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Expanded CI Utilization Clinic Efficiency

Presenter:

- Réne Gifford, Ph.D.

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Expanding CI utilization: clinic efficiency

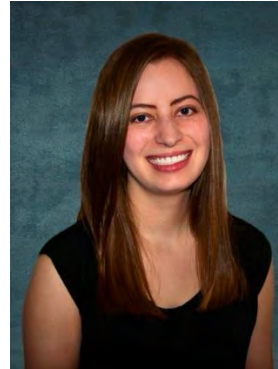
René Gifford, PhD, CCC-A



David Haynes, MD



Jourdan Holder, AuD, PhD



Katie Berg, AuD, PhD



Aaron Moberly, MD



Change is coming, are you ready?

88% of the original Fortune 500 companies are gone (1955-2016)

If you want things to be better in the future, you have to be ready to change.

It is not necessary to change.
Survival is not mandatory.
- W Edwards Deming

A pessimist sees the **difficulty**
in every opportunity;
an optimist sees the **opportunity**
in every difficulty.

- Winston Churchill



CI Utilization in adults and children

NIDCD (2021): As of late 2019 → 118,100 CIs in adults, 65,000 CIs in children

- **Adults:** ~2.3 to 12.7% utilization
 - *Sorkin (2013). Cochlear Implant Intl, 14: S4-S12; Sorkin & Buchman (2016). Otol Neurotol, 37(2):e161–e4; Perkins et al. (2021). Otol Neurotol, 42(6):815-823; Nassiri et al. (2022). Otol Neurotol*
- **Children:** ~50 to 59% utilization
 - *Sorkin & Buchman (2016). Otol Neurotol, 37(2):e161-164.*

Barriers: cochlear implantation

AWARENESS

**Varied &
overlapping
indications**

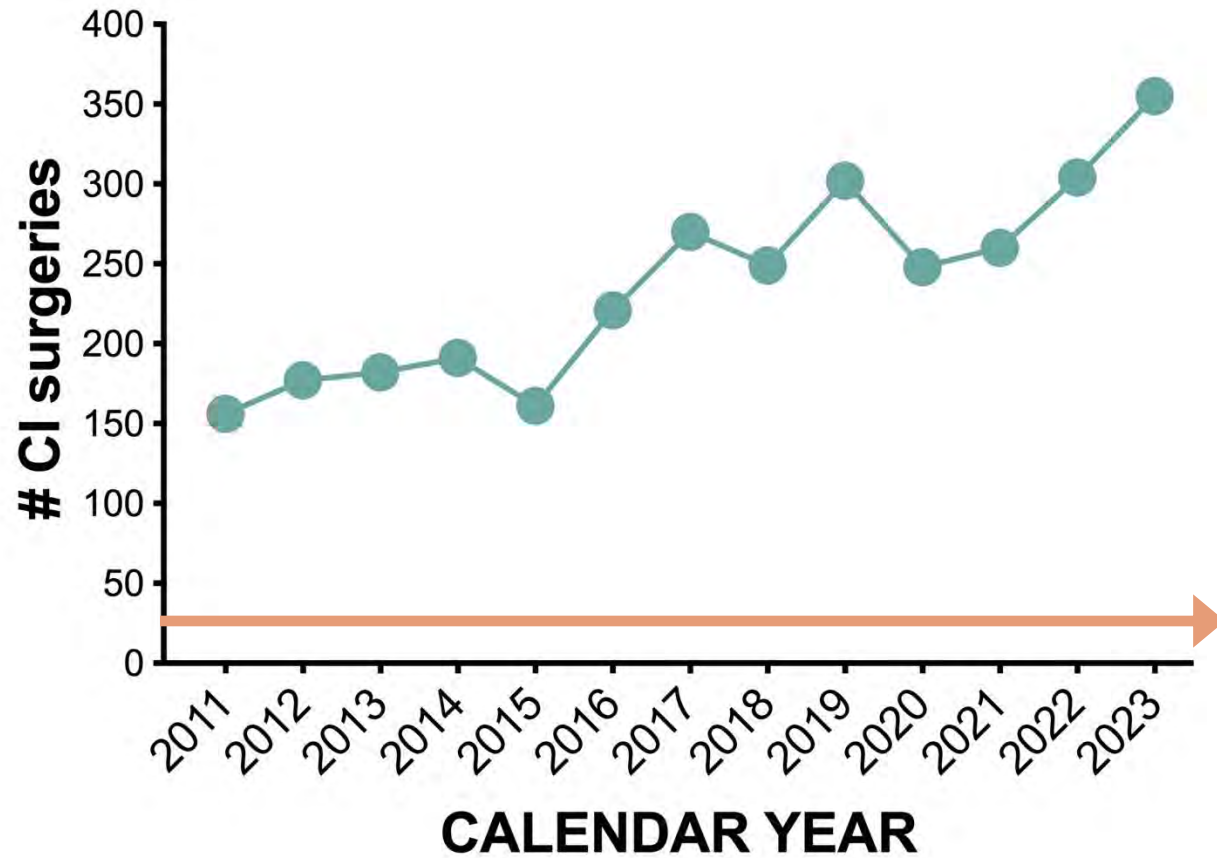
**Lack of defined
care pathways**

Insurance/\$\$

**Access to CI
clinics**

**Outcome
uncertainty**

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MEDICAL CENTER



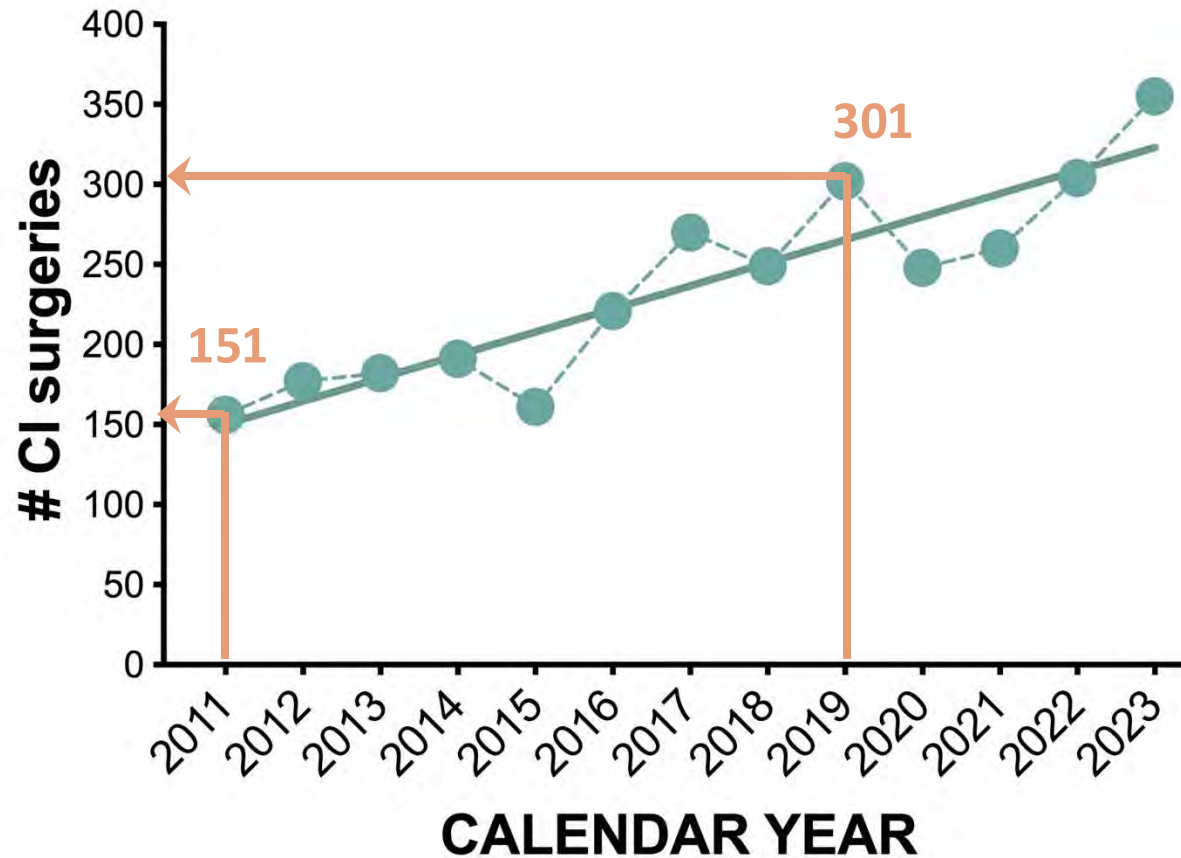
Expect Continued Growth:

- Expanded Indications
- 60,000 new cases of SSD/yr
- **Millions** of EAS/Hybrid candidates

Increasing prevalence of hearing loss

Average
CI Program

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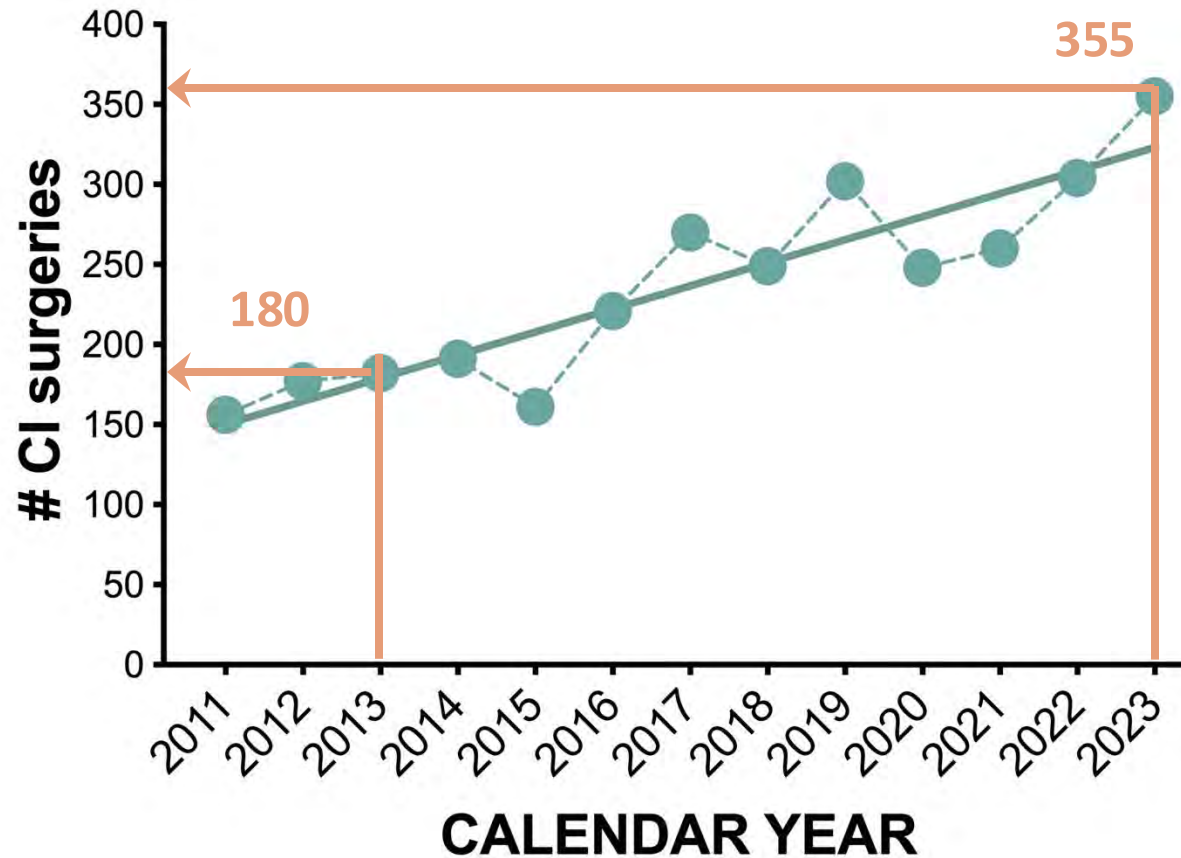
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Increasing prevalence of hearing loss

