



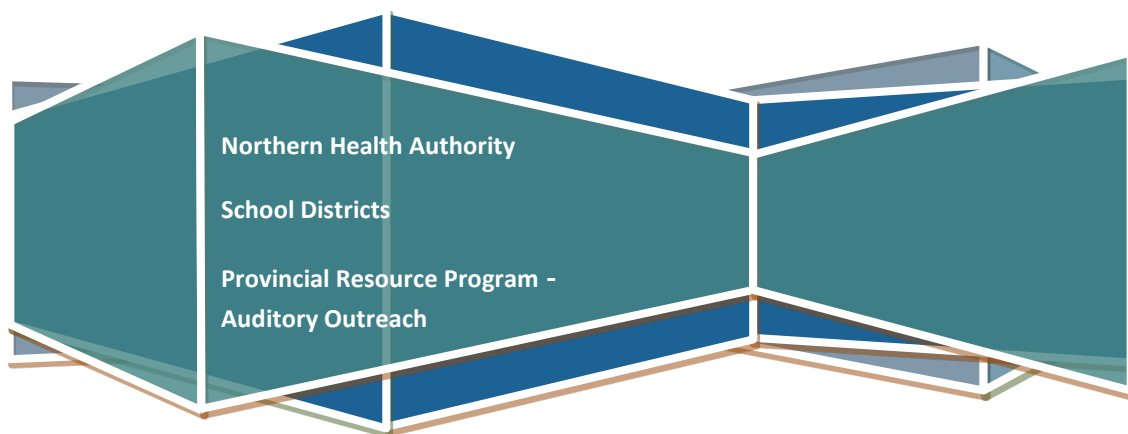
Regional Agreement

For the Delivery of

Assistive Listening Technology

to School Aged Children and Youth

Northern Health Region



Background

The obligations of each ministry involved in the delivery of assistive listening technology to children and youth are specified in the *Inter-Ministerial Protocol for the Provision of Audiological Support Service* (the Protocol), within the *Inter-Ministerial Protocol for the Provision of Support Services to Schools (2013)*. Through the Protocol, the British Columbia Ministries of Health, Children and Family Development, and the Ministry of Education and Childcare are making a commitment to provide assistive listening technology to students with peripheral hearing loss to give them better auditory access to their educational programs. The B.C. Ministry of Health provides funding and delegates authority to Regional Health Authorities for audiological services for children under 19 years old. The Ministry of Education provides funding and delegates authority to Boards of Education and the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach, for the provision of education support services and assistive technology required by students with diagnosed peripheral hearing loss.

Regional Agreements

In the Protocol, regional health authorities and boards of education are tasked with developing a regional process for “the sharing of information and coordination of audiology services that is collaboratively developed and effective.

Regional Agreement Between Northern Health Authority, Board(s) of Education and Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach

The Northern Health Authority and the school districts within its region hereby agree to accept the following regarding provision of assistive listening equipment through the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach for school aged children and youth with peripheral hearing loss who attend public schools, non-independent First Nations schools, or Group 1 & Group 2 independent schools. Participating independent schools will follow the same procedures as the public schools within this health region. The purpose of the program is to loan equipment from existing stock, to improve student access to educational programs.

A. Consultation

Consultation between staff in audiology clinics, school/district staff and Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach staff is critical to student success. It is expected that the Public Health manager responsible for the regional audiology program and the school district administrator responsible for student services will establish and maintain a communication process to address current and emerging operational matters regarding assistive listening technology in schools. The Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach, as a tertiary service provider to school age children and youth, is available for consultation to both Public Health clinics and schools/districts regarding the needs of this population.

In addition to equipment loans and services as outlined above, the Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach offers audiology, speech language pathology, and teacher of the Deaf and hard of hearing expertise and outreach consultation for students with cochlear implants. Our team supports the development of local capacity, through consultation with school staff and parents, assistance with assessments, and assistance with the establishment of goals for individual education plans. Auditory Outreach professionals use evidence-based practice, current research and clinical knowledge of the unique skills and needs of individuals with cochlear implants to support these students and their teams.

B. Dispute Resolution

In any cooperative endeavour involving multiple ministries, regional health authorities, and local boards of education, issues will inevitably arise. In addressing any issues, the principle of expeditiously resolving them at the lowest (i.e. most local) level possible will be respected. The process for resolving issues between ministries/agencies will, in order, involve:

1. Public Health audiology clinic staff, local school/district staff and Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach staff.
2. The Public Health manager responsible for audiology services, the school/district administrator responsible for student services and the manager of the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach Principal.
3. The Public Health Director responsible for audiology services, the Superintendent of the local School District and the Superintendent of the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach host district.

Rarely will issues need to be raised beyond the third level mentioned above, but, where this occurs, the concern will be forwarded to the appropriate Ministries for resolution.

C. Responsibilities

The delivery of assistive listening technology services to students with peripheral hearing loss requires a coordinated inter-ministerial approach. The direct delivery of educational services and resources required for those services, as specified in the *School Act*, is the responsibility of the local boards of education funded by the Ministry of Education.

