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Unlock the Potential: Widex Sound Assist

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- [Susan de Bondt] Welcome and thank you for joining me today for course 38259. Unlock the Potential with Widex Sound Assist, an accessory for Widex Moment Bluetooth hearing aids. I am Dr. Susan de Bondt, senior clinical education specialist with Widex US. I am an employee of Widex USA and receive financial compensation and there are no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. The learning outcomes for this course are as stated. After this course, participants will be able to list the six functions available in the Widex Sound Assist accessory. They'll be able to identify the client needs met by each function of the Widex Sound Assist and they'll be able to describe the steps of pairing the Widex Sound Assist with Moment hearing aids.

The course of the next 30 minutes we'll provide an introduction to Widex Sound Assist including when to fit it, identifying which clients would benefit from adding the Sound Assist accessory to their Moment fitting. We'll talk about what comes with the Sound Assist itself and what are the practical stats of use, like how long will Sound Assist lasts on a full charge. We'll then dive into a review of the details of each mode of functionality. We'll give you the steps for pairing Sound Assist to Moment hearing aids and the steps for pairing Sound Assist to other Bluetooth devices. We'll provide a quick summary of Sound Assist button function and then we'll wrap up by showing you how you can access Sound Assist in the Moment app.

The Sound Assist is an extremely versatile accessory designed to meet a variety of needs for your Widex Moment clients. Whether you fit them a year ago or just today. And during the next 30 minutes we'll go through each function and describe how that function may add that extra assist to the client, exactly when it's needed. We'll introduce each function of the Sound Assist by grouping those functions into the areas of microphone functionality, Bluetooth functionality, and telecoil function. Let's begin by thinking about who has potential to benefit from the Sound Assist, as it works with any of the Moment hearing aids that are Bluetooth enabled. This would include the

rechargeable mRIC and sRIC, the RIC 312 D, and the BTE 13 D and, of course, the rechargeable BTERD.

Sound Assist is an appropriate accessory for any current or future Moment hearing aid user who needs optimum performance for certain listening situations. Particularly appropriate might be those individuals with poor word recognition skills, those with difficulty hearing and understanding speech and noisy environments like a restaurant or those who find themselves challenged with complex listening situations, like conversation outdoors or in a car, in an office or a club meeting, or at larger group events. Even when meeting a couple of friends at the coffee shop. Even those Moment users who just occasionally need that little extra bit of listening help, or those who want to expand their listening connectivity to a variety of devices, or those who find themselves occasionally in looped environments.

They can each benefit from the Sound Assist. So really this could be pretty much everybody you are helping with their hearing care. In other words, any patient can benefit. Sound Assist is a very small lightweight device, small enough to fit readily in the palm of your hand and weighs only slightly more than one ounce. Although it has multiple functions, the Sound Assist has been designed for easy use and access to using just one or all of those functions. The top of the Sound Assist houses three microphones and four LED lights that will signal the functionality of those microphones. In the center, a push button allows the user to alternate between different functions of the microphones. Buttons along the sides of the Sound Assist offer on off functionality, as well as toggling between the different modes of functionality.

Volume up and volume down buttons as well as a program button also reside on the adjacent side. On the back of the Sound Assist, you'll find a clip that allows attachment to a collar or a lapel or a pocket. The Sound Assist is charged through a micro USB charging port found on the opposite side of the device. Sound Assist is packaged with

a charging cable, a wall adapter, a user manual, and a lanyard that can be secured underneath the clip of the Sound Assist. When the lanyard is used, the length and placement of the Sound Assist can be adjusted for comfort and for proximity to the wearer's voice. Let's take a look at some of the basic statistics of the Sound Assist.

When fully depleted, a full charge is achieved after three hours of charging. With the bulk of the charge being accomplished within that first hour. On a full charge, the user will get approximately 10 hours of use. Now there is some variability depending upon the functions being used within the Sound Assist. For instance, Bluetooth and Telecoil functions may take more power from the rechargeable battery reserve. The average of 10 hours is based on a typical mixed use of the functions of the Sound Assist. That is whether they're using microphone inputs, Bluetooth inputs, or Telecoil. The Sound Assist can be paired with one set of hearing aids at a time, but can also pair with up to eight additional standard Bluetooth devices; such as phones, tablets, or iPads and computers.