Program doubled in 8 years

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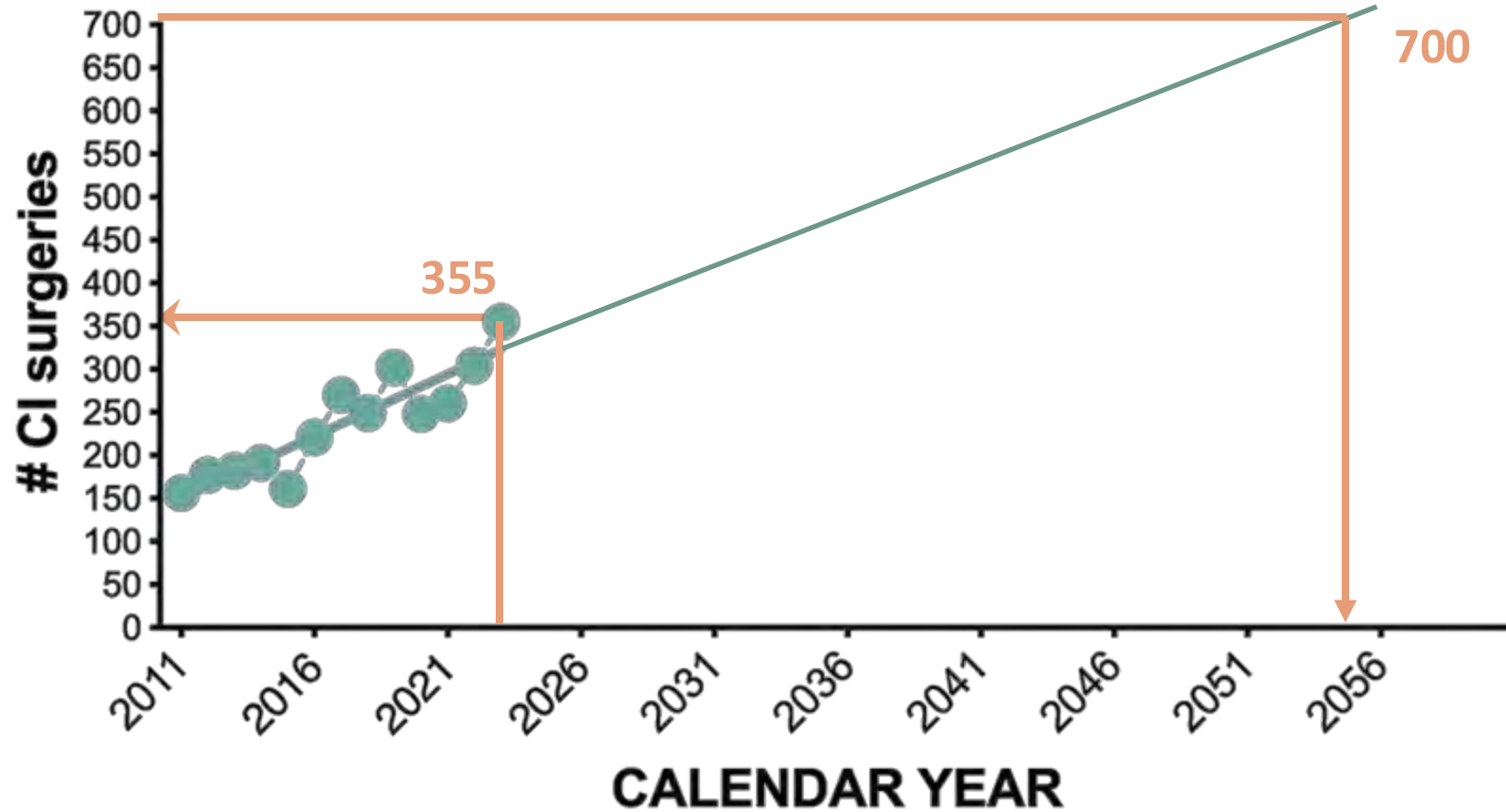
Expect Continued Growth:

- Expanded Indications
- 60,000 new cases of SSD/yr
- **Millions** of EAS/Hybrid candidates

Increasing prevalence of hearing loss

Program doubling in 8-10 years

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Next projected
doubling...

2054

Catchment Profile of Large Cochlear Implant Centers in the United States

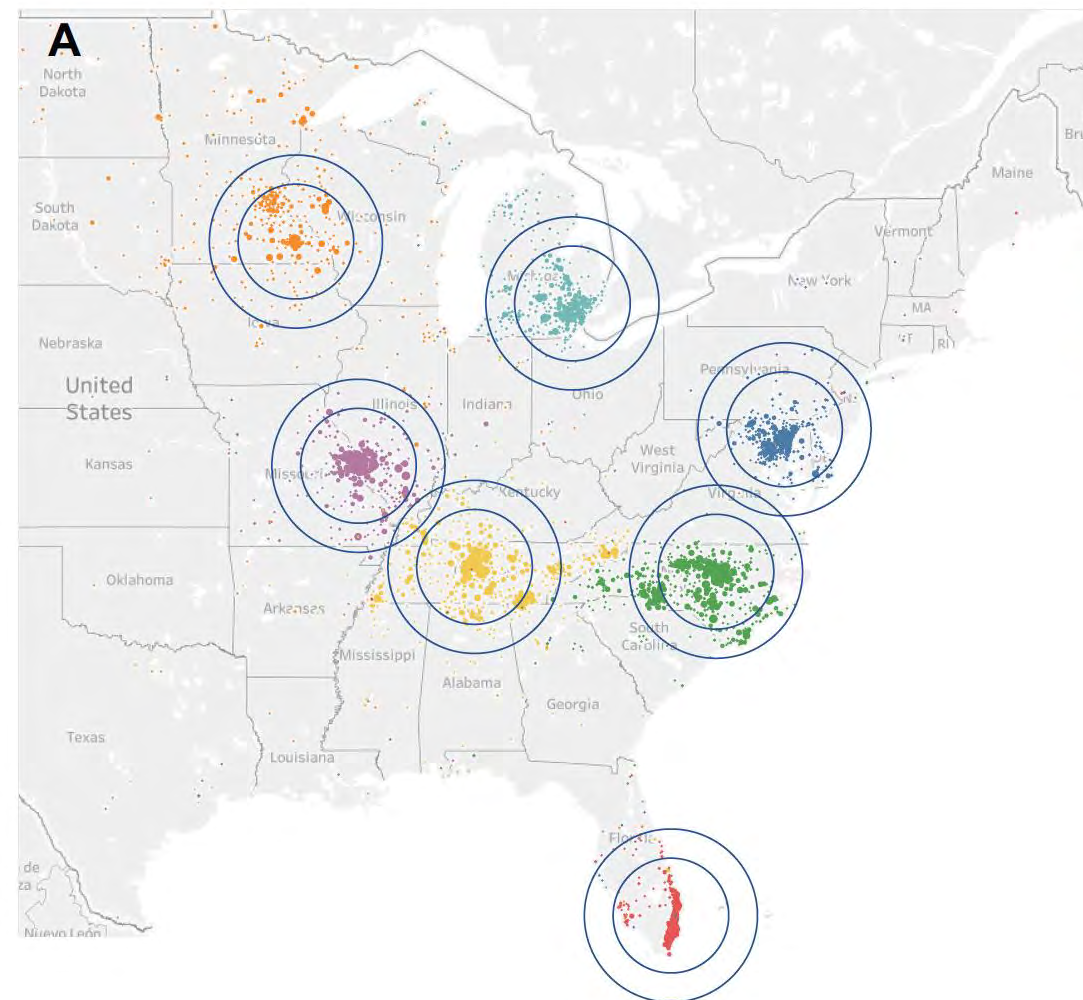
Ashley M. Nassiri, MD, MBA¹, Meredith A. Holcomb, AuD², Elizabeth L. Perkins, MD³, Andrea L. Bucker, AuD⁴, Sandra M. Prentiss, PhD², Christopher M. Welch, MD, PhD⁵, Nick S. Andresen, MD⁶, Carla V. Valenzuela, MD, MSCI⁷, Cameron C. Wick, MD⁷, Simon I. Angeli, MD², Daniel Q. Sun, MD⁶, Stephen P. Bowditch, AuD, MS⁶, Kevin D. Brown, MD, PhD⁴, Teresa A. Zwolan, PhD⁵, David S. Haynes, MD, MMHC³, Aniket A. Saoji, PhD¹, and Matthew L. Carlson, MD¹

Otolaryngology-
Head and Neck Surgery
1-7
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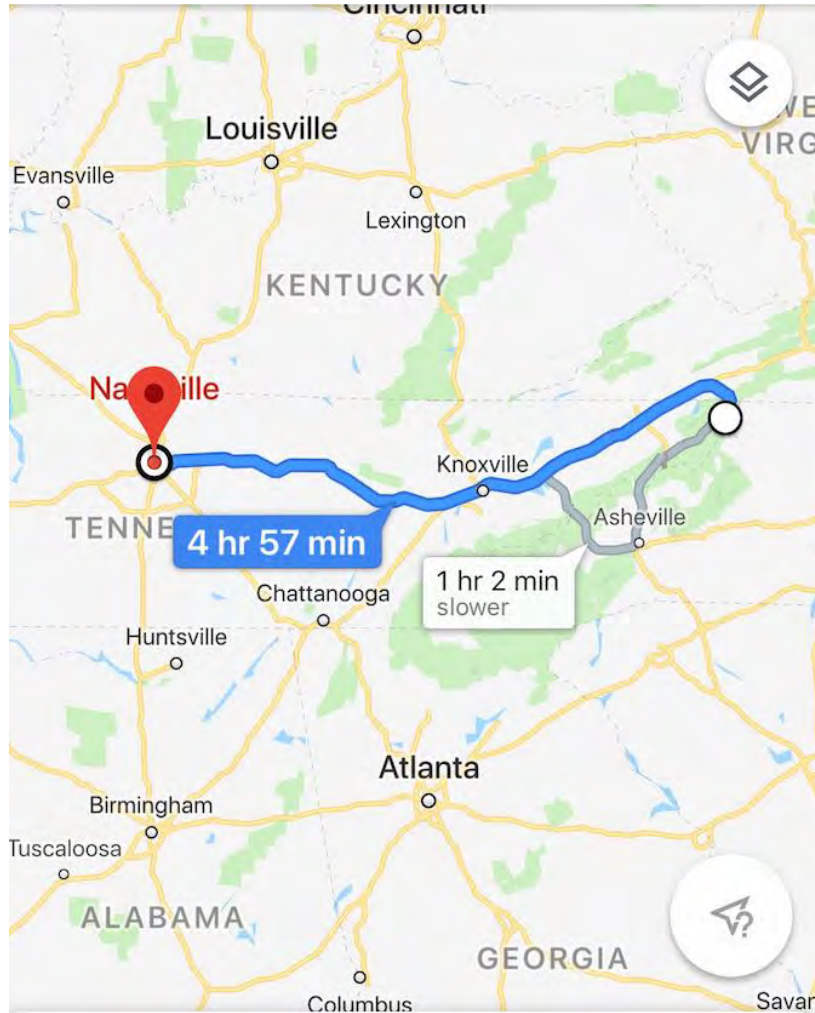
- 91% within 200-mile radius resulting in concentration of care
- Over 6-year period, the number of CIs in these centers increased by 43%

Consider:

- Satellite programming/surgery
- Telehealth/remote programming
- Optimizing delivery process



Cochlear Implant: Patient Experience Project



4 hr 57 min (333 mi) !

