

December 17, 2017

Re: Important Application Changes for *HearU Nebraska*

Dear Hearing Care Provider,

It doesn't seem possible that **HearU Nebraska** is closing in on our 10th year of serving Nebraska's Deaf and Hard of Hearing children. Since 2008, *HearU* has provided 641 hearing aids and served nearly 400 families in 73 different cities across Nebraska. We are proud to have never denied any child services. Unfortunately, a challenging financial environment and continued growth in our numbers has forced us to limit our services.

Starting January 1, 2018, financial criteria will be used to determine eligibility of services. A financial section has been added to the *HearU* application and **financial data will be used to determine eligibility**. Applications will fall into one of **three tiers based on household income, expenses, and family size**.

Tier One: *HearU* will provide **hearing aid(s), a care kit, earmold(s), 1 year supply of batteries, and dispensing fees** (equal to the current NE Medicaid rate and paid to provider). If the provider chooses to charge above the Medicaid rate, the parents are responsible for the difference. **Replacement earmolds** will only be covered if pre-approved through *HearU* and will depend on funding.

Tier Two: *HearU* will provide **hearing aid(s) and care kit only**. Parents will be responsible for dispensing fees, earmolds (initial set and replacements), and batteries. These fees will be determined by and paid directly to you, the provider.

Tier Three: Child **does not qualify** based on reported household income falling above the cut-off criteria.

If a child has received hearing aid(s) through *HearU* in the past and **replacement hearing aids** are being requested, a **new application** will need to be completed. Hearing aids will only be replaced **every 5 years** and only if funding is available (some exceptions may be made). The child's **parent(s) will be responsible for dispensing fees, earmolds, and batteries for all replacement hearing aids**. These fees will be determined by and paid directly to you, the provider.

If the reported household income falls within the **Medicaid or Medically Handicapped Children's Program criteria** (up to 185% poverty level), we will provide the families with the information they will need to apply for these programs. We will also inform you of this status and **offer temporary hearing aid(s)** so the child isn't without amplification during the Medicaid/MHCP application process. It will be up to you, the provider, to determine how to handle dispensing fees, cost of earmolds and batteries for any temporary hearing aids since Medicaid or MHCP may or may not reimburse you for these services if the child ends up qualifying.

The **new application** for **HearU Nebraska** will be available in a **fillable pdf** on our website <https://cehs.unl.edu/secd/nebraska-hearing-aid-banks/> and on the website for the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing <https://ncdhh.nebraska.gov/resources/hearing-aid-funding>

NOTE: We are aware that divulging financial information may be uncomfortable for some parents and we want to be diligent about limiting access to this sensitive information, therefore, we highly encourage you to **have the parents complete Parts C & D of the application and submit directly to HearU via mail or fax:**

Address: HearU Nebraska
107 Barkley Memorial Center
University of Nebraska - Lincoln
P.O. Box 830738
Lincoln, NE 68583-0738
Fax: 402-472-0363
Phone: 402-472-0043

Parts **A & B** should be completed by the audiologist and sent to *HearU* with the **audiogram**.

Please do not hesitate reaching out to us if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for all you do to ensure our Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in Nebraska have access to services.

Lastly, if you know of any person or organization who may want to support *HearU Nebraska* with a tax deductible donation, please feel free to provide them with our contact information, or let us know and we can contact them or send them a brochure. If you want brochures for your office, please let us know.

Sincerely,



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