

## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEARING CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN**

### **Technician Responsibilities**

1. Maintain current hearing conservation certification - Certification must be renewed every three years in order to maintain status as an Occupational Hearing Conservationist
2. Regulations / Instructions: Become thoroughly familiar with and maintain copies of all pertinent Instructions containing Hearing Conservation guidance:
  - DOD Instruction 6055.12
  - NEHC TM 6260.51.99-2
  - OPNAV Instruction 5100.23 series (shore)
  - OPNAV Instruction 5100.19 series (afloat)
  - MCO 6260 series (Marines)
  - Local Instruction (Base Order)
3. Maintenance of DOEHRS-HC Audiometric Equipment and Troubleshooting
  - Perform daily documented Functional Listening Checks
  - Perform daily documented Biologic Calibration Checks (DD 2217)
4. Perform pure tone air conduction hearing tests
  - Perform Reference hearing tests (DD 2215) on all military personnel, and DOD civilians in the Hearing Conservation Program (HCP). Perform Periodic/Annual hearing tests on all personnel in the HCP
  - Schedule follow-up testing after an STS (DD2216)
  - Provide a termination audiogram upon separation (active duty) or upon removal from duties in noise/separation for civilians, on a DD2216 form.
5. Counsel patients on results of testing
  - Explain how to read the audiogram, what the frequencies and thresholds mean
  - Educate patients on what is normal hearing and what is considered a hearing loss
  - Explain what an STS is
  - Explain reasoning behind follow-up testing if there is an STS (TTS versus PTS)
    - **Temporary Threshold Shift (TTS)** - A significant threshold shift detected during monitoring audiometry that resolves after a period of auditory rest
    - **Permanent Threshold Shift (PTS)** - A significant threshold shift that does not resolve after auditory rest
6. Fit Hearing Protection
  - Medically fit all noise-exposed personnel with pre-formed hearing protection, purchased by individual's unit or shop
  - Re-educate patients who sustain an STS on proper wear and maintenance of HPD's

- Document on the current audiogram the size and type of earplugs fitted for each ear

#### 7. Refer Patients for Follow-up Care

- Refer to Medical Officer if medical condition is apparent (draining ear, pain, head cold, sinus problem)
- Refer to Audiologist if patient sustains an STS, does not meet baseline criteria, or complains of hearing problems or tinnitus

#### 8. Educate and Motivate

- Document that all personnel in the Hearing Conservation Program have received annual hearing conservation education / training
- Deliver a one hour minimum initial class on the requirements of the program
- Tailor annual refresher training to the individual in conjunction with results of the annual audiogram

#### 9. Limitations

- Technicians cannot train or certify other technicians in Hearing Conservation
- Technicians cannot train other technicians on the use of DOEHRS-HC or DOEHRS Data Repository (DR)
- Technicians cannot diagnose hearing loss or ear disease
- Technicians are not trained to perform hearing tests for children or as part of a diagnostic evaluation process

#### 10. Responsibilities to the patient

- Provide valid audiograms
- Promote adherence to the Hearing Conservation Program
- Fit earplugs properly (each ear individually, not depending on ear sizes) & document sizes in medical record
- Counsel patients on how to insert plugs and how to clean them
- Provide a variety of hearing protective devices, allow the patient to choose
- Provide a neat, clean area for testing
- Protect patient privacy