

Implementation and Training Framework for deploying Sound Scouts Automated Hearing Screening Solution in Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF)

Created for RACF Management Team



1. Preparation and Equipment Setup

Required Equipment:

- iPad (or Apple touchscreen device).
- SennheiserHD400s headphones -additional headphone options are listed in the Automatic Audiometer Guide located on the Sound Scouts support page, in app, or you can contact the Sound Scouts team. (<https://www.soundscouts.com/au/support/>).
- Stylus (generic rubber tipped tool acceptable) for tapping screen if residents have long fingernails and/or restricted hand mobility.

Technical Setup:

- To begin using Sound Scouts for Hearing Screening of Residents, Facilities must create a subscription which they can do by contacting the Sound Scouts team via email (contact@soundscouts.com.au) or phone (1300 424 122).
- To commence testing ensure the iPad is connected to the facility's Wi-Fi.
- Pre-install the Sound Scouts app (<https://www.soundscouts.com/au/download/>), open app and login to the facility's subscription via Settings > Log In.
- Test the app and familiarise staff with the login and session creation process.

2: Training and User Guidance

Training Staff:

- Access training resources provided by the Sound Scouts team. Resources are specifically designed to support RACF staff in assisting residents in using the Sound Scouts app, with step-by-step instructions for entering resident details, and completing a hearing test. Resources available on the Sound Scouts Support page.
- Staff training is available on how to handle common troubleshooting issues (e.g. ensuring correct equipment use and syncing results to SSIMPL (Sound Scouts Integrated Management Platform). Email Sound Scouts to access the most up-to-date resources (contact@soundscouts.com.au). Training needs may vary depending on digital fluency.
- Most importantly the testing process is simple and requires minimal technical expertise. It is designed to reduce barriers related to digital literacy among staff and residents.

User Manuals and Troubleshooting Guides:

- Refer to accessible, easy-to-follow, digital Sound Scouts Guides for quick reference during testing. Head to the Sound Scouts Support page to access Guides (<https://www.soundscouts.com/au/support/>).

3: Conducting Hearing Tests

Resident Testing:

- Staff to assist residents in completing the automated hearing test using the app. The test is non-invasive, requiring residents to respond when they hear tones/beeps through headphones.
- Standardised testing settings should be used, when possible, to ensure consistency across all residents (e.g. testing both ears on four frequencies).
- Staff should complete the Headphone Sound Check and guide residents through the trial and main test. Residents should be instructed to tap once when they hear a tone/beep.
- Staff to ask questions, as prompted by the app, relating to hearing health and willingness to take action if a hearing loss is detected.
- Staff to facilitate discussion around hearing test results. This may include encouraging the resident to see a health professional when a hearing loss is detected.

Test Duration:

- The test duration for both ears is typically less than 10 mins, making it a manageable addition to the resident care process.

4: Workforce Parameters

Workforce Integration:

- Staff, including carers and support personnel, need minimal training to administer the test.
- Ensure there are clear workflows and responsibilities for who will conduct the tests and monitor the results and support follow-up processes when a refer result is received. It's recommended to allocate hearing screening to a role rather than a person to ensure continuity of information and the service.
- Given the workforce challenges in aged care (including availability of audiologists), Sound Scouts provides a scalable, non-clinical solution that can be effectively used by non-specialist staff.

5: Data Management and Integration

Results Integration:

- Results from the Sound Scouts app, including audiograms and pass/refer outcomes, can be accessed via SSIMPL, the Sound Scouts Integrated Management Platform.
<https://ssimpl.soundscouts.com.au/portal/>
- SSIMPL is web based and allows easy access to all results.
- Staff should be trained to retrieve reports and integrate hearing test results into existing resident management dashboards to inform care decisions and communication strategies.

Privacy and Data Security:

- The facility should ensure they comply with privacy regulations, particularly concerning the storage and sharing of residents' hearing data.

Indicators of Value (for the Facility to Consider)

- ☐ Digital Literacy - Consider the digital literacy of staff and residents. Sound Scouts is designed to be intuitive, minimising technical barriers, but ongoing support is available.
- ☐ Experience - Evaluate the ease of testing for both residents and staff, focusing on user experience with the game-based format.
- ☐ Cost - Consider the cost-effectiveness of integrating Sound Scouts in comparison to traditional hearing testing services. The low need for clinical personnel reduces overall costs. Consider benefits for staff when equipped with a better understanding of residents' hearing limitations.
- ☐ Follow Up - Consider access to follow up services such as access to a healthcare professional when a hearing loss is identified.
- ☐ Workforce Parameters - Potential to leverage non-clinical staff to carry out testing, freeing up clinical staff to support follow-up care where necessary and to support ongoing management needs for those with hearing loss as required.

Part 6: Pilot and Continuous Improvement

Pilot Program

Date:

Implement a pilot phase with support from Sound Scouts Care Team, to gather data on the program's benefits and challenges.

Consider implementation with a small subset of residents (10-20 residents).

Assign team role, with a 'Hearing Champion' to run the Pilot.

Schedule a block of time for hearing screening or manage as suits the RACF's schedule.

Test in a quiet space when the residents are best able to concentrate.

Review results and discuss with the Sound Scouts team.

What went well?	What can be improved?	What are the next steps?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positives for residents• Positives for staff• Positives for others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What did we learn• Where do we need advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write down any action items• Include deadlines and dates as needed

Feedback Loop

- Collect feedback from both staff and residents to refine the testing process and ensure the framework is scalable across the organisation.

The Sound Scouts Hearing Screening Program framework outlines an approach to implementing Sound Scouts in aged care facilities, addressing critical factors such as cost, ease of use, and workforce integration. The scalability of Sound Scouts ensures that it can meet the needs of both metropolitan and regional aged care services, improving residents' hearing health and contributing to better cognitive outcomes.

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