

Living with someone who has gradual hearing loss

You'll find this factsheet useful if your partner, or someone you're close to, is gradually losing their hearing. We explain what age-related hearing loss is – and how you can offer your support.

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i If you'd like this factsheet in Braille, large print or audio, please contact our Information Line – see last page for contact details.



Note: We use the word ‘partner’ in this factsheet for convenience, but the difficulties experienced, and the ways in which you can help, apply to anyone you’re close to.

Why do some people lose their hearing as they get older?

Most people gradually lose their hearing as they get older. This type of hearing loss is known as ‘presbycusis’ or ‘age-related hearing loss’. It’s caused by general wear and tear of the cochlea (the hearing organ in the inner ear), which happens naturally over time. Age-related hearing loss is the most common form of hearing loss and affects more than half of all people over 70 years old.

Alongside ageing, there are other factors that might make people more likely to lose their hearing, including:

- genetic predisposition
- regular and prolonged exposure to loud sounds in earlier life
- certain drugs used to treat seriously ill people such as chemotherapy drugs, and antibiotics such as gentamicin, streptomycin and neomycin
- inflammation or infection of parts of the ear
- other conditions, such as Ménière’s disease and acoustic neuroma.



To find out more about how the ear works and the different types and causes of hearing loss, see our leaflet *Ear problems and treatments*. You may also be interested in our factsheet *Acoustic neuroma*.

How do I know if my partner’s hearing is getting worse?

If your partner’s hearing is getting worse, you may find that they:

- often ask people to repeat what they say
- often misunderstand what’s being said
- complain that you’re not speaking clearly or loudly enough
- don’t hear you when you come into a room
- don’t hear the doorbell or the telephone ring
- can’t cope with pubs, parties and other noisy environments
- turn the TV up too loud for your comfort
- start to speak in a monotonous tone of voice, or don’t speak as clearly as before.

How does my partner's hearing loss affect how they hear?

If your partner has age-related hearing loss, they'll usually hear vowel sounds clearly but not the consonants. Consonant sounds are crucial for carrying the meaning of words. They create the high-frequency sounds of speech and, unfortunately, it's usually the high-frequency sounds that are lost when hearing deteriorates.

For example, instead of hearing "What shall we have for supper?", your partner may hear "Wha- ar- we -av -or -ba?"

It's likely that your partner will first experience difficulty in understanding women and children, as their voices are of a higher pitch, while lower-pitched male voices are easier to hear and understand. As your partner's hearing worsens, it will become more difficult for them to understand speech, especially in noisy surroundings.

Your partner will gradually need to rely more on lipreading to 'fill in the gaps'. This involves watching the lip shapes, gestures and facial movements of the person you are talking to, and using context to fill in the gaps in conversation.

A lot of lipreading is guesswork. Some sounds and their lip shapes can be seen on the lips but some, such as 'p', 'm' and 'b', are easily confused because they look similar.

Other sounds are made in the back of the throat, so they are invisible – for example, 'k' and 'g'. Lipreading can 'fill in' the consonants that someone can no longer hear, but can lead to some misunderstandings – for example, 'biscuit' looks like 'big kiss'.

It's likely that your partner will benefit from attending a lipreading class, to improve their lipreading skills ([see page 8](#)).

For tips on how to make lipreading easier for your partner, [see page 7](#).

What does it mean for me and my partner if they have hearing loss?

Hearing loss affects people in different ways. Before your partner gets help with their hearing loss, they may:

- find chatting hard work and tiring
- have less time to relax because they are concentrating more on communication
- become isolated and choose to miss social events because communication is too much of a strain
- be unable to hear how clear or loud their speech is for others; they may slur some of their speech sounds because they can't hear their own voice
- start to speak more softly, if their hearing loss means that everyone's speech is quiet for them

- experience 'loudness recruitment', which is commonly associated with hearing loss; your partner may not be able to hear quiet sounds but may hear loud sounds at their normal level – the change from no sound to loud sound happens too quickly, causing discomfort and pain
- experience anger, anxiety, frustration and depression due to their hearing difficulties.

There is good evidence that the sooner someone takes steps to manage their hearing loss – by getting hearing aids, for example – the less impact it will have on their life.

Does your partner have ringing in the ears or balance problems?

