

October 14, 2010 – VA Hearing Support

The meeting was called to order by Jim Wooll who addressed the following topics:

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HEARING SUPPORT

Source of information

- Kimberly J. Best, Au D, FAAA, CNIM
 - Clinical Audiologist, Central Texas VA – Temple
- They were not able to attend our meeting but did answer an number of questions via email

Questions

- How do Veterans qualify of hearing aid services?
- What services are provided?
- What is the wait time for services?
- Are there any costs to the veteran?

How do you qualify?

- Service connected related to ears and hearing
- Service connected for any condition at least 10%.
 - Knee condition 10%
 - Impaired Hearing 20%
- Belong to a Priority Group 5
 - Includes income
- Purple Heart recipients are automatically eligible

What services are provided?

- Hearing tests
- Hearing Aids
- Hearing Aid adjustments and repairs
- Batteries for Aids issued by the VA
- Assistive devices (amplified telephones, smoke alarms, etc.)
- Ear cleaning

What is the wait time for services?

- It depends
 - If you have a VA Primary Care Physician you need to go through that doctor for a referral to audiology.
 - Normally a referral appointment is less than a 30 day wait.
- If you are not established with the VA that needs to happen first (no information on how long that takes)
- You need to see your VA PCP at least once every three years to remain active.

Cost to the Veteran

- There is not cost for aids, batteries or devices.
- There may be a bill for the office visit
 - Depends on insurance

FUTURE OF THE HEARING AID SIG

A significant percentage of attendees along with emails received from members unable to attend the meeting made it known that they strongly supported the continuance of the SIG.

Jim announced he was out of ideas for meeting topics and asked for suggestions. One member recommended a guest speaker is not always required and “testimonials” from member users could be very beneficial to others with aids and useful to those members seeking information and advice on the selection of providers, products, fitters, degree of hearing impairment and most important satisfaction with the product and services obtained.

Tommy Judson agreed to volunteer his services as long as the time and involvement would be at a minimum.

Members can expect the SIG to continue with more Q&A sessions and Member Testimonials sessions. Outside speakers in the future would represent a special “treat” rather than the norm.

Members are strongly encouraged to make it known what meeting subjects are of interest to them.

Q & A

Several members present were in the process of considering their first purchase of hearing aids and were interested in advice and recommendations as to how to proceed and where to go.

Reference was made to information contained in prior meeting notes and comments were made that is difficult to identify which meeting contained the desired information and suggestion that a meeting subject or description would be useful for reference purposes.

Testing and test results were a topic discussed and prompted an idea for the subject of a future meeting.