Note that only one Bluetooth device can stream to the Sound Assist at a time. Now we'll break down the multi-functionality of the Sound Assist into easy-to-use components. Let's start with the three function groups, a remote microphone mode, Bluetooth mode, and Telecoil. The remote microphone mode is the first setting by default as you power on the Sound Assist. There are two options in the microphone mode; partner mic and table mic. And the best part is just changing the position of the Sound Assist from a horizontal plane to a vertical plane will automatically move the focus between these two functions. This keeps the Sound Assist super easy for the client to use. I'm sure you can think of a client who, even with their hearing aids, cannot easily hold a conversation in a noisy situation.

You probably have at least a handful of those clients that come to mind right away. So let's start with the function of the partner mic. Many hearing aid users find themselves

having difficulty with friends or loved ones who are hard to hear, especially in challenging listening situations, as I mentioned, like outdoors, in a car, or in a restaurant. Once the Sound Assist is turned on, simply clip the Sound Assist to clothing of the companion or use the lanyard to wear the Sound Assist around the companion's neck and easier listening is accessible. The transmission distance between the partner mic being worn by the companion to the hearing aid user is within 26 feet. A gyroscope within the Sound Assist automatically activates the directional mode and the microphone closest to the speaker's mouth.

The ideal placement of the Sound Assist should be within eight inches or so from the speaker's mouth. While using the partner mic you can adjust the streaming volume with a short press to the plus or the minus volume buttons. The companion has the ability to pause and resume streaming from the Sound Assist with a short press to the center push button on the top of the Sound Assist. Why struggle during a lunch with friends or during a business meeting when Sound Assist can provide better access to those voices at a distance or within competing background noise when it's used in table mic function. Simply turn the Sound Assist on and place on the table within five feet of those you want to hear.

In table mic mode, all four LED lights on the top are green to signal 360 degrees of mic input. A long press on the center push button changes to a more directional focus signaled by a single green light, perhaps to be directed towards a particular person. Being able to focus or lock the microphone sensitivity is particularly helpful when you have that one soft spoken person that is to your right or to your left whom you really want to focus on. Additionally, a short press on the center push button mutes the Sound Assist and is signaled by four red LED lights. So you can see exactly how easy the microphone mode functionality and Sound Assist works simply by placing it flat on the table or clipping to a collar and adjusting the volume for easy listening.

Now let's take a look at the Bluetooth mode functionality. Whether Bluetooth streaming from a device, or using the Sound Assist for hands-free microphone used during phone calls or using the Sound Assist as a remote control for the function of the hearing aids. Each of these additional functions enhance the value of the Moment hearing aids. First, let's talk about Bluetooth streaming. Sound Assist can be paired to up to eight standard Bluetooth devices and commonly these will be a smartphone, a tablet, an iPad, a watch, or a computer. With the increase in the use of virtual meetings, I've found many clients getting excited by the option for participating in that Zoom or that team meeting and being able to listen to the audio portion of that meeting directly through their Moment hearing aids.

There are four simple steps to Bluetooth streaming. The first step is to pair the Sound Assist to any Bluetooth device. Once that is completed, turn on the Sound Assist and with a short press of the power button once more, toggle to Bluetooth mode and you'll be ready to stream. Streaming distance between the device and the Sound Assist, as with any standard Bluetooth, is approximately 50 feet. The transmission distance between Sound Assist to the hearing aids is approximately 26 feet. When using the Sound Assist for convenient hands-free calling, the Sound Assist incorporates noise reduction features that give great sound quality for both the Moment user and the caller on the other end of that call, enabling them to hear the client with ease even when they're in a noisy car or an outside noisy environment.

