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JAN 21 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION LIST

FROM: AFMOA/CV

110 Luke Avenue, Room 405  
Bolling AFB, DC 20332-7050

SUBJECT: Hearing Test for Pediatric Patients by PES/Occupational Medicine

Criteria for pediatric hearing tests in physical examination/occupational medicine sites must be established to meet acceptable standards of care. Pediatric patients under a certain age cannot be appropriately tested in physical examination/occupational medicine facilities due to the type of audiometric equipment employed and type of technician training.

The audiometric equipment used in physical examination sections is a microprocessor-based, automated system which evaluates hearing levels using a patient response hand-switch. Young children lack the maturity to consistently perform this task which result in inconsistent or inaccurate results. In addition, testing facilities are typically small, one-person booths which can be frightening to small children and prevent parents from accompanying a child during evaluations.

Standards of care necessitate age-appropriate modifications to hearing test procedures to evaluate patients of various ages. Physical examination technicians are not trained in pediatric hearing testing techniques. Their training involves testing adult patients only. The nature of the testing and type of technician training make age-appropriate modifications difficult.

To meet standard of care requirements, pediatric hearing evaluations by physical examination and/or occupational medicine sites must be limited to patients with a minimum chronological/mental age of 12 years. Maturity of this population will facilitate proper testing with physical examination audiometric equipment. Modifications to facilities, equipment, procedures, or training should not be necessary. Patients who do not meet this criterion should be referred to an audiologist for assessment.

If you have any questions, please contact Lt Col John R. Allen, USAF SG Consultant, Audiology/Speech Pathology, 1609 Brookley Avenue, Suite 12, Andrews AFB, MD 20762-6418, DSN 857-2495, (240) 857-2495, or email [allen.john@andrews.af.mil](mailto:allen.john@andrews.af.mil).

  
PAUL B. CHRISTIANSON, Colonel, USAF, MC, SFS  
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