

ANSWERING AUDIOLOGISTS' PLEAS

Counselling guidelines can be a useful tool for audiologists who are unsure about how to provide the best information to their clients.

Audiologists are usually the first professionals who provide informational counselling to families when a person is diagnosed with being deaf or hard of hearing. However, due to a lack in their experience and the absence of an informational counselling guideline, these professionals are often uncertain of what type of information they should provide.

They generally end up providing counselling that is biased and limited, which leaves parents and patients frustrated when making decisions on possible intervention options and outcomes.

"For audiologists, the missing pieces to the puzzle include the absence of an informational counselling guideline, along with their lack of experience, knowledge and skills, which further contribute to their uncertainty," says Zandile Shezi.

Audiologists, primary caregivers and other experts from UKZN collaborated on developing an informational counselling guideline for audiologists. The guideline provides recommendations on the information that audiologists should provide to allow primary caregivers to make informed decisions, contextual factors they should consider, the recommended



Counselling guidelines can make intervention decisions easier for hard-of-hearing patients.

frequency of counselling sessions, and characteristics and skills that audiologists should have to provide this service.

"The guideline highlights the action indicators for an adequate counselling session," says Shezi.

"With this guideline, audiologists can minimise bias and improve their informational counselling to provide better developmental outcomes for the family and for the child who is deaf or hard of hearing."

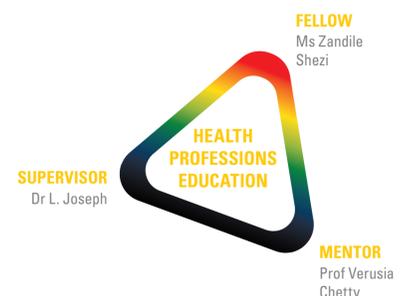


Towards Research Leadership

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