Your partner may have tinnitus as well as hearing loss. Tinnitus is the name for the noises that some people hear in their ear(s) or head – buzzing, ringing, whistling, hissing and other sounds. It's a common myth that there's nothing that can be done about tinnitus – there are many products and therapies that can help people to manage it so that it's not troublesome.

Your partner may also experience balance problems and feel dizzy. Most often, these symptoms are caused by a problem in the inner ear – in which case, there's almost always a treatment to help.

Other health conditions can also cause balance problems, so your partner should see their GP to investigate the cause.



For more information, see our factsheets *How to help friends and family with tinnitus and Dizziness and balance problems*.

What action should my partner take?

If you're at all concerned about your partner's hearing, encourage them to get it checked by a professional. Gradual hearing loss is likely to be age related but can sometimes be associated with other health problems.

Your GP will be able to check your partner's ears for any infections or obstructions that might be causing their hearing loss. If there's no obvious cause of temporary hearing loss, they should refer your partner to an audiologist (hearing specialist) for hearing tests.

If your partner needs hearing aids, they can get modern, digital hearing aids for free from the NHS, or they can buy them privately.

If your partner decides to get their hearing aids from the NHS, they will be seen either by an audiologist or ear, nose and throat consultant for a full hearing assessment. If they live in England, they may get the option of choosing from a range of qualified healthcare providers that run NHS audiology services.

Once your partner recognises that they have hearing loss, they shouldn't delay seeking medical advice. It's better that they start using hearing aids sooner rather than later, because getting used to louder

sounds through their hearing aids will be harder if their brain is out of practice at interpreting the incoming sound signals.

i To find out more, see our leaflet *Getting hearing aids*.

“There’s nothing wrong with my hearing”

It may be difficult for your partner to accept that they’re losing their hearing, so you’ll need to approach the subject in a gentle and tactful way. You could suggest that they take our quick and easy Hearing Check, either online for free at actiononhearing.org.uk/hearingcheck or over the phone on **0844 800 3838** (calls are charged at local rates).

The check takes about five minutes. It’s not a full hearing test, but it will indicate whether your partner’s hearing is in normal range or whether they should see their GP for further tests.

i Your partner may also find our leaflet *How’s your hearing? useful*.

What does it mean for my partner to use hearing aids?

Hearing aids help people with hearing loss to hear better, but they don’t restore hearing to normal levels. At present, it’s not possible to correct or cure hearing loss completely, but using hearing aids may help your partner to hear more clearly.

Adjusting to new hearing aids can be challenging. It may take up to several months before your partner is used to the new sounds they can hear through their hearing aids, and can use them comfortably all day, but everyone is different. At first, the sounds your partner hears through their hearing aids may sound different or odd, but their brain will acclimatise to them over time, so they shouldn’t give up.

You should encourage your partner to build up the time they spend using hearing aids – and use them for as long as they feel comfortable. Your partner may only want to use hearing aids at certain times or in certain situations, but using them for a longer period of time will help them to acclimatise quicker.

If, after a few months, they still can’t get used to their hearing aids, encourage your partner to go back to the specialist who fitted them. You might like to go with them, so that you both understand how to use and look after the hearing aids.

You can also find out how your partner could benefit from support services such as hearing therapy and lipreading classes ([see page 8](#)).

i For more information about hearing aids, see our leaflet *Life with hearing aids*.

The hearing loop setting

Most hearing aids have a hearing loop setting (formerly called the 'T' setting). When on this setting, hearing aids can pick up sound from a hearing loop system, which is a piece of equipment that helps people who use hearing aids to hear more clearly over background noise.

Hearing loops can be found in public places such as cinemas, theatres, shops and bank counters. Some phones contain hearing loop technology, to help people to hear better on the phone.

There are also hearing loops that you can install at home, and others for in the car.

You partner's audiologist may need to activate the hearing loop setting on the hearing aids before it can be used - this should be done at the hearing aid fitting.

 For more information, see our factsheet *Assistive listening devices*.

Bluetooth hearing aids

Many hearing aids can now link up with Bluetooth-compatible TVs, smartphones, laptops and lapel microphones, through Bluetooth streaming devices or Bluetooth neckloops (a loop of wire that sits around your neck). This can help to improve the clarity of sound heard, especially when there's background noise.

