

# SAC Position on Over-the-Counter (OTC) Hearing Aids in Canada

## Executive Summary

Speech-Language & Audiology Canada (SAC) supports improved access to hearing care through OTC hearing aids for adults with mild to moderate hearing loss. However, SAC emphasizes the need for strong regulation, clinical support, and public education to ensure their safe and effective use.

### Key Positions

- **Stronger Regulation:** SAC calls for Health Canada to implement clear safety, labeling, and performance standards for OTC hearing aids.
- **Clinical Support:** Audiologists can apply evidence-based, patient-centred care- including assessment, fitting, and counseling-to optimize OTC hearing aid outcomes.
- **Education:** there is a need to educate the public and healthcare providers on appropriate use, risks, and hearing loss awareness when it comes to OTC hearing aids.

### SAC Commitments

- Advocate for robust federal regulation of OTC hearing aids.
- Equip audiologists to support OTC users with best-practice care.
- Deliver public education on hearing loss and safe device use.

### Conclusion

OTC hearing aids offer increased access but are not a standalone solution for Canada's hearing care gap. Effective integration requires a collaborative approach involving regulators, clinicians, consumers, and policymakers. SAC commits to leading this effort through education, standards development, and policy advocacy-ensuring that all Canadians have access to safe, effective, and appropriate hearing care.