To use the hands free mic mode, the Sound Assist is paired to any Bluetooth phone and is worn by the client either on the clip or on a lanyard. The controls are available to adjust the volume and to possibly mute the hearing aid microphones temporarily. To answer or end a call, press on the center button briefly. If you prefer to reject the call, press and hold the center button for two seconds. And of course, while you're not on the call, you can activate your phone's voice assistant by pressing and holding the

center button for two seconds to make those voice commands. Remember that your voice assistant needs to be enabled on the connected Bluetooth device to work.

To use the Sound Assist as a remote control, the Sound Assist must be in Bluetooth mode. So with the Sound Assist turned on press the power button once more to toggle to Bluetooth. This will allow you to control the hearing aids while not actively streaming. If the plus or the minus button is pushed while you're streaming, it will change only the volume of the stream signal. Using the Sound Assist as a remote control for hearing aid functionality can be much easier for many clients who may have dexterity issues or vision issues or maybe they have difficulty pressing, finding and pressing the push button on the back of the hearing aid. Or for some they just don't wish to have to use an app on their phone for program selection or volume control.

So Sound Assist gives them another easy to handle option. And last but not least, let's talk a little bit about the Telecoil mode function of Sound Assist. Many hearing aid users prefer to keep their hearing aids as small and lightweight as possible so the ability to use an accessory with a Telecoil for those instances where they may find themselves in a looped environment, this comes in quite handy and they're getting the best of both worlds. We know a rechargeable RIC with a T-Coil is important to many of you. With this solution, we are able to continue to offer the smallest lightest weight lithium ion rechargeable hearing aid on the market for all patients with the option to add this extremely versatile accessory for anyone who needs it in those select situations.

The power button and indicator light must be facing upwards which orients the Telecoil antenna to the most sensitive position. Turn the Sound Assist on and then a short press to the power button two more times moves the function of mode to Telecoil. Sound Assist Telecoil can be used with any Telecoil loop system. Since positioning is important, use of the lanyard can help to facilitate the correct orientation. The lanyard is

tucked underneath the clip and positioned by adjusting the lanyard length to, again, ideally within eight inches from the user's voice. The first step and most important step in getting your client ready to use Sound Assist will be to pair the hearing aids to the Sound Assist.

Prior to pairing check to make sure that the hearing aid firmware has been updated to 5.0.282. You can confirm this by connecting the hearing aids to Compass GPS 4.4 or look in the Moment app if the user's using the app under more and under about to see this specific firmware version in the hearing aids. To see this in action, let's watch this short video. To put the Sound Assist into pairing mode, press and hold the power and the volume up button for five seconds. The blue flashing lights let you know that the Sound Assist is ready for pairing. The hearing aids should be close by and powered on. So as a reminder, when you take the hearing aids out of the charger, they power on automatically or you can press and hold the push button on each hearing aid for a long press to turn the hearing aids off and back on.

Once Powered back on, they are in Bluetooth pairing mode for three minutes. Within a few seconds, the lights go green and the Sound Assist is paired to the hearing aids and ready to use. You are probably familiar with the basic steps of standard Bluetooth pairing, but let's take a quick look. Put the Sound Assist into pairing mode by pressing the on off and the plus button simultaneously for five seconds. The flashing blue lights tell you it's in pairing mode. Go to your phone settings, Bluetooth, and activate Bluetooth and wait for Widex Sound Assist to show up in the device list. Tap on the Widex Sound Assist there and within just a few seconds you'll see the lights on the Sound Assist go green, which indicates that it's paired.

These steps can be repeated for other standard Bluetooth devices. And remember you can have up to eight devices paired to your Sound Assist. So we're now familiar with the position of the power mode button on the top of the Sound Assist. And then on the

adjacent side, the volume up and down buttons. The power mode button essentially allows you to turn the device off and on with a long press. And with a short press you can toggle through the three different modes; microphone, Bluetooth, and Telecoil. And there are small green lights that show which mode you are currently in. And of course, pressing the plus button and the power mode button will put the device into pairing mode, and that's with a long press of three seconds simultaneously to those two buttons.