Fastest route, the usual traffic

Surgeon (initial, Pre op, post op)

Audiology eval

Device selection eval

Imaging (CT and MRI)

Anesthesia pre

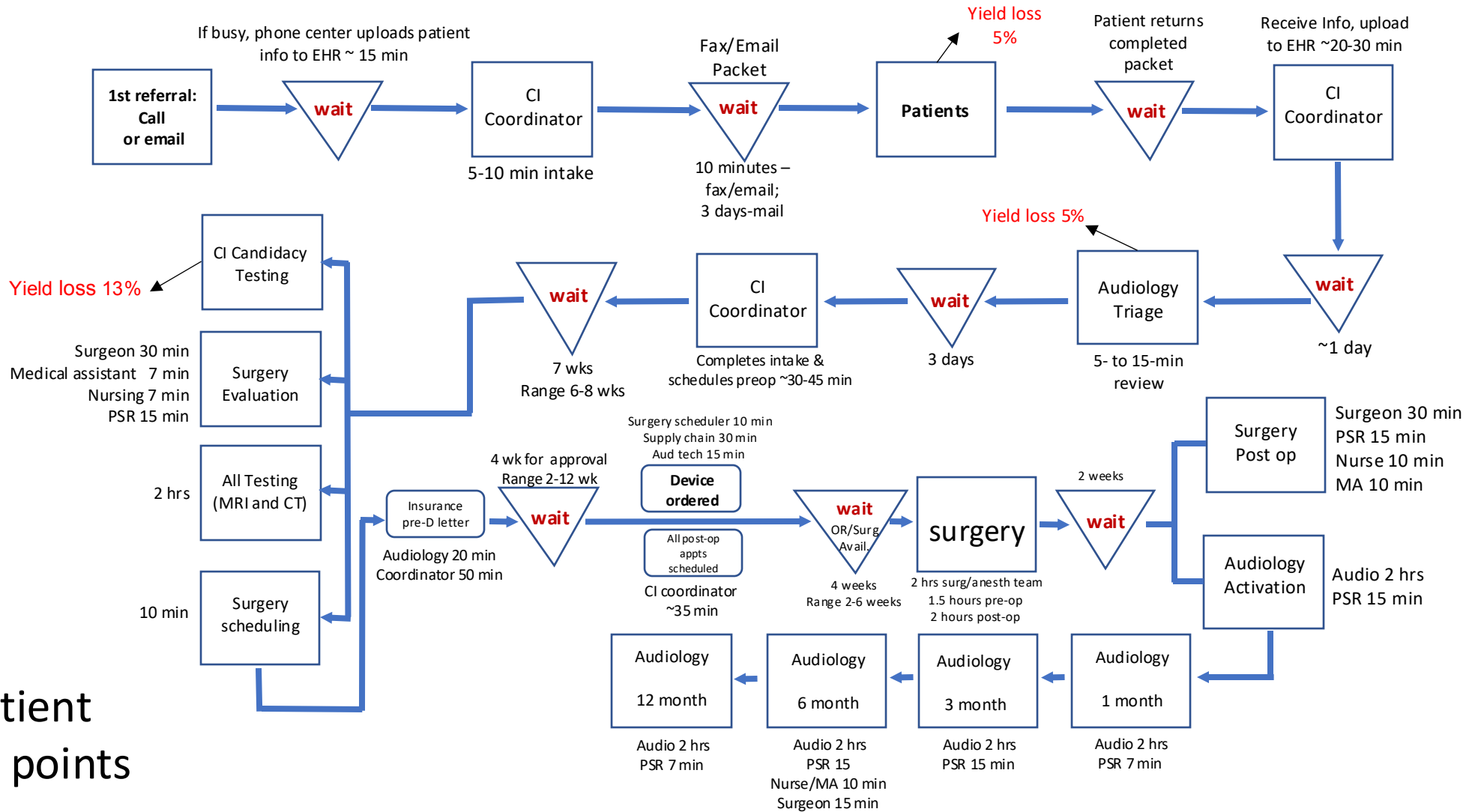
Surgery

Device mapping and training (4+ visits)

2+ visits

- 6-12 days missed work/school
- 6-12 hotel stays
- ~60-120 hours travel
- ~4000+ miles, assuming 35 mpg @ \$3.50/gallon = \$400

Process map: Day 1 to 12 months post activation

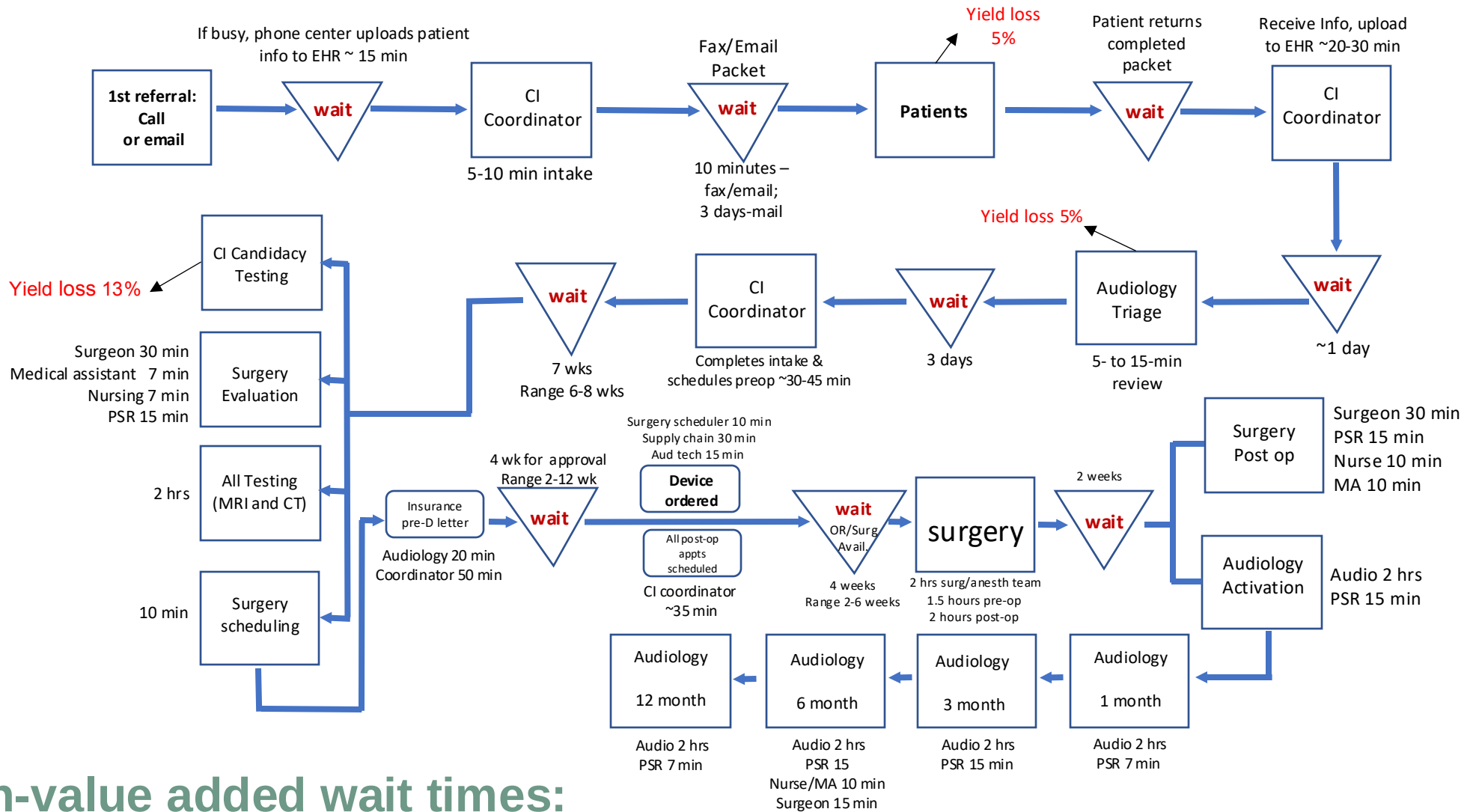


19 patient
contact points

9 “wait” periods

Slide courtesy of David Haynes, MD

Process map: Day 1 to 12 months post activation



Slide courtesy of David Haynes, MD

Same-Day Patient Consultation and Cochlear Implantation: Innovations in Patient-Centered Health Care Delivery

*Ashley M. Nassiri, *Robert J. Yawn, †René H. Gifford, †Jourdan T. Holder, ‡C. J. Stimson,
*Roland D. Eavey, and *David S. Haynes

**Department of Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery; †Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences; and
‡Department of Urology, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, Tennessee*

How can we drive change?

The Science of Behavior Change

Stages-of-change model

Prochaska & DiClemente (1983). J Consult Clin Psychol, 51(3): 390–395.

5 stages of change

- Precontemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance



PRECONTEMPLATION

Build awareness for my need to change

CONTEMPLATION

Increase my pros for change
and decrease my cons

PREPARATION

Commit and plan

ACTION

Implement and revise my plan

MAINTENANCE

Integrate change into my lifestyle

Postoperative CI audiology follow-up: evidence-based practice

René Gifford, PhD, Katie Berg, AuD, PhD,
and Jourdan Holder, AuD, PhD

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Postoperative CI follow-up: evidence-based practice



Clinical care delivery

1991

Clarion clinical trial protocol

Schindler & Kessler (1992). Laryngoscope, 102: 1006-13.

Adults

- 12- to 16-hour activation
 - 3, 6, and 12 months

1997

N24 clinical trial protocol

Adults & Children

- **7-8 visits in 1st year**
 - 2-day activation, 2 weeks, 1 mo, 3 mo, 6 mo, 9 mo, and 12 mo

1997

Combi 40+ clinical trial

Adults & Children

- **5 visits in first year**
 - activation, 1 week (optional), 1 mo, 3 mo, 6 mo, and 12 mo

2019

AAA CI Clinical Practice Guidelines

Messersmith et al. (2019). JAAA. 30:827–844.

Adults

- **6 visits in 1st year**
 - Activation, 1 week, 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months
 - Routine follow-up: every 6 to 12 months

Children*:

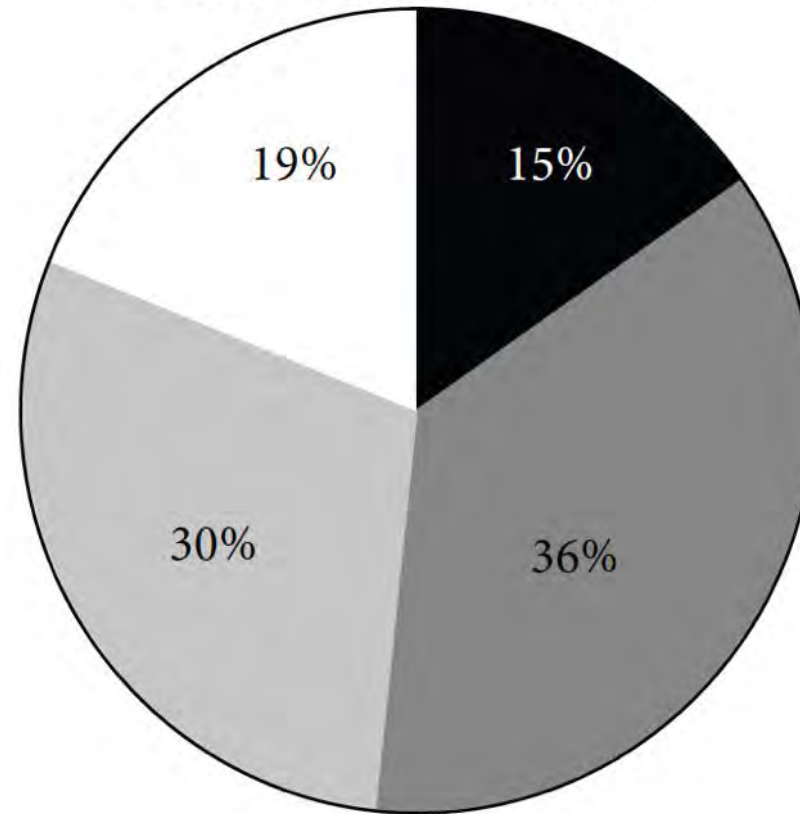
- **7 visits in 1st year**
 - Activation, 1 week, 1 month, 3 months, 6 months, 9 months, and 12 months
 - Routine follow-up:
 - Younger children: every 3 months
 - Older children every 6 to 12 months

**Hemmingson & Messersmith (2018). JAAA (6.8 appts in 1st year)*

Clinical care delivery

Vaerenberg et al. (2014). Sci World J. 2014:501738.

Number of sessions between
switch-on and 12 months



Unsustainable!