There are also a few Bluetooth hearing aids that can connect to Bluetooth-compatible devices directly. These are called 'Made For iPhone' (MFi) hearing aids. Your partner can ask their audiologist about their options.

 To find out more, see our factsheet *Understanding wireless technology for hearing aids*.

What can I do to support my partner?

There's a lot you can do to support your partner:

- Encourage them to visit their GP about their hearing loss as soon as possible.
- Offer to go with your partner to their medical appointments - this can be a good way to find out more about their particular hearing loss.
- Don't try to do everything for your partner - if the doorbell rings, encourage them to answer it.
- Try not to speak for your partner or to leave them out of the conversation - make sure they know the conversation topic.
- Be supportive and patient.
- Encourage your partner to explain their hearing loss to friends and family.
- Carry on socialising - don't give up your normal social activities.
- Try not to let your partner apologise for losing their hearing - it's no one's fault.

- Set a good example for others to follow – speak clearly and a little slower, so your partner can understand you, and other people can see how to communicate with your partner effectively. Ensure your face is under good lighting to help your partner to lipread.
- Find out more about products and technology that can help your partner, such as alerting devices, amplified telephones and hearing loop systems (see ‘Products and technology’, [page 13](#), for more information).

 For information on all aspects of living with hearing loss, contact our Information Line ([see last page](#) for details).

How can I communicate better with my partner?

These simple tips can make a difference:

- Make sure you have your partner’s attention before you say anything.
- Use your partner’s name to attract their attention. People usually hear their name better than they hear other words.
- Don’t speak to your partner from behind; tap them on the arm to attract their attention.

Remember: Your partner may find it harder to hear what you’re saying if:

- they are tired
- everyone is talking at once
- they have tinnitus ([see page 4](#))
- the TV, radio or washing machine is on in the background.

Simply switching off background noise (when you can) and making sure you’re in the same room before you start conversations will make a huge difference to how well you communicate.

Tips to help your partner lipread you

For many people with hearing loss, lipreading is a vital communication skill – but it needs a lot of practice and concentration.

- Find a suitable environment with good lighting, away from noise and distractions.
- Sit or stand at the same level as your partner, about 3–6ft away.
- Face the light, or your face will be in shadow.
- Make sure your partner is looking at you before you speak.
- Introduce the topic of conversation.
- Speak clearly at a moderate pace, without raising your voice or over-emphasising your speech.
- Use natural facial expressions, gestures and body language.

- Keep your face visible. Don't put your hands near it or wear sunglasses, and try not to turn away while you are talking.
- Use plain English and repeat or rephrase something if your partner finds it difficult to follow.
- From time to time, check that your partner is following you.
- Be patient and take time to communicate properly.

Lipreading classes

Encourage your partner to attend a lipreading class in your local area, if there is one. In addition to helping your partner to develop their lipreading skills, they'll be able to share experiences and tips with others in similar situations. Some workplaces may agree to time off work to attend these classes.

 To find a local class, visit the website of the Association of Teachers of Lipreading to Adults: atllipreading.org.uk If there isn't a class in your area, ask your local adult education centre or college to provide one. Also, see our leaflet *Learning to lipread*.

Who else might be able to help?

Hearing therapists

Hearing therapists support people to adapt to their hearing loss by advising on hearing aids and communication strategies. They can also offer help to minimise the distress of persistent tinnitus. Unfortunately, hearing therapists aren't available at every hospital, but your partner's audiologist may be able to refer them to their nearest one.

Balance and tinnitus clinics

Some hospitals have specialist balance clinics that can provide help in diagnosing and treating people with balance problems. They are normally run by audiologists, and sometimes hearing therapists or physiotherapists offer support with rehabilitation to manage the problem.

Tinnitus clinics provide therapies to help people manage their tinnitus. Some hospitals have tinnitus clinics but not all, so your partner may need to travel a bit further to visit one.

Hearing aid support services

There may be a local hearing aid support scheme in your area, where volunteers provide support, through home visits and drop-ins, to people who use hearing aids. We provide such a service, called Hear to Help. Your local audiology department may also be able to put you in touch with a local scheme.

Please call our Information Line for more information about Hear to Help services near you ([see last page](#) for contact details).

Are there any tips to help deal with everyday situations?

The following tips are for a variety of social and everyday situations.