The Sound Assist will stay in Bluetooth pairing mode for two minutes. In addition to the main uses of the power mode button; turning a device off and on and toggling between modes. And in addition to putting the Sound Assist into pairing mode with the plus button and the power mode button pressed simultaneously, you can also do a reset to remove all pairings from the Sound Assist. Now this may come in handy if you are loaning the Sound Assist to a new client and you wanna make sure that there's no interference, any previous pairings that another client may have used. So in order to do this, with a Sound Assist off you will press the minus button and the power mode button for five seconds.

At that point, you'll see the LED lights flashing yellow and then once completed, once the reset is completed, then the Sound Assist will turn off. Now this deletes all pairings so anything that you want to pair in terms of hearing aids or in terms of other devices, you'll need to go back and re-pair. The main functions of the center push button obviously are to pause and resume streaming, and this is regardless of any mode that Sound Assist is in. So you can pause and resume remote mic streaming, Bluetooth streaming, Telecoil streaming, and of course you can use it to accept or take or to end a phone call. It's also used for activating the voice assist when paired to a Bluetooth device.

And again, you must activate the voice assist on the Bluetooth device itself. In order to activate the voice assist while in Bluetooth mode, press the center button for two seconds and then proceed with instructions to make the voice assist requests. The main use of the volume buttons are of course to control the volume of the incoming signal, and that's regardless of the mode. So it can be a volume control of remote mic streaming, Bluetooth streaming, call streaming, Telecoil streaming, or hearing aid mic volume. And again, as a reminder, it needs to be in Bluetooth mode and not streaming. For the plus and minus button to serve as a remote control for volume for the hearing aids themselves.

An additional feature is a long press on the minus volume button will mute the hearing aid mics. In other words, that room off feature, if it's pressed while streaming. So you still can have the streaming input, but turn the hearing aid mics off. And then a simple long press on the plus button for volume un-mutes the hearing aid mics again. Program button uses. Obviously are to toggle between programs when you're using the Sound Assist as the remote control for the hearing aid. So a short press moves between the regular programs, a long Press would allow you to move between the Zen Plus or Sound Relax plus programs. You can also use the program button to lock the buttons on the Sound Assist.

Basically press the program button and the volume plus button simultaneously. When you do so, LED lights will flash white to indicate that you've made the change to either lock the button functionality or unlock the button functionality. No pairing is needed for Sound Assist in Compass GPS. However, you may want to go into the handling tab and into decks accessories, as there it does allow you to type in the serial number of the Sound Assist for completion of the hearing aid and accessory fitting information. The Moment app version 1.6 will recognize Sound Assist when it's on and active. The app will give adjustment and control of sound streaming, allowing the user to mute the hearing aid mics to overall adjust the streaming volume.

It'll allow the use of sound mixer, which lets you adjust the balance between the microphone and the streaming input. The user can adjust the individual left and right ears independently, and also has adjustment of some of the frequency response using the equalizer. The Moment app also allows access to some information about Sound Assist through My Guide, which is the little button at the bottom of the app. And once you go into My Guide, you'll have access to a couple of short little videos. These videos will remind them how to turn the Sound Assist off and on, as well as how to put the Sound Assist into pairing mode. So yes, everyone can use a little assistance sometimes.

And as you can see, Sound Assist offers a very versatile feature set, providing assistance in a whole variety of situations that clients may need. Just that little bit of extra help. And as an accessory to Moment hearing aids, Sound Assist of course, is small, lightweight, easy to use, and very affordable. You can find a number of short video tutorials on Sound Assist functionality on mywidexpro.com/en-us, or widex.com/en-us. So I encourage you to check those out as a great way for a little refresh when you're ready, or please feel free to reach out to your regional sales manager or your clinical education specialist for individual help. And of course, if you have questions or you're not sure who your regional sales manager or clinical education specialist are, please reach out to AQInquiry@widexsound.com. You can leave a question or inquiry there, a request for help, and someone will reach out and contact you in return. Again, I thank you for joining us today and I thank you for choosing Widex to deliver sound like no other to your clients.