7 centers
17 countries
5 continents

Clinical care delivery



NETFLIX

2000: Netflix offered to sell to Blockbuster for \$50M

2024: Netflix is valued at ~\$300B

2020



2024

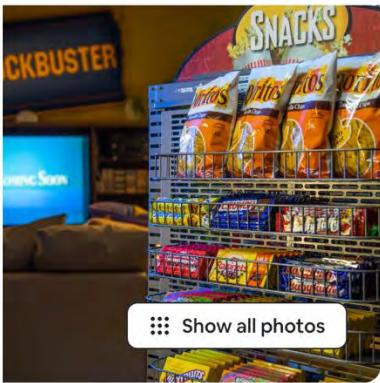


AnywhereAny weekAdd guests

Airbnb your home

The Last Blockbuster

[Share](#)[Save](#)



[Show all photos](#)

Bend, Oregon

4 guests · Studio · 1 bed · Half-bath

★ 5.0 · [3 reviews](#)

Sold out

Request

Clinical care delivery



Clinical care delivery



Clinical care delivery

2011

Adults (6-7 visits in 1st year)

- Activation Day 1
- Activation Day 2 (optional)
- 1 week
- 1 month
- 3 month
- 6 month
- 12 month

Children (7-8 visits in 1st year)

- Activation Day 1
- Activation Day 2 (optional)
- 1 week
- 1 month
- 3 month
- 6 month
- 9 month
- 12 month

2016-2024

Adults (3-4 visits in 1st year)

- Activation
- 1 month
- 6 month (optional)
- 12 month

2018-present

Children (4-5 visits in 1st year):

- Activation
- 1 week (optional)
- 1 month
- 3 month (optional)
- 6 month
- 12 month

***A long time ago (2015) in a galaxy far, far away
(Nashville)***

VUMC lost 3 CI audiologists and 2 surgeons

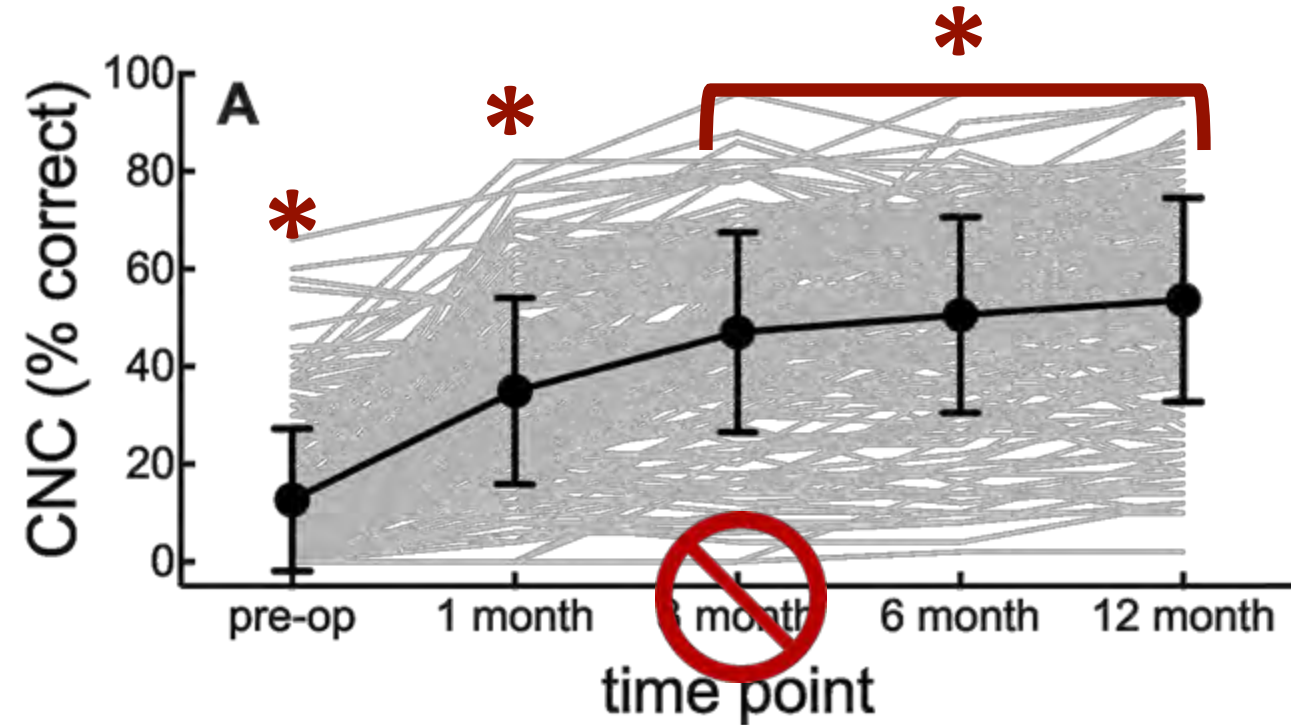
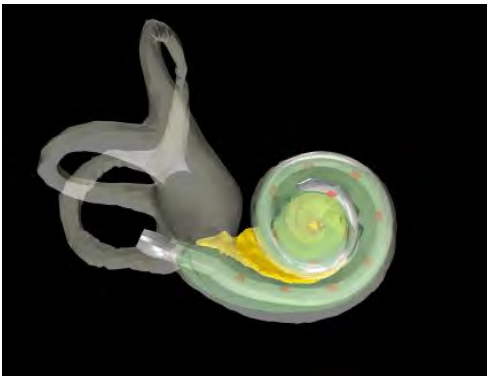
By May 1, 2016 → 9-month wait for pre-op eval

Little available times to schedule activations.

Berg et al. (2023). Otol Neurotol, 44(8):e635-e640

Retrospective review

- 18+ years
- CI-aided detection (20-30 dB HL)
- ESRTs at 1 month
 - Shape C/M/MCL profile
- **Oto-pilot**: VUMC CT imaging data available to audiologist at activation
- **CNC at 1, 3, and 6 mo**
- 171 adults (178 ears)

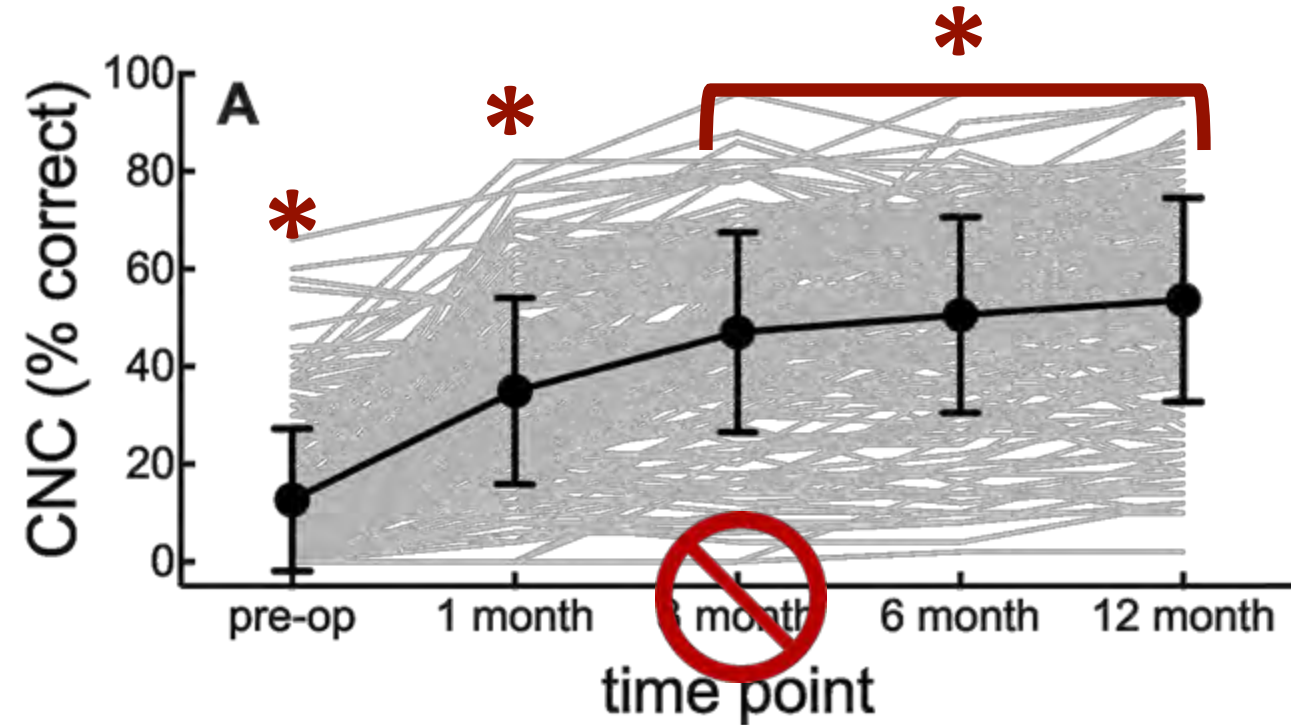
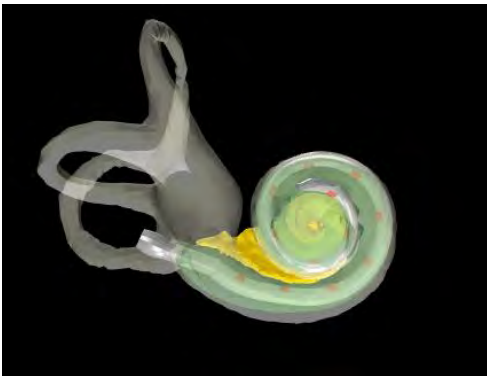


Streamlined protocol: $\frac{2015}{161 \text{ Cls}}$ $\rightarrow$ $\frac{2019}{301 \text{ Cls}}$ $\rightarrow$ $\frac{2023}{330 \text{ Cls}}$

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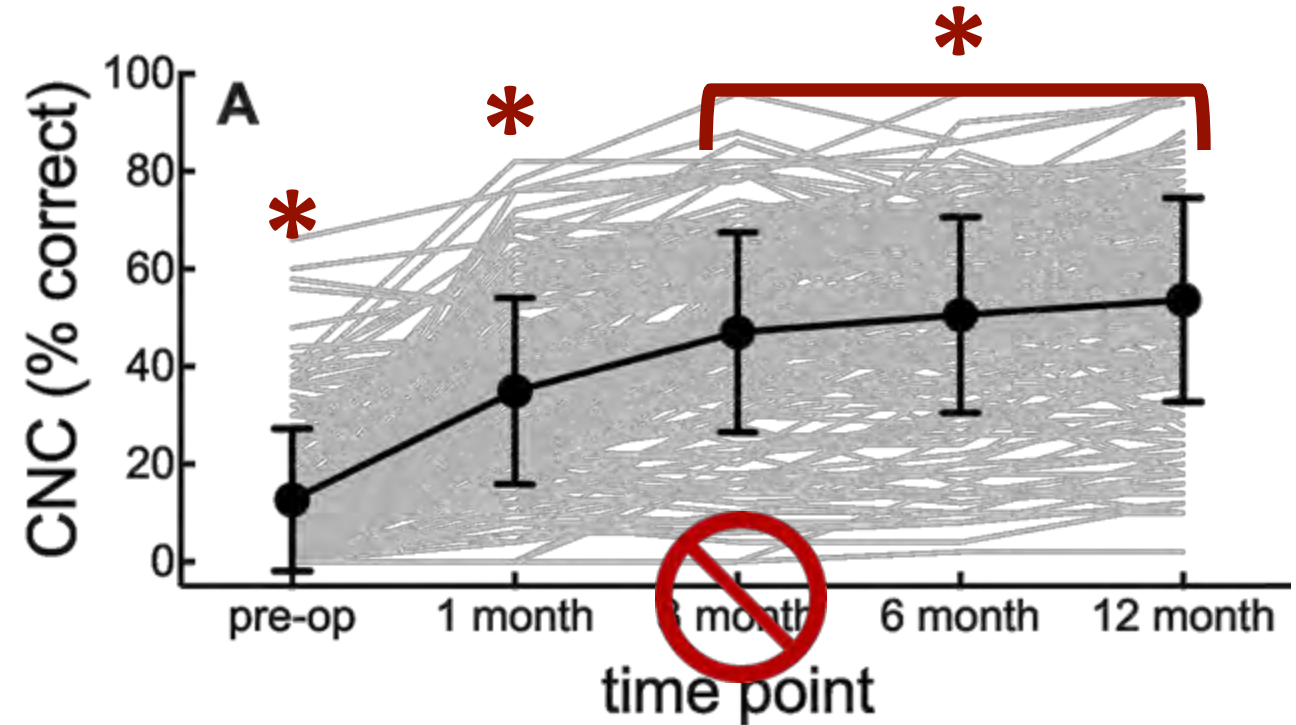
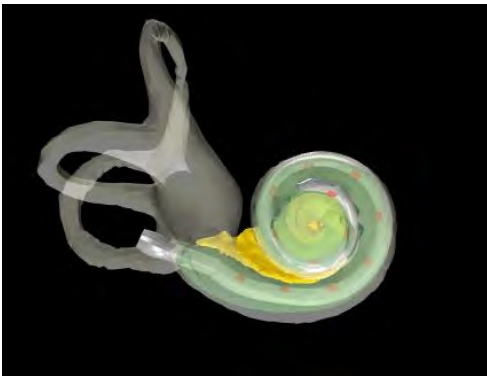