In the home

Simple changes to your home environment can make it easier for you to communicate with your partner:

- Cover any wooden flooring with carpet or rugs to help absorb sound.
- Use soft furnishings to help reduce sound reverberation and echo.
- Use padded tablecloths to reduce clatter of cutlery and crockery.

Going to the doctor or hospital

- Your partner should tell staff that they have hearing loss and use hearing aids (if they do), and this should be recorded on their file, so staff are always aware.
- If there's no visual display in the waiting room, encourage your partner to tell the receptionist that they won't hear their name being called. This means the receptionist will need to come and get your partner.

- If your partner uses hearing aids, they can ask to see the doctor in a room fitted with a hearing loop, or find out if there's another type of listening device that can help them to hear what the doctor is saying.
- Encourage your partner to ask the doctor to move to a different chair to make it easier to lipread, if necessary.
- Your partner can explain that it's difficult to lipread if the doctor is looking at a computer or writing on a pad while talking.
- If your partner is worried that they won't understand what the doctor is saying, you could suggest going along to the surgery with them.
- Your partner could ask the doctor to write down important details such as dates and times, prescriptions and how many times to take tablets.
- Encourage your partner to speak, rather than letting you speak for them.
- If you go to medical appointments with your partner, be sure that each of you is clear on your role beforehand. Rather than interrupting when the doctor is communicating with your partner, perhaps you could take on the job of writing notes, so you and your partner can chat about the meeting afterwards.

Your partner can ask for a lipspeaker or notetaker to be present if lipreading is hard and if a healthcare professional has requested the meeting. The healthcare provider will need to book a lipspeaker or notetaker in advance, and will be responsible for payment. Without using their voice, a lipspeaker repeats what a hearing person or speaker says so that the person with hearing loss can lipread it. A notetaker is trained to take accurate and clear notes.

 Find out more about communication support in our **Communication** factsheets.

Our campaign to improve access to health services

People who are deaf or have hearing loss often face barriers to communication when they visit the GP or other NHS services. Forcing people to use the phone to make appointments or failing to provide communication support may lead to missed appointments and ineffective care – and frustration.

To make sure people who are deaf or have hearing loss are able to access healthcare in the same way as everyone else, our **On the Record** campaign is calling on government and NHS services to take action to meet the requirements of Equality legislation.

To find out more, and to download a sample letter or card that your partner can give to their GP surgery to let them know about their hearing loss, visit actiononhearingloss.org.uk/ontherecord

At work

If your partner has hearing loss, their employer must make adjustments for them under equality legislation. For example, they might need to modify their job to take account of their needs. Or they might have to provide equipment such as an amplified telephone, a hearing loop system and flashing alarms.

Your partner can ask their HR department for an Access to Work assessment. Access to Work is a government grant that can help with the cost of any special equipment, adaptations or communication support that people with hearing loss may need while at work or attending interviews.

 For more information about your partner's rights, see our factsheet *Your rights as an employee*. To find out more about Access to Work, visit gov.uk/access-to-work/overview (nidirect.gov.uk if you live in Northern Ireland).

Going out to a restaurant, party or pub

Your partner may not enjoy going out in a large crowd, as it's difficult to lipread a lot of people at once. The following tips can help:

- Ask the pub or restaurant manager to turn down the background music if it's too loud. Explain how difficult it is for hearing aid users to cope with background music.

- Sit on your partner's 'better side' – the side on which they can hear most clearly – so you can repeat key words that they may have missed.
- If the room is noisy, encourage your partner to speak a little louder. Your partner may not realise that they need to adjust the volume of their speech.
- Choose a place where the lighting is suitable for lipreading.
- Choose a place that is quieter and better adapted for people with hearing loss – for example, somewhere with tablecloths and carpet to absorb the sound.
- Try to sit away from the kitchen, till or entrance areas, as banging doors and crockery will affect someone who is wearing hearing aids.
- Check that the loop system is working. Ask for it to be switched on, if necessary. If it isn't working properly, talk to the management.
- Your partner might like to turn down their hearing aids at the end of the performance so that the clapping noise is not uncomfortable.