Delivery standards for the regional health authorities and the local boards of education under agreement(s) with the Ministry of Education are provided in the Protocol, in the section entitled “Obligations of Each Ministry.”

The various responsibilities outlined below are further detailed, as follows:

1. The Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach will build, select and maintain a resource library of researched supported assistive listening equipment to support students who are deaf and hard of hearing to provide improved access to educational opportunities.
2. The Public Health audiology clinic will:
 - a. Conduct an assessment and evaluation of a student’s hearing.
 - b. Make recommendations for amplification or other personal assistive devices.
 - c. Provide a copy of audiological information to the designated representative of the board of education, with parental consent to alert them of hearing loss and possible implications for participation in the educational program.
 - d. Consult with school/district staff regarding the need/benefit of assistive listening technology (personal RM).
 - e. Where there is mutual agreement that personal Remote Microphone (RM) equipment should be used by the student, the audiologist will determine the most appropriate RM system for the student from a list of equipment available through the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach.
3. The Public Health audiologist will initiate the equipment request in collaboration with the Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (TDHH) and forward the necessary documentation to the administrator responsible for student services in the school district.
4. The school district administrator responsible for student services will complete and sign the required request form, acknowledging financial liability for loss or damage of equipment and send the completed forms with supporting documentation to the Provincial Resource Program, along with a signed parent/ guardian consent form.
5. The administrator responsible for student services or other designated school district staff member will send a copy of the completed request form to the Health Unit.
6. The Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach will, on receipt of the completed request form and supporting documentation, send the equipment to the Health Unit and notify the Health Unit and the School District when the equipment has been shipped.
7. Upon receipt of the equipment at the Health Unit, the Health Unit will verify the equipment on the child’s hearing aid to ensure that the electroacoustic response is appropriate.

8. The Health Unit will arrange for delivery of the equipment to a site agreed upon by the School District and audiology clinic and will arrange for training and/or provide written material for individuals working with the student to ensure they are aware of the student's individual needs.
9. When the student has been fitted with assistive listening technology (RM system), a designated individual in the school district will: (*Please Note: School district designated individual[s] is usually the Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing [TDHH]*).
 - a. Ensure the administrator of the school is aware the student is in receipt of assistive listening technology.
 - b. Inform the classroom teachers(s) and other staff about optimal assistive listening technology function and troubleshooting tips.
 - c. Ensure security measures are in place to protect the equipment.
10. The school administrator will identify an individual responsible for on-going maintenance and equipment checks.
11. The designated TDHH in the school district will assess the benefit of the equipment of the student on a regular, frequent and on-going basis.
12. When it is determined by the TDHH that equipment may need repair, contact PRP first- the equipment will be shipped to the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach. Neither clinics, nor school/district staff, will engage in equipment repairs, as it may void equipment warranties.
13. Every spring, the Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach will send a complete list of current equipment loans to each school district for review. School districts will confirm that the list is accurate and that all listed equipment is accounted for.
14. At the end of the school year, the equipment will be securely stored by the school district until the following school year.
15. The Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach will compile and maintain a database with records of equipment stock, student loans and their audiological information.
16. Equipment requiring repair, as well as units no longer required by students, will be shipped to the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach promptly. This may occur at times other than the end of the school year.
17. Procedures and protocols for students with cochlear implants are outlined in the Regional Agreement for the Delivery of Assistive Listening Technology to School Aged Children and Youth - Cochlear Implant Agreement document.
18. The Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach will provide education opportunities, training (e.g., webinars, in-services) and online resources (e.g., EasySheets, instructional videos) regarding assistive listening equipment and support for students who have cochlear implants. Regular communication between Auditory Outreach (i.e., newsletters & website posts) will inform community Audiologists, Teachers for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and other members of the school teams of upcoming educational opportunities.

D. Information Sharing

Information sharing between boards of education, public health authorities and the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach will be in accordance with the *School Act* and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy* legislation. To facilitate information sharing, Public Health clinics will, at the student's first visit to the clinic, seek parent/guardian signed consent to share audiological assessment and evaluation information with both the school/district and the Provincial Resource Program - Auditory Outreach.

E. Agreement Review

This agreement will be automatically reviewed every five years. Parties to this agreement may request a review at any time.

Approved and agreed on this date: _____.