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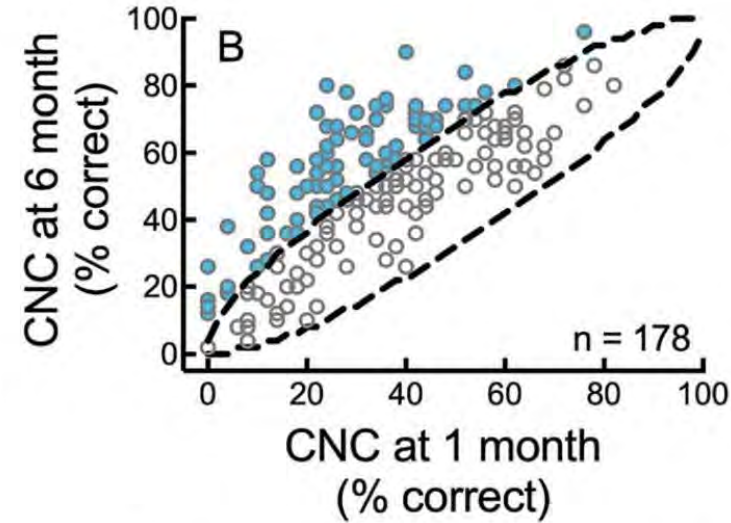
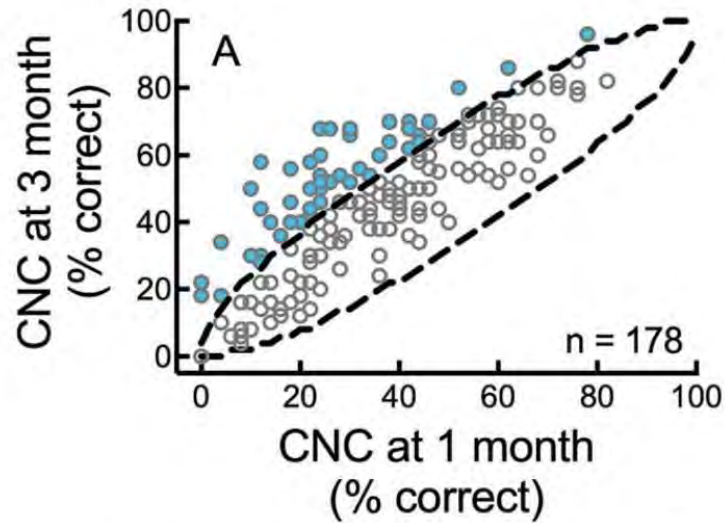
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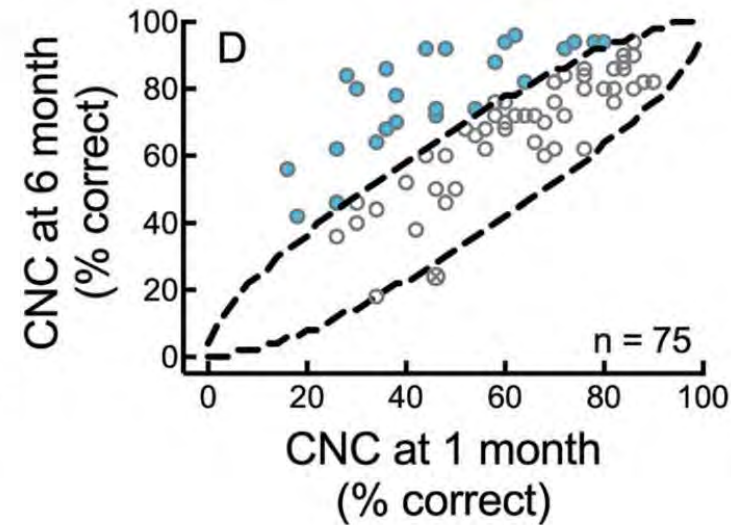
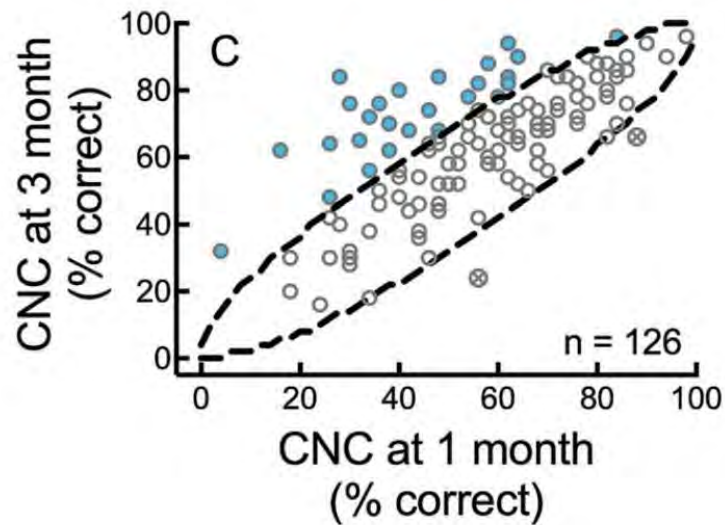


Streamlined protocol: $\frac{2015}{161 \text{ Cls}}$ $\rightarrow$ $\frac{2019}{301 \text{ Cls}}$ $\rightarrow$ $\frac{2023}{330 \text{ Cls}}$

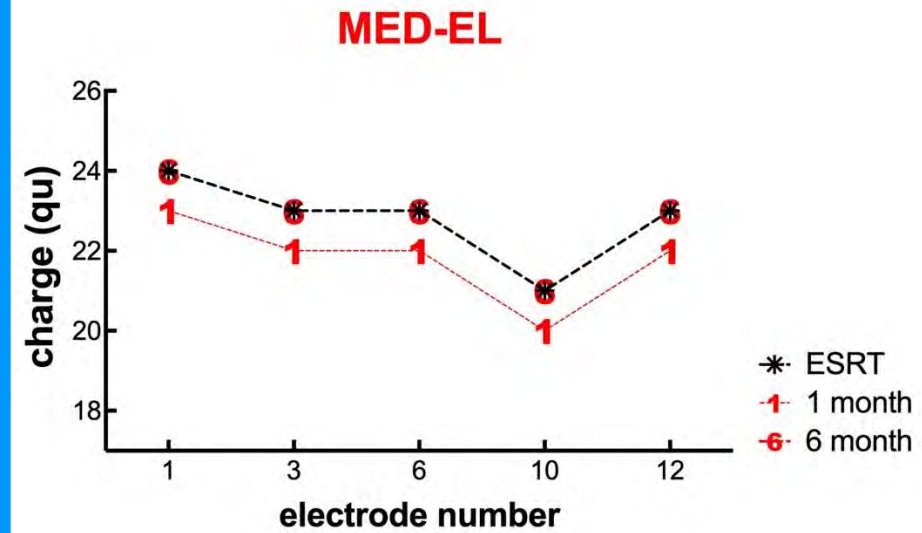
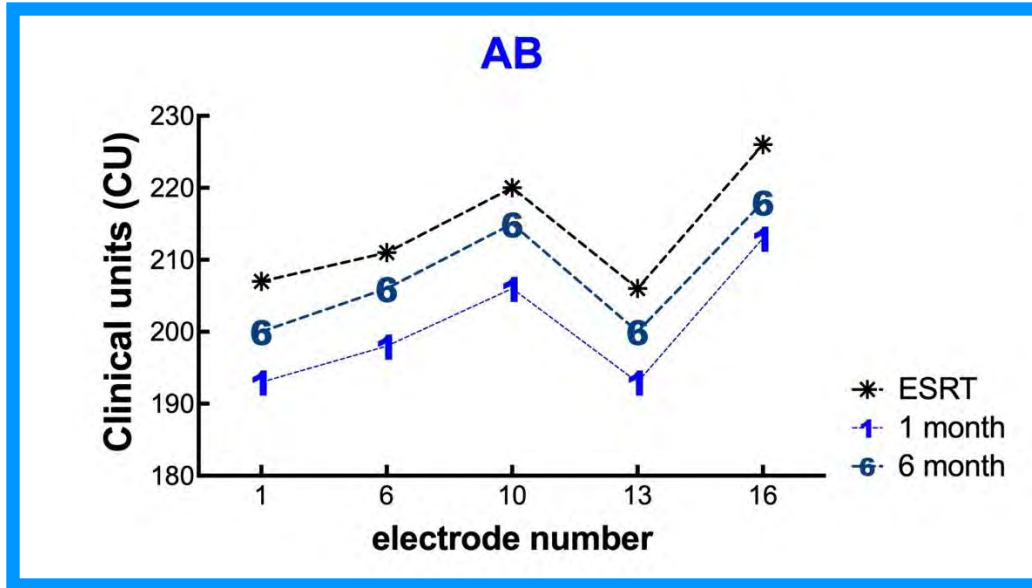
Berg et al. (2023). Otol Neurotol, 44(8):e635-e640



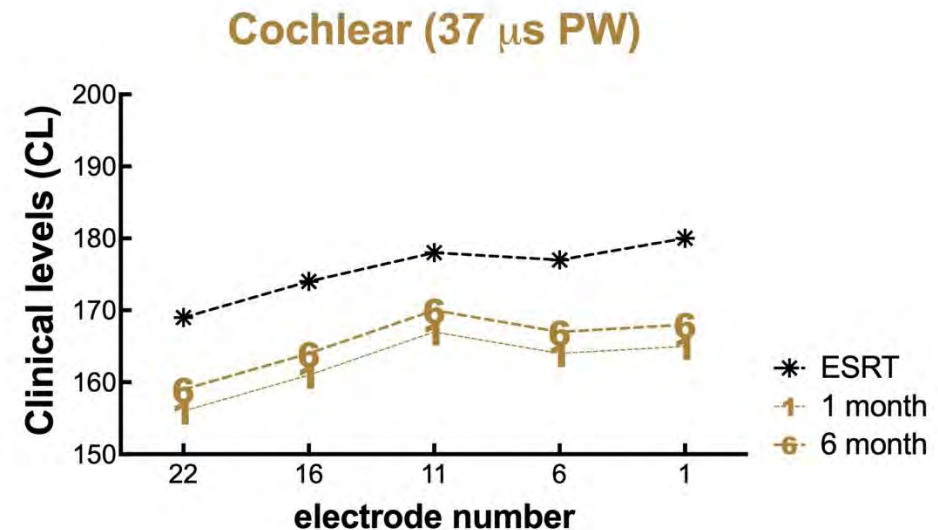
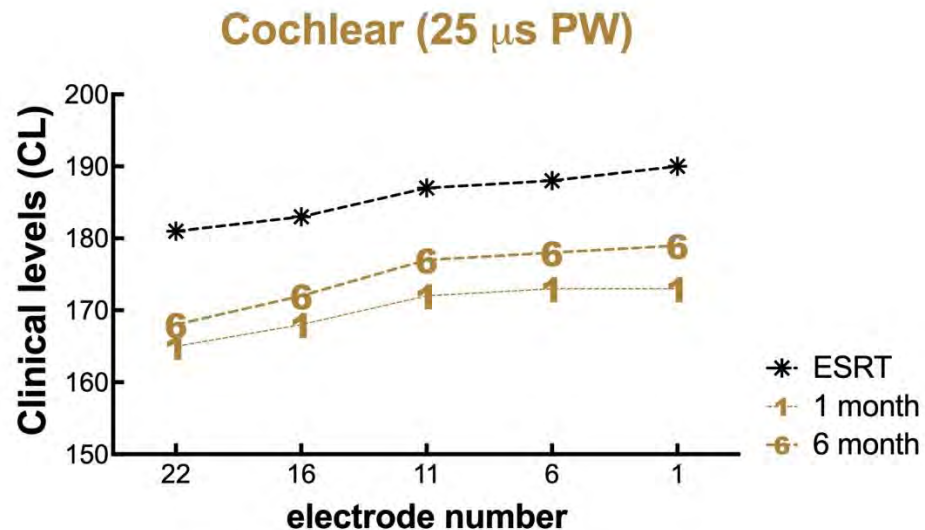
Top row:
Clear ear