Getting around

Here are some suggestions you might find useful:

- **i** Our **Speak Easy** campaign is asking restaurants, cafes and pubs to reduce background noise. To find out more and to get involved, visit actiononhearingloss.org.uk/speakeasy
- Walk on your partner's 'better side'. Remember, if your partner needs to lipread, walking and talking at the same time is difficult.
- A car is noisy for a hearing aid user. Your partner can get loop systems to use in a car.
- On trains, or in stations, listen out for loudspeaker announcements and tell your partner what has been said.
- Your partner may be eligible for a disabled person's bus pass, which entitles the holder to free travel during 'off-peak' times. The type of pass available varies between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, so your partner will need to contact the local council to find out who issues disabled bus passes in your area and how to get one.
- Your partner may also be eligible for a Disabled Persons Railcard for £20, which entitles the holder and a friend to one-third off standard and first-class tickets at any time.

Cinema, concert and theatre visits

Cinemas, concert halls and theatres should have a hearing loop or infrared system that your partner can use. Here are some suggestions you might find useful:

- Pre-book the best seats for watching, listening and using the loop or infrared system. When you book, check which seats have the best coverage from the loop or infrared system (an alternative to a loop).

- If you and your partner live in Greater London, you can apply for a Freedom Pass, which permits free travel on the entire Transport for London network. On most services you can use the pass at any time.

Shopping

Here are some suggestions you might find useful:

- Your partner might want to wear a badge to let shop assistants know that they are deaf, have hearing loss or lipread. Contact Hearing Link for one of these ([see page 14](#)).
- Your partner should look out for the hearing loop sign on counters. If the loop isn't working, or staff don't know how to use it, your partner should tell the management.
- Lipreading through a glass screen can be difficult, though there is often a loop system in place at such counters. If your partner needs to have a long conversation at the bank or anywhere else, they should ask to go somewhere without a glass screen or be seen in a quiet room, with a hearing loop or other listening device, if possible.

Going to meetings or places of worship

Sit at the front, near the speaker. Your partner should ask the person in charge:

- whether there is a hearing loop system available and whether it's working (if not, they may want to try a conversation listener)

- to change the lighting to make lipreading easier, if necessary
- to book a lipspeaker or notetaker, if necessary
- for advance information, so that they can take part.



For more information on hearing loops and conversation listeners, see our factsheet *Assistive listening devices*.

How do I cope with my partner's hearing loss?

You may find that hearing loss is stressful not just for your partner but for you as well. Remember that frustration is normal when you can't communicate with your partner as well as you used to.

Here are some suggestions you might find useful:

- Share how you're feeling with another family member or friend, or on an online forum.
- Go out together with a mutual group of friends so that neither of you feels isolated.
- Have time for yourself – continue with your hobbies, sports or other interests. Don't feel you have to give up a hobby or interest because your partner isn't able to share it with you.
- Discuss your needs and concerns with your partner and, if necessary, with your GP.

Getting help if you are a carer

If your partner's hearing loss means you are spending a lot of time caring for them, you can get help and support from organisations such as Carers Trust ([see page 15](#)).

What benefits or products are available?

You and your partner may be able to claim some benefits because of their hearing loss and any other health conditions. Contact our Information Line to find out more or read our **Benefits and grants** range of factsheets.

Know your rights

The Equality Act 2010 (the Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland) aims to stop discrimination against people who are disabled. The Act states that a service provider – for example, a doctor, solicitor or a theatre – cannot discriminate against a person who is disabled by refusing to provide them with a service, treating them in a worse manner or providing the service on worse terms.

A service provider may have to make a reasonable adjustment to its service, including providing equipment, if that will help people who are disabled use the service. This includes making sure hearing loop systems are in place and are turned on.

 For more information, contact our Information Line ([see last page](#)) or read our factsheet *Your rights when using services*.

Products and technology

There's a wide range of products, including assistive listening devices, amplified telephones and alerting devices, available to help your partner in the home, car and workplace, and when out socialising. Some products are Bluetooth-compatible, which allows users to pair their smartphone and other gadgets with their hearing aids for a more enhanced listening experience.

Your partner may be able to get some equipment from the local social services department. Departments vary in terms of the equipment they supply, as well as whether or not they charge for it. They are encouraged to provide eligible people with a direct payment – money that people can use to buy their own services, including equipment.