On behalf of School District #28, Quesnel _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #50, Haida-Gwaii -
Queen Charlotte Islands _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #52, Prince Rupert _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #54, Bulkley Valley _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #57, Prince George _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #59, Peace River South _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #60, Peace River North _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #81, Fort Nelson _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #82, Coast Mountains _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #87, Stikine _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #91, Nechako Lakes _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of School District #92, Nisga,a _____
School District Administrator, Student Support Services

On behalf of non-independent First Nations Schools (FNESC) _____
Director, Special Education Programs, FNESC

On behalf of Independent Schools of B.C. (Group 1&2) _____
Director of Independent Schools & Homestay

On behalf of Northern Health Authority _____
Northern Health Manager/ Director

On behalf of Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach _____
Superintendent of Schools, School District #47, qathet

School District #28, Quesnel
School District #50, Haida-Gwaii - Queen Charlotte Islands
School District #52, Prince Rupert
School District #54, Bulkley Valley
School District #57, Prince George
School District #59, Peace River South
School District #60, Peace River North
School District #81, Fort Nelson
School District #82, Coast Mountains
School District #87, Stikine
School District #91, Nechako Lakes
School District #92, Nisga,a
Non- Independent First Nations Schools (FNESC)
Independent Schools (Group 1 & 2)

Procedural Responsibilities

For Delivering Assistive Listening Technology to School Aged Children and Youth

Northern Health
Region

Health Unit Audiology Clinic	Forms/ Communication	School District	Forms/ Communication	PRP - Auditory Outreach	Forms/ Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out audiological assessment and diagnostic services Get parental approval for audiogram release and report to the school district and PRP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Authority Information Form Release 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration between health unit audiologist and school district personnel regarding classroom environment and support available in school, which may influence the decision regarding the most appropriate assistive listening equipment required to maximize learning. 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine most appropriate equipment from PRP list of available equipment Inform family and provide PRP Permission to Share information form for parent signature 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share information with audiologist or technician regarding school and classroom environments Identify competencies needed to support equipment Specify who will provide any required in-service 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide list of available equipment to all public health audiology clinics, school districts and group 1 and group 2 independent schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loan library Equipment List
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completes and obtains parent/ guardian signature on PRP Permission to Share form (shared responsibility) 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide Permission to Share form via website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides Permission to Share form
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicate equipment being requested and sign the request form, signaling responsibility for appropriate equipment selection for the student Send request form, along with audiological information and Permission to Share form to school district for school district administrator signature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment Request form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and Sign request form agreeing to accept financial liability for lost/damaged equipment (district administrator) Completes and obtains parent/ guardian signature on PRP Permission to Share form (if audiology clinic hasn't done so) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide RM request for support form via website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for Support form
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward signed forms along with audiological information to PRP Send copy of RM request form to public health audiology clinic and e-mail when sent to PRP 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive complete Equipment request form and supporting documentation Communicate with health unit audiologist if equipment is not available or clarification required Discuss options with audiologist and TDHH responsible for the student in the district, if required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update student's confidential file 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update student's confidential file 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send equipment to public health audiology clinic along with equipment service report or packing slip E-mail audiologist and SD, equipment has been shipped or if delays anticipated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Service form

Procedural Responsibilities

For Delivering Assistive Listening Technology to School Aged Children and Youth (continued)

Northern Health
Region

Health Unit Audiology Clinic	Forms/ Communication	School District	Forms/ Communication	PRP- Auditory Outreach	Forms/ Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive equipment and complete listening validation Record in student's file 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide shipment tracking info if required 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete RM/HA equipment verification in accordance with best practice Record in child's file with appropriate documentation 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange for equipment to be sent to student's TDHH and provide training and/or written material for the use of the equipment and troubleshooting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record when equipment leaves the clinic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pick up equipment at the health unit or receive equipment at a designated location Equipment validation needs to be conducted by personnel trained to do listening check 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep note of serial numbered equipment on loan/ Packing Slip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide annual printout of district equipment currently on loan, or by request 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training and/or written material to school staff if health unit unable to provide.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report loss or damage promptly to PRP When serial numbered equipment is lost or intentionally damaged beyond repair, the School District is expected to cover the cost of replacement 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment Loss Form
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure school principal is aware of the equipment and that security measures are in place Ensure equipment is listed in the school inventory for insurance purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District protocol for equipment security 		
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide ongoing maintenance and equipment checks (e.g. regular listening check, purchase of batteries for the equipment and cords as required – School District responsibility to purchase items.) Validate and document the benefit to student (e.g. functional listening evaluation, teacher questionnaires, etc.) and seek audiologist's advice if problems, concerns arise 			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return malfunctioning equipment to PRP for repair or replacement with documentation and complete forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify PRP and clinic by email equipment was sent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive malfunctioning equipment and process repair or replacement. Courier repaired or replaced equipment within 3 business days to health unit audiologist or school district as requested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Service Form Equipment Return form

Health Unit Audiology Clinic	School District	PRP- Auditory Outreach
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct listening check of equipment at end of year ▪ Store equipment securely at school district for summer ▪ Send malfunctioning equipment to PRP for repair or replacement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide Technical Service repairs ▪ Provide Equipment Exchange form
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ship repaired equipment or replacements to either the health unit or school district, as requested, prior to school startup.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receive replaced equipment from PRP if required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Receive repaired equipment from PRP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remove equipment from inventory that is not functioning optimally and/or has an unusually high rate of repair