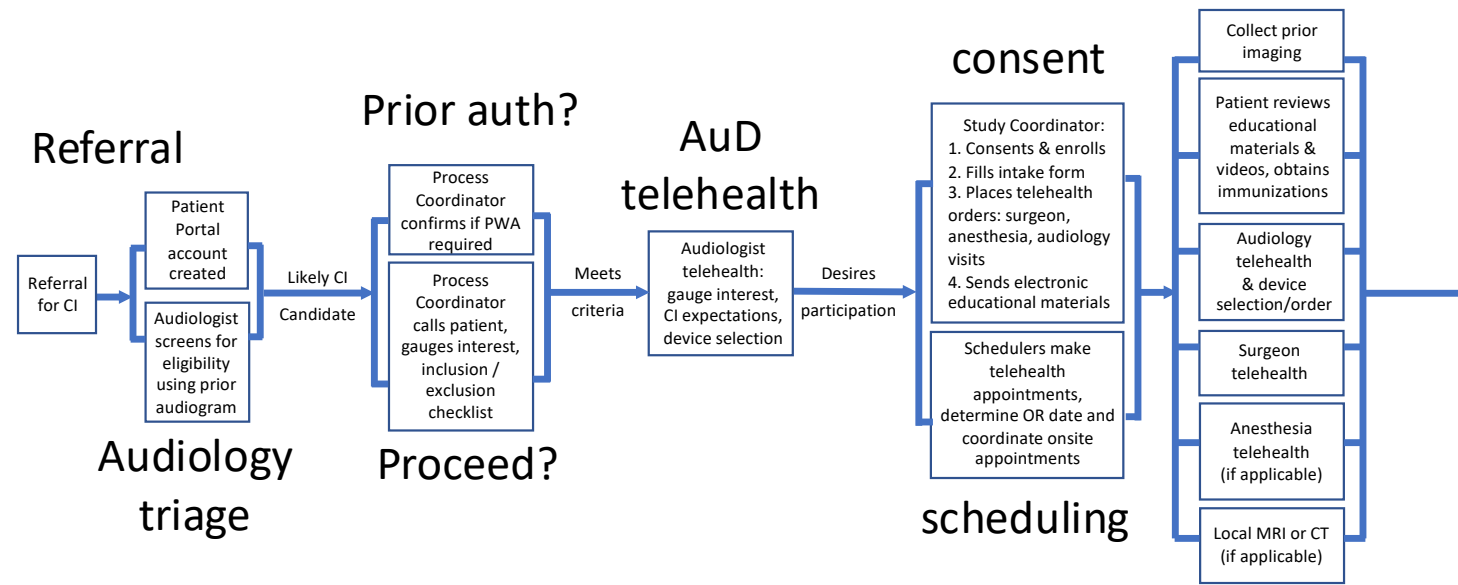


Bottom row:
Best aided

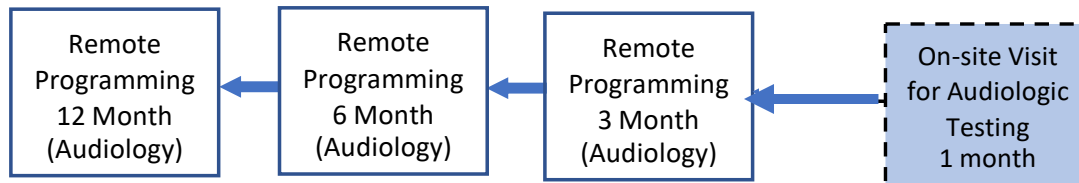


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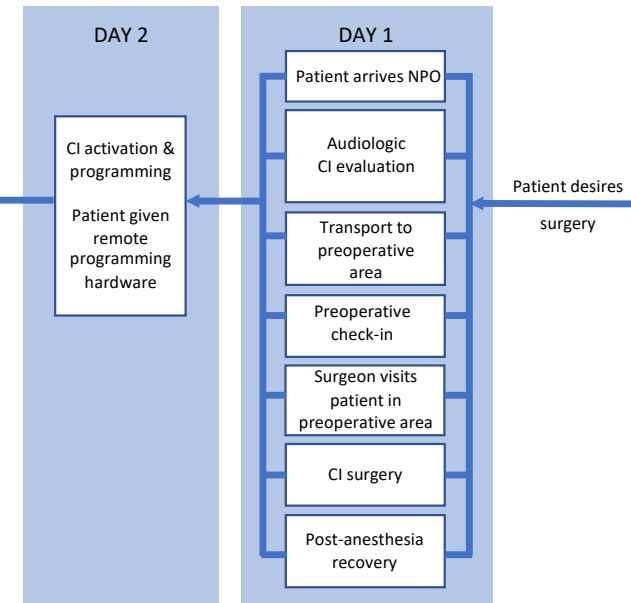




Goal: remote programming and remote check in clinic workflow

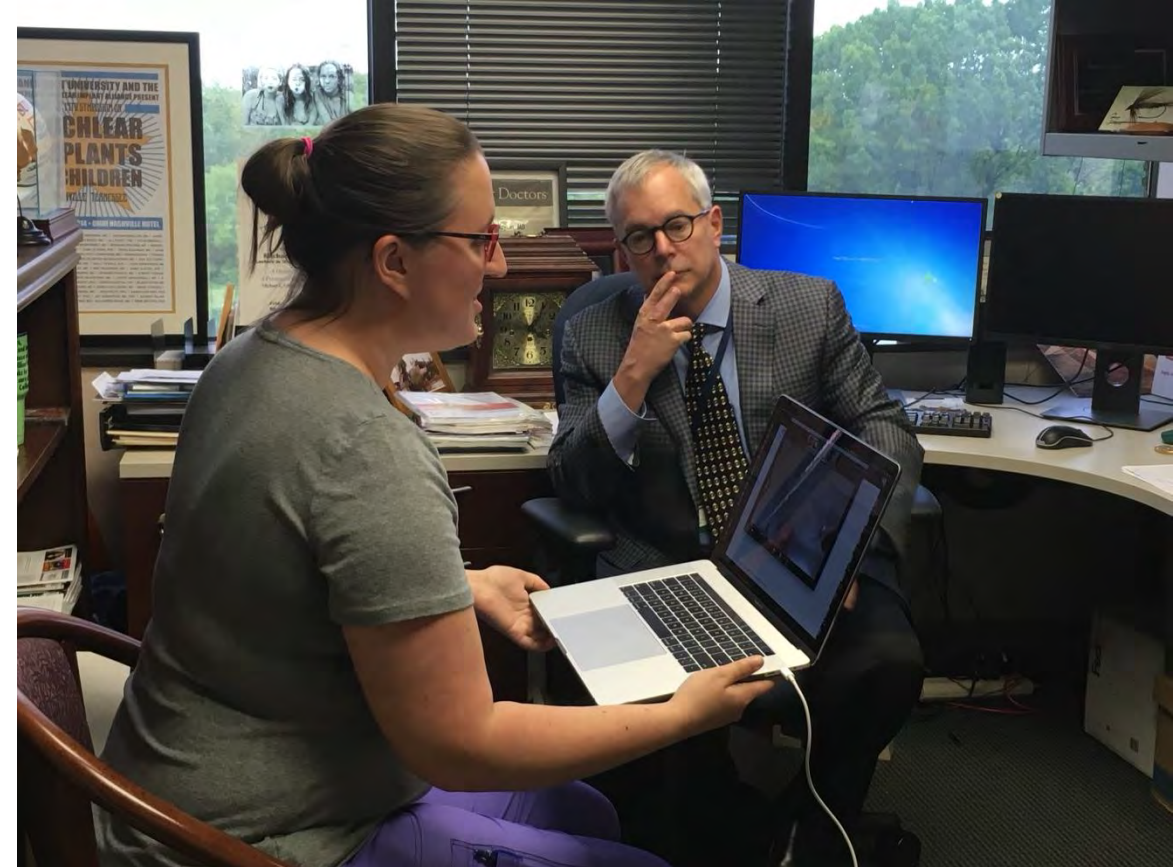
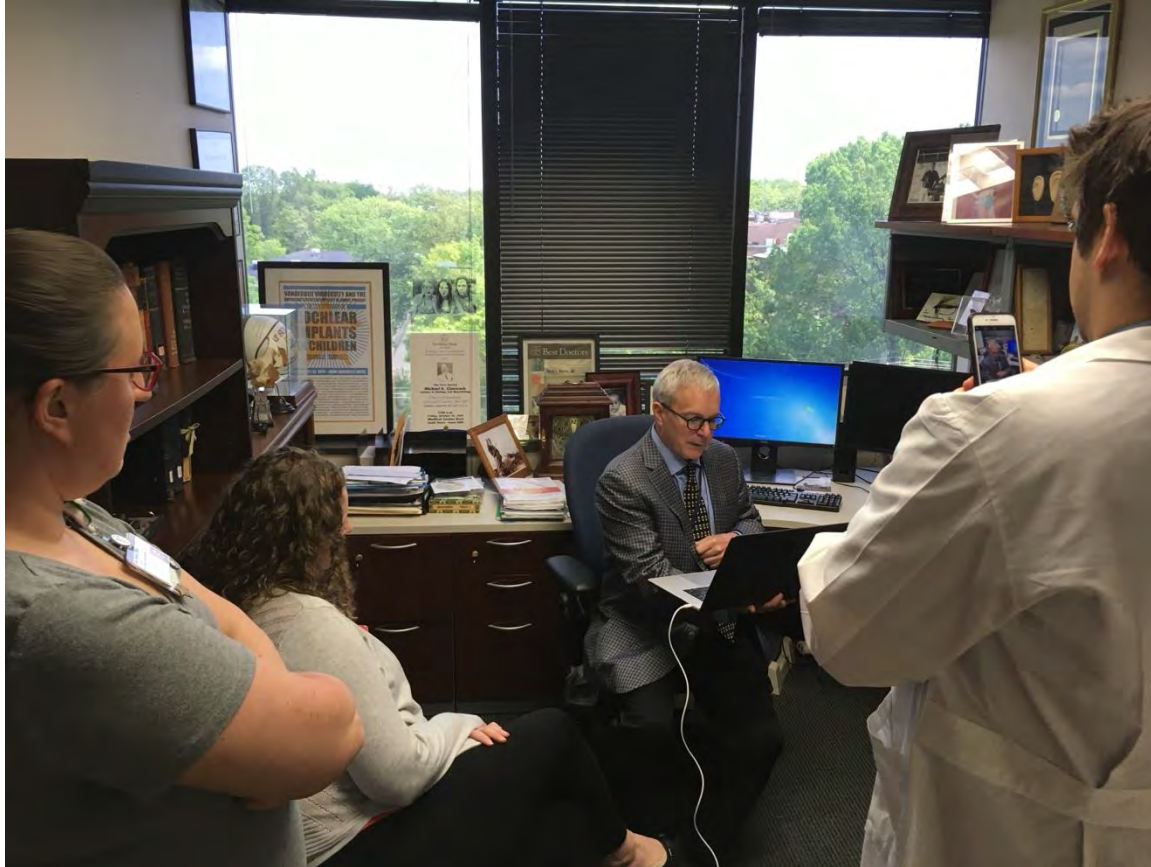


Single on-site visit

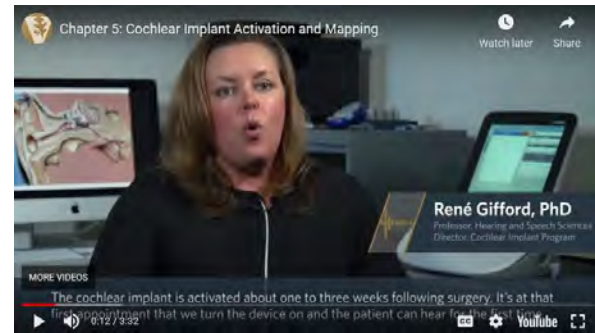
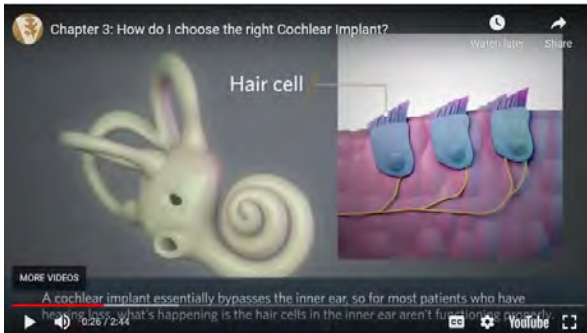
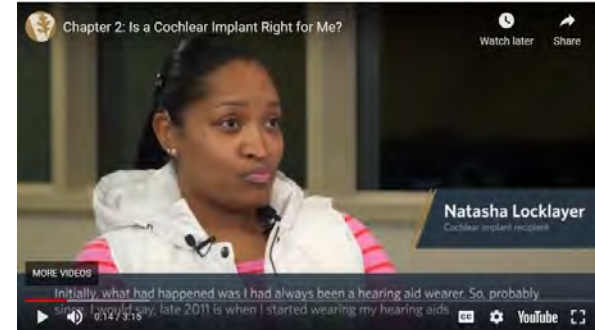


Same-day CI surgery process map:
Currently only available for Medicare &

Same-day surgery & “My Hearing Health” bundle: Communication/Telehealth



Pre-visit patient education



<https://www.vanderbilthealth.com/patient-resource/cochlear-implant-educational-videos>

Pre-visit patient education

Chapter 1: What Is a Cochlear Implant?

