UK NSC hearing loss in adults recommendation

Following a review of the evidence against strict criteria, the UK NSC does not recommend introducing a national screening programme for hearing loss in older adults.

Hearing loss is a common problem that often develops with age and it has a significant impact on those affected. It is a major health problem.

The last review on screening for hearing loss in older adults was carried out in 2009 when a screening programme was not recommended.

The conclusion of this latest review is again that a screening programme should not be introduced.

Key findings supporting the UK NSC recommendation

- research into screening and hearing loss found a number of problems which prevent the UK NSC recommending a screening programme
- the evidence is too limited to establish the best type of test to be used, the level of hearing loss to target, the age at which people should start to be screened and the amount of time between screening tests
- there is also a lack of evidence about the acceptability of the available treatments
- despite the high prevalence of hearing loss and many options for amplification, a significant proportion of those with hearing loss do not use hearing aids for any length of time
- the research also reports a lack of evidence on the benefit from long term use of hearing aids

The UK NSC regularly reviews its recommendations on screening for different conditions in the light of new research evidence becoming available.

To find out more about the UK NSC’s hearing loss in older adults recommendation, please visit: legacy.screening.nhs.uk/hearing-adult