The use of ecological momentary assessment to evaluate aided benefit with children
Danielle Glista (1, 2), Robin O’Hagan (1, 2), Maaike Van Eeckhoutte (1, 2), Susan Scollie (1, 2)
(1) Western University, (2) National Centre for Audiology

Objectives: This study investigated ecological momentary assessment (EMA) implementation with children and presents preliminary results specific to the quantification of real-world aided benefit for fittings specific to listening in quiet and noisy situations.

Background: Traditional approaches to assessing hearing aid benefit include laboratory-based tests and retrospective self-report surveys. The experience sampling method (ESM) is an alternate technique used to capture real-time data from real-world experiences. Included in ESM is EMA, an ecologically valid and patient-focused self-report data method that aligns with technologically driven research questions. In audiology, EMA can offer a detailed investigation of real-world aided performance, contributing to individualization of hearing aid fitting(s). Research suggests that EMA is feasible with adults and is a valid measurement of hearing aid outcome(s). The feasibility and data quality of EMA results collected with children is currently unknown.

Methods: Twenty-nine children aged 7-17 wore behind-the-ear hearing aids fitted to the DSL v5.0 child prescription with manually accessible programs including targets for listening in quiet (program 1: P1) and noise (program 2: P2). Children completed a one-week trial, outside of school time, with self-triggered, twice-daily EMA entries using both programs. Data collection included a tablet-based survey of situation-specific loudness, ratings of hearing aid benefit and program preference.

Results: On average, participants completed 12 entries during their trial (M = 9 days), totaling 334 entries. Findings suggest that situational loudness, as judged by the children, related to program use/preference, speech understanding and ratings of loudness.

Conclusions: Findings indicate that EMA methodologies are feasible with older children and enable the collection of real-time, ecologically valid data. In this study, EMA enabled the evaluation of hearing aid benefit specific to one noise management strategy: the DSL v5.0 child prescription, with targets specific to listening in noise.