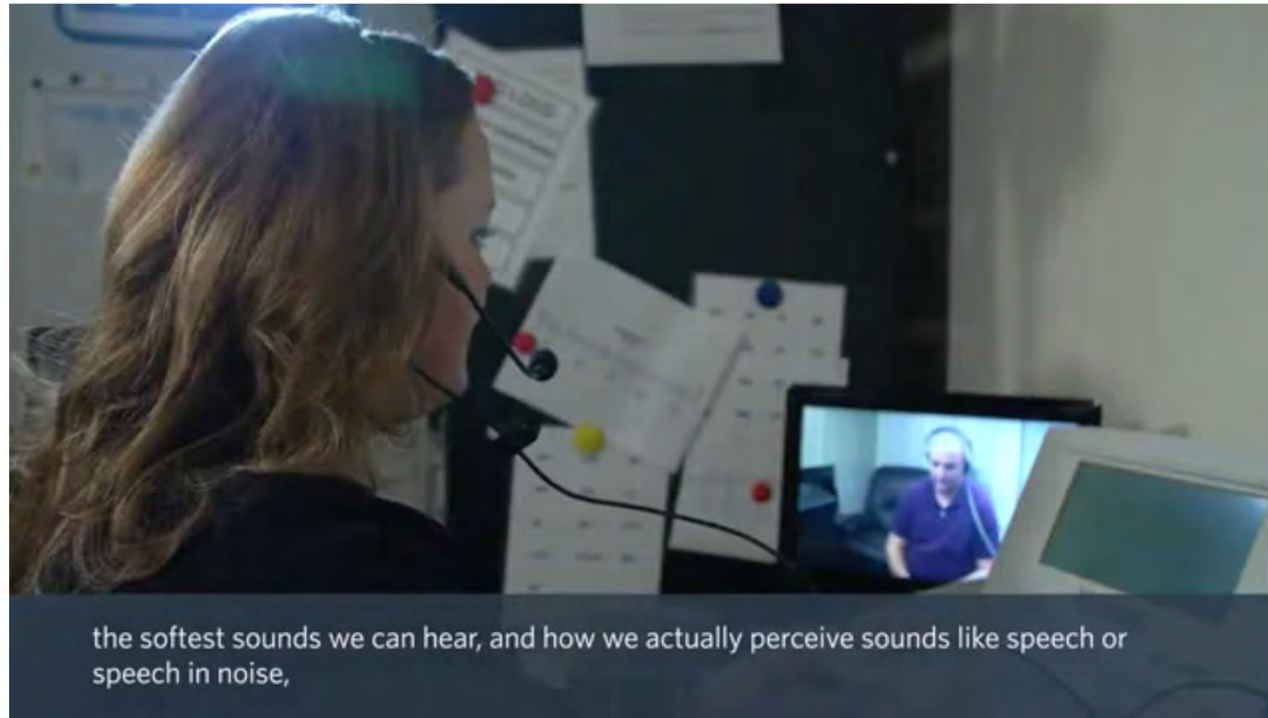


4:53 min

<https://www.vanderbilthealth.com/patient-resource/cochlear-implant-educational-videos>

Pre-visit patient education

Chapter 2: Is a Cochlear Implant Right for Me?

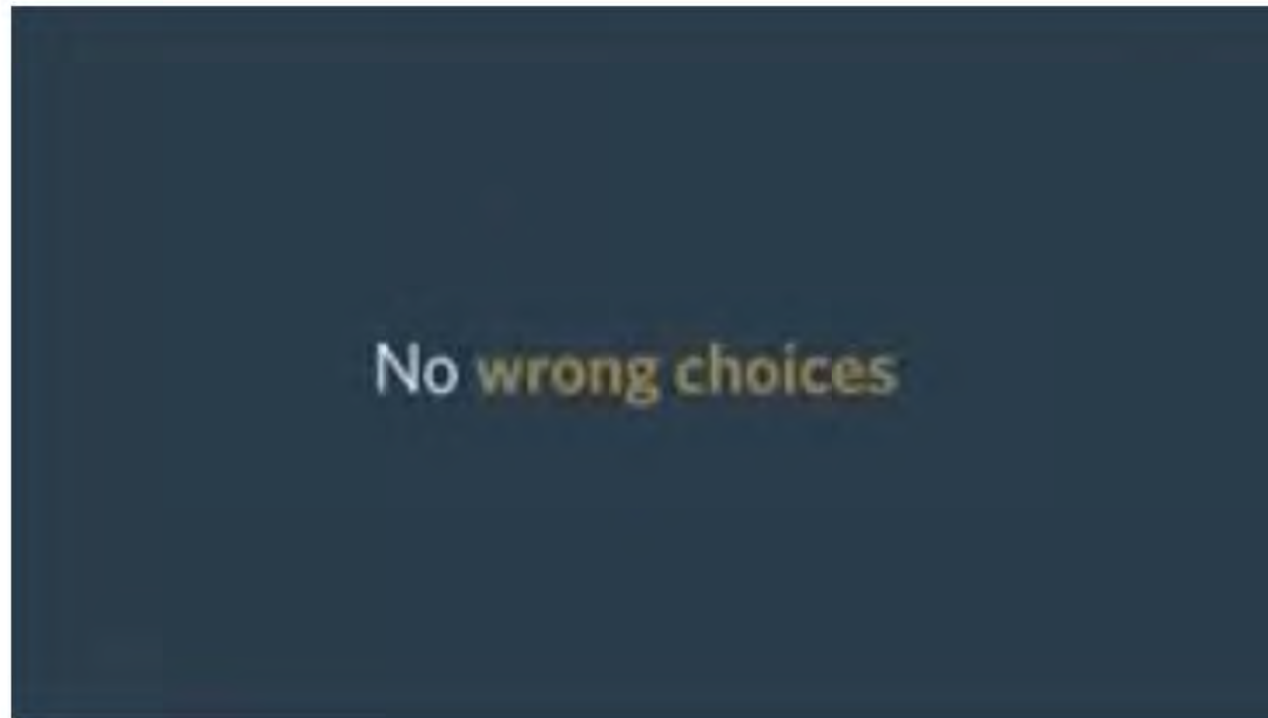


3:15 min

<https://www.vanderbilthealth.com/patient-resource/cochlear-implant-educational-videos>

Pre-visit patient education

Chapter 3: How Do I Choose the Right Cochlear Implant?

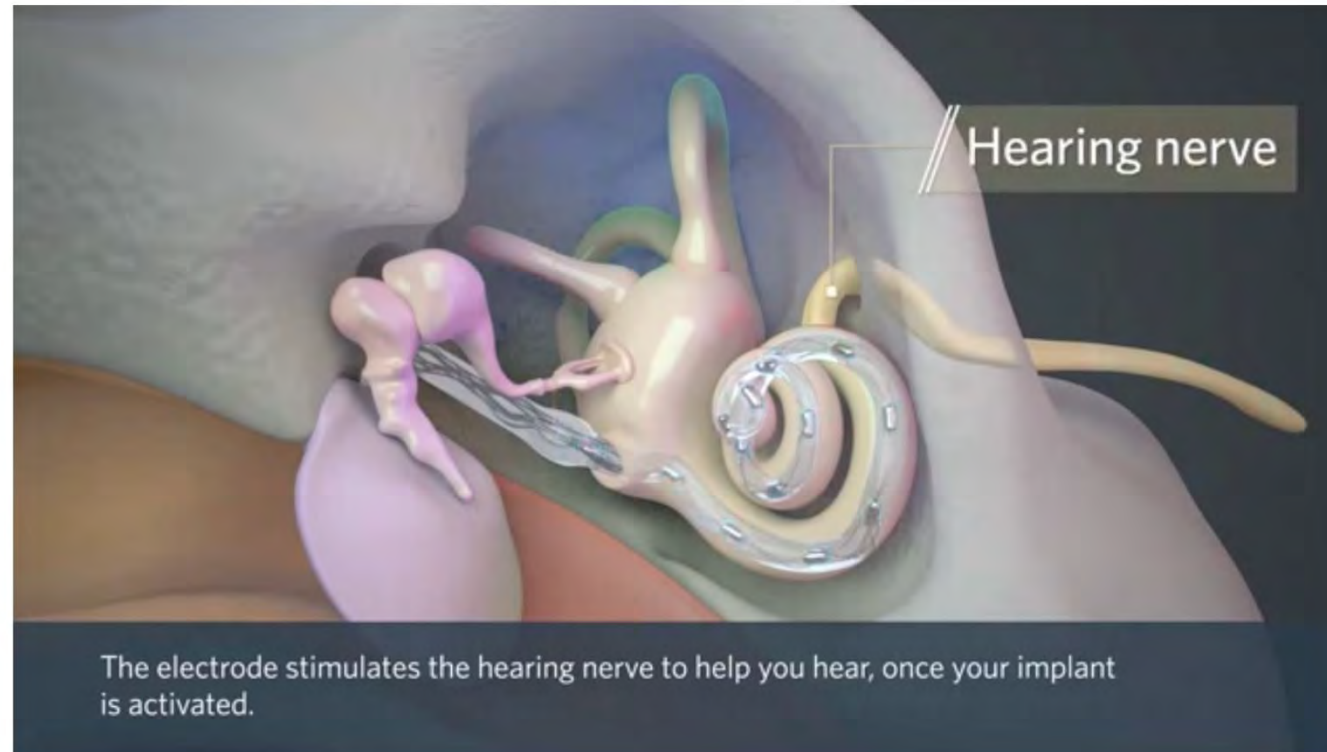


2:44 min

<https://www.vanderbilthealth.com/patient-resource/cochlear-implant-educational-videos>

Pre-visit patient education

Chapter 4: Cochlear Implantation Surgery

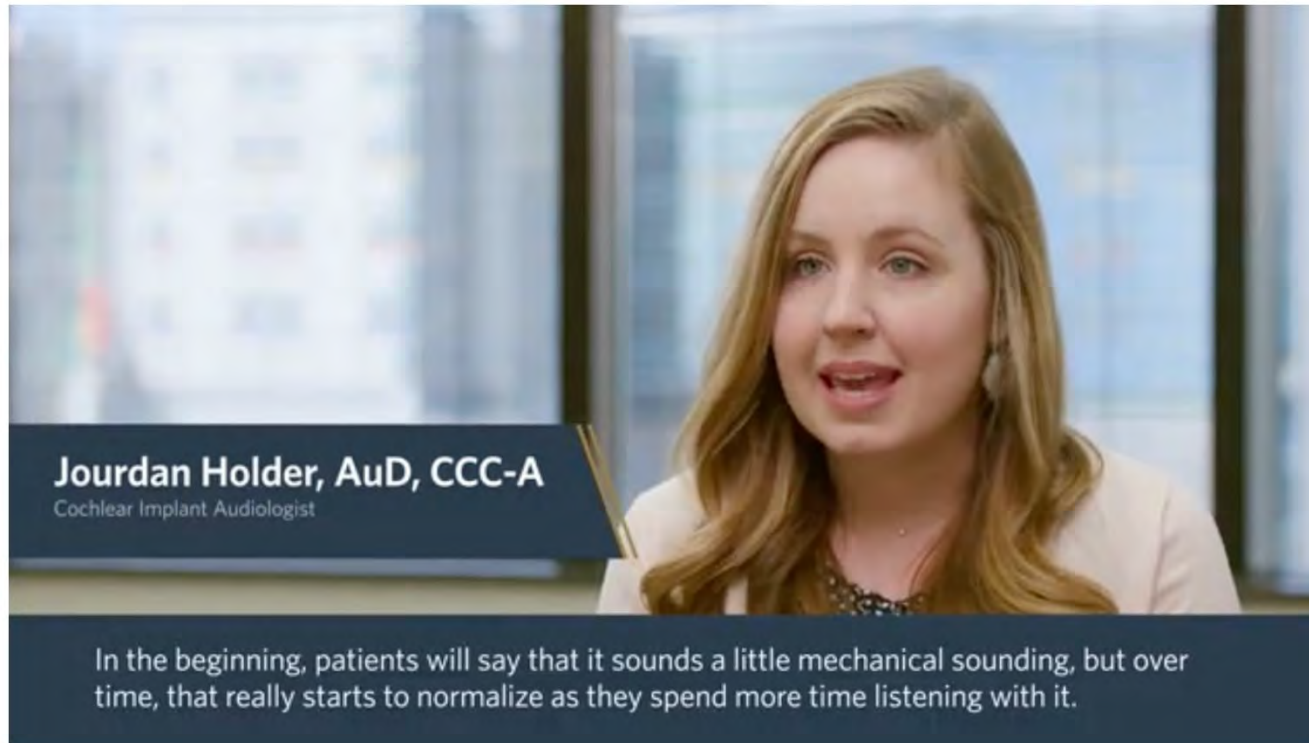


5:19 min

<https://www.vanderbilthealth.com/patient-resource/cochlear-implant-educational-videos>

Pre-visit patient education

Chapter 5: Cochlear Implant Activation and Mapping



3:32 min

<https://www.vanderbilthealth.com/patient-resource/cochlear-implant-educational-videos>

OPEN

Implementation Strategy for Highly-Coordinated Cochlear Implant Care With Remote Programming: The Complete Cochlear Implant Care Model

*Ashley M. Nassiri, *Aniket A. Saoji, *Melissa D. DeJong, *Nicole M. Tombers, *Colin L. W. Driscoll, *Brian A. Neff, †David S. Haynes, and *Matthew L. Carlson

**Department of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota; and †Department of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Nashville, Tennessee*



Bundled services

The screenshot shows the top of the Vanderbilt Health website. The header includes the Vanderbilt Health logo, a search bar, and a menu icon. Below the header is a large image of four people (three women and one man) smiling and talking. Overlaid on the bottom left of this image is a white box with a phone icon and the number (615) 343-9520. To the right of this box is a blue button that says 'Contact Us'. Below the image, the text 'MyHealth Bundles for Employers' is displayed. At the bottom left, there is a 'Quick Links' dropdown menu. At the bottom right, there is a small blue box with a white 'z' icon and the text 'Thank you for choosing VUMC M...'. Below this box is a button that says 'Register for a FREE webinar'.