Contact social services for more information about their policy. You will find their details in telephone directories under the name of your local authority (council) or you can search the Gov.uk website: www.gov.uk

You can also buy a variety of useful equipment through online stores including the Action on Hearing Loss shop: actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop

 For more information, see our **Products and technology** range of factsheets.

Where can I get further information about hearing loss?

Action on Hearing Loss

You and your partner may be interested in our leaflets:

- *How's your hearing?*
- *Getting hearing aids*
- *Life with hearing aids*
- *Ear problems and treatments*
- *Understanding tinnitus.*

You can order these from our Information Line ([see last page](#) for contact details) or download them from our website at actiononhearingloss.org.uk/factsheets

Other organisations

Association of Teachers of Lipreading to Adults (ATLA)

The professional association for teachers of lipreading to adults

ATLA c/o Hearing LINK
23 The Waterfront
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN23 5UZ

Telephone or text: **07426 559 602**
Website: atlalipreading.org.uk

BDA (British Deaf Association)

The BDA is a charity run by Deaf people for Deaf people. It delivers a range of services to empower Deaf people to overcome difficulties that they face on a daily basis.

3rd Floor
356 Holloway Road
London
N7 6PA

Telephone: **020 7697 4140**
SMS/FaceTime: **07795 410 724**
Email: bda@bda.org.uk
Website: bda.org.uk

British Tinnitus Association

A charity campaigning for better services for people with tinnitus. It supports a network of local tinnitus support groups across the UK, has a range of publications and produces the magazine *Quiet*.

Ground Floor
Unit 5 Acorn Business Park
Woodseats Close
Sheffield
S8 0TB

Telephone: **0800 018 0527**
Email: info@tinnitus.org.uk
Website: tinnitus.org.uk

Carers Trust

A charity that works to improve support, services and recognition for carers.

32-36 Loman Street
London
SE1 0EH

Telephone: **0844 800 4361**

Fax: **0844 800 4362**

Email: info@carers.org

Website: carers.org

National Association for Deafened People (NADP)

The national representative organisation for deafened people.

Dalton House
60 Windsor Avenue
London
SW19 2RR

Telephone: **0845 0559663**

Email: enquiries@nadp.org.uk

Website: nadp.org.uk

Information you can trust

The Information Standard certifies us as producers of high-quality, evidence-based information. Thank you to **Adam Beckman, Head of Audiology Services at Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust**, for helping us review and update this factsheet, published October 2017.

For a list of references for this factsheet, please email references@hearingloss.org.uk

Did you find this factsheet helpful?

We'd love to know what you think of this factsheet - please email us at reviewpanel@hearingloss.org.uk

If you'd like to join our Readers' Panel, to help us create new publications and improve existing ones, please let us know.

Further information from Action on Hearing Loss

Our expert information covers everything you need to know about:

- hearing loss and deafness
- tinnitus
- ear problems and treatments
- hearing aids and cochlear implants
- useful products and technology
- communication tactics and support
- benefits and grants
- your rights.

Visit our website actiononhearingloss.org.uk or call our Information Line ([see last page](#)) for information, support and publications. You can also find out about services in your area, our hearing research, and how you can get involved.

Please help us support others

We provide our leaflets, factsheets and Information Line service free of charge to anyone affected by deafness, tinnitus or hearing loss in the UK. We rely on the generosity of our supporters to help us do this. We would be very grateful if you would consider making a donation – of as little or as much as you can afford.

Please send a cheque, payable to Action on Hearing Loss, to:

Freepost RTLX-CZKX-BTTZ
Action on Hearing Loss
1-3 Highbury Station Road
London N1 1SE
(No stamp needed)

Donate online at actiononhearingloss.org.uk/donate
Or make a donation over the phone by credit or debit card:

 **0203 227 6182**

 **0203 227 6185**

Thank you.

Our purpose is to help people confronting deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss to live the life they choose. We enable them to take control of their lives and remove the barriers in their way.

To find out more about what we do and how you can support us, go to actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Action on Hearing Loss Information Line

Telephone: **0808 808 0123**

Textphone: **0808 808 9000**

SMS: **0780 000 0360**

(standard text message rates apply)

Email: **information@hearingloss.org.uk**

Join us



Action on Hearing Loss



@ActionOnHearing

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Action on Hearing Loss is the trading name of The Royal National Institute for Deaf People.
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