or administrative positions can be achieved through experience and training. However, opportunities for such advancement are limited.

## **Resources**

### **Education Programs**

University of Western Ontario in London

[http://www.uwo.ca/fhs/csd/academic\\_information/prerequisites\\_aud.html](http://www.uwo.ca/fhs/csd/academic_information/prerequisites_aud.html)

University of British Columbia in Vancouver

<http://www.audiospeech.ubc.ca/why-study-with-us/m-sc-audiology/audiology-criteria>

Dalhousie University in Halifax

<http://humancommunicationdisorders.dal.ca/Prospective%20Students/Requirements.php>

University of Montreal (instruction in French)

<http://www.eoa.umontreal.ca/etudes/admission/index.html>

University of Ottawa (instruction in French).

<http://www.health.uottawa.ca/sr/audio/adm.htm>

### **Financial assistance and bursaries**

For information about Canada student loans and grants, please visit:

[http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/student/loans\\_grants/index.shtml](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/jobs/student/loans_grants/index.shtml)

### **Associations**

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association

<http://www.asha.org/>

British Columbia Association of Speech/Language Therapists and Audiologists

<http://www.bcaslpa.ca/>

Canadian Academy of Audiology

<http://www.canadianaudiology.ca/>

Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists

<http://www.caslpa.ca/english/index.asp>