VANDERBILT HEALTH

Search Menu

(615) 343-9520

Contact Us

MyHealth Bundles for Employers

Quick Links

Thank you for choosing VUMC M...

Register for a FREE webinar

The screenshot shows the 'Bundles We Offer' section of the Vanderbilt Health website. The header includes the Vanderbilt Health logo and navigation links: 'Find a Doctor', 'Patients & Visitors', 'Services We Offer', and 'Healthcare Professionals'. Below the header, the section title 'Bundles We Offer' is displayed. Underneath, it says 'We offer bundled care options for several common health care needs, including:'. This is followed by a list of seven bundled care options, each with a checkmark icon and a link: 'MyMaternityHealth for Employers', 'MyOrthoHealth for Employers', 'MyWeightLossHealth for Employers', 'MyRecoveryHealth for Employers', 'MyHearingHealth for Employers', 'MySpineHealth for Employers', and 'MyUrologyHealth for Employers'. Below this list, the section title 'Related Programs and Clinics' is displayed, followed by a link to 'MyHealth Bundles'.

VANDERBILT HEALTH

Find a Doctor Patients & Visitors Services We Offer Healthcare Professionals

Bundles We Offer

We offer bundled care options for several common health care needs, including:

- ✓ [MyMaternityHealth for Employers](#)
- ✓ [MyOrthoHealth for Employers](#)
- ✓ [MyWeightLossHealth for Employers](#)
- ✓ [MyRecoveryHealth for Employers](#)
- ✓ [MyHearingHealth for Employers](#)
- ✓ [MySpineHealth for Employers](#)
- ✓ [MyUrologyHealth for Employers](#)

Related Programs and Clinics

[MyHealth Bundles](#)

Single comprehensive payment covering all services associated with an ***episode of care***

Episode of care

- All services provided to treat a clinical condition or “procedure”
 - In this case, CI surgery + 3 months (medical episode of care)
- Bundled services, value-based care and insurance reimbursement



Same-Day Bundled Cochlear Implants



Concierge Service

Concierge service provided by a dedicated patient navigator to heighten and streamline the care experience



An easy path to cochlear implant surgery.



MyHearingHealth Bundle Program

Traditionally, a patient's journey from an initial assessment to receiving a cochlear implant could take several months. At Vanderbilt University Medical Center, appointments and travel are streamlined to a single- or two-day experience in many cases through the MyHearingHealth bundle.

MyHearingHealth provides patients with a high-touch care experience and an enhanced focus on convenience and communication. All services are "bundled" together, and patients experience low to no out-of-pocket costs depending on their employer's health care coverage.

MyHearingHealth Benefits

- Connection to a patient navigator, who streamlines the care experience
- Minimal time off work for appointments and travel to and from the medical center
- Low to no costs depending on employer's health care coverage
- Highly experienced clinical team, providing the most cochlear implants in the Western Hemisphere

Cochlear Implants

are small electronic devices that can provide a sense of sound to individuals with moderate to profound hearing loss.

The implant consists of an external device that sits behind the ear and an internal device that is surgically implanted under the skin.

Cochlear implants are different than hearing aids.

Hearing aids make sounds louder, allowing them to be detected by ears with structural damage and hearing loss. Cochlear implants bypass the damaged parts of the inner ear and directly stimulate the auditory nerve to transmit incoming sound to the auditory system. Cochlear implants help patients hear, improve speech understanding, and improve hearing-related quality of life in ways that hearing aids cannot.

Who is a good candidate for cochlear implant surgery?

Adults who have tried appropriately fitted hearing aids but are still struggling with everyday communication are likely candidates for cochlear implants. These include individuals who:

- Are experiencing hearing loss of a moderate to profound degree who are receiving minimal benefit from hearing aids
- Have hearing in both ears but with poor clarity. This is commonly reported as "I can hear speech, but I cannot understand it."
- Miss half or more of spoken words, without lip reading, even when wearing hearing aids
- Rely heavily on lip reading, despite wearing hearing aids

Get Started

Visit MyHearingHealthBundle.org and contact a patient navigator today.



Current subscribers:

Vanderbilt
Nashville Metro Schools System
Gaylord Entertainment

What are your goals?

- Build a destination center? Grow your CI practice? Streamlined patient onboarding? *Significantly greater CI utilization?*
- Improved processes inside and outside the operating room?
- Process analysis to improve your care delivery model?
- Streamline your processes to prepare bundled payments?
- App-based programming and increased use of telehealth?
- Overcome IT barriers re: PHI?

Deliver care differently

Clinical care delivery

2011

Adults (6-7 visits in 1st year)

- Activation Day 1
- Activation Day 2 (optional)
- 1 week
- 1 month
- 3 month
- 6 month
- 12 month

Children (7-8 visits in 1st year)

- Activation Day 1
- Activation Day 2 (optional)
- 1 week
- 1 month
- 3 month
- 6 month
- 9 month
- 12 month

2016-present

Adults (3-4 visits in 1st year)

- Activation
- 1 month
- 6 month (optional)
- 12 month

2018-present

Children (4-5 visits in 1st year):

- Activation
- 1 week (optional)
- 1 month
- 3 month (optional)
- 6 month
- 12 month

Clinical care delivery: ADULTS

2016-April 2024

Adults (3-4 visits in 1st year)

- Activation
- 1 month
- 6 month (optional)
- 12 month

Since April 2024

Adults (2 in-person visits in year 1)

- Activation (eSRTs optional, CI-aided audiogram, unaided audiogram*)
- 1 month (eSRTs, unaided audiogram, EAS fitting, CNC in CI ear)
 - *3 & 6 months: clinician discretion*
- 12 months (programming *only if needed*, CI-aided audiogram, unaided audiogram, contra ear audiogram, EAS/HA verification)
 - Remote check?
- follow-up, as needed
 - Assuming ~260 adults/year, cutting 2 aud visits in year 1
 - Cuts 520 visits/year
 - 1040 hrs/yr for 2-hr appts
 - 780 hrs/yr for 90-min appts
 - 520 hrs/yr for 1-hr appts

*for EAS candidates

Clinical care delivery: CHILDREN

2018-present Children (4-5 visits in 1st year)

- Activation
- 1 week (optional)
- 1 month
- 3 month (optional)
- 6 month
- 12 month

Protocol: “under construction” Children (~3-4 in-person visits in year 1)

- Activation (CI-aided audiogram, if possible)
 - *1 week at clinician discretion*
- 1 month (attempt eSRTs, PMSTB word rec, CI-aided audiogram, questionnaires)
- 3 month (eSRTs if not obtained at 1 mo, PMSTB, CI-aided audiogram, questionnaires)
 - *6 month (goal: remote programming with SLP/AVT guidance; visit optional with demonstrated month-for-month growth)*
- 12 month (eSRTs if not obtained previously, PMSTB, CI-aided audiogram, questionnaires, unaided audiogram & HA verification)

*for EAS candidates

The future of clinical care delivery

Remote tools

Considerations:

- Hospital vs. professional billing
- Licensure
- Patient/parent comfort with tech
- Cell phone and Wi-Fi service



WELCOME
TO THE FUTURE

Remote Programming by Advanced Bionics



AB Remote Programming



Participating in a Remote Programming session is quick and simple.



AB: Unique Remote Capabilities

AB and other manufacturers offer remote support.

- 1 Subjectively assess how your patient is progressing and discuss any concerns
- 2 Make global adjustments (master volume), bass and treble; adjustments of sound processor settings
- 3 Check impedances and datalogs
- 4 Enable Live speech



ONLY AB offers Remote Programming.

- | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
|  | Measure NRI |  | Create a new map |
|  | Measure upper and lower stimulation levels |  | Measure sides individually for bilateral recipients |
|  | Make advanced adjustments |  | Create and download programs |
|  | Conduct bimodal Remote Programming (CI + HA) | | |

Slide courtesy of AB

Benefits For AB Recipients



Access to care for those living far from their HCP



Flexibility and convenience to accommodate busy work and school schedules



Real-world cochlear implant adjustments



Receive the same quality of programming without the cost and time associated with traveling



Freedom to choose where to receive healthcare



Slide courtesy of AB



Benefits For The Professional



Now professionals can provide service from any location



Flexibility in scheduling appointments and potential to reduce no-show rate or late arrivals



Opportunity to provide more patient management solutions for patients who live at a distance



Provide programming services that are as effective as in-person appointments



Support patients in real-life hearing environments and increase patient satisfaction

Benefits to the Industry

SUSTAINABILITY

Remote Programming drives the transition to a resource-efficient future, as well as patient savings in time and costs.

DIFFERENTIATING CARE

The future of healthcare will demand that hospitals and clinics deliver better value, offer improved outcomes, and lower costs.

CLINICAL EFFICIENCIES

Hearing care professionals seek significant clinical benefits, efficiency, and ease of use from new technologies.

References:

<https://hbr.org/2015/09/better-value-in-health-care-requires-focusing-on-outcomes>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2021/05/17/how-to-differentiate-a-medical-practice-from-the-competition/?sh=6f11ee75cf6a>

<https://hitconsultant.net/2019/04/01/consumerization-of-healthcare-why-differentiation-is-critical-for-clinics/>

Slide courtesy of AB

PHONAK

2024 Medicare National Medicare Payment

Remote Programming Coding Guide for Reimbursement from Medicare and Other Plans

POS22 Audiologist is located in an on campus-hospital outpatient department, defined as follows: a portion of a hospital's main campus which provides diagnostic, therapeutic (both surgical and nonsurgical) and rehabilitation services to sick or injured persons who do not require hospitalization or institutionalization. (Description change effective January 1, 2016)⁴

Slide courtesy of AB

SUMMARY

- Poor CI utilization
- Typical clinical protocol: 12+ clinic visits from pre-op → 12 months
- Optimization of clinical protocols
 - eliminate follow-up visits that are not evidence based
 - **remote programming!!**
 - time for new and complex patients
- Evidence-based CI programming →
 - superior auditory outcomes
 - fast track to max performance
 - free-up schedule
 - “top of license”

} Benefits patients,
clinic, health care
economy, etc.

Cochlear Implant Team Efficiency Course

Best Practices For Cochlear Implant Programs

January to September, 2025

Course Director

Sarah Sydlowski, AuD, PhD, MBA

Director, Hearing Implant Program Associate Chief

Improvement Officer Cleveland Clinic



cochlearimplantraining.com

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A close-up photograph of a healthcare worker wearing full personal protective equipment (PPE). The worker is wearing a blue surgical cap, a white face mask, and red-rimmed glasses. They are also wearing a blue protective gown. The worker is looking down, focused on a task, with their hands visible at the bottom of the frame. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in similar PPE, suggesting a clinical or hospital setting.



Advanced Bionics Virtual Workshop Series: Empowered Patients. Efficient Practices.



Topics include:

- Continuous Clinical Improvements
- Candidacy and Evaluation
- Surgery and Activation
- Digital Solutions for Personalized Patient Care
- Cracking Coding and Reimbursement in the US

**Empowered Patients,
Efficient Practices:**
AB's Virtual Workshop Series

Thank you!

Questions?

Comments?



Thank you!

Please complete a
short survey on today's
training session.



<https://forms.office.com/e/Dh2rYD4jbW>