Eastern Health

Hearing Conservation Program

Background

Exposure to noise levels that are beyond permissible limits can be an occupational hazard in the health care industry, which may necessitate the use of hearing protection and/or other control strategies.

The purpose of the program is to help reduce employee exposure to excessive noise levels in the workplace, and ultimately prevent illnesses related to occupational noise. Where feasible, exposure to noise levels that exceed allowable limits will be eliminated by either engineering controls (i.e. barriers, vibration damping, substitution, or source isolation) or administrative controls (i.e. job rotation, safe work practices, equipment maintenance, training and signage).

Individuals required or permitted to work in a location where noise levels exceed permissible limits, and where accepted engineering or administrative controls are not sufficient to reduce noise to acceptable levels, or not practical, must wear hearing protective equipment appropriate to the circumstances in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, applicable Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards and this program.

The purpose of the program is to:

- Ensure that all employees, physicians, students, volunteers, contractors, and agents of Eastern Health are protected from noise levels that exceed permissible levels.

- Establish and communicate Eastern Health's commitment to workplace health & safety in accordance with section 68 of the Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Health and Safety Regulations.

- Establish roles and responsibilities with respect to the hearing conservation program.

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1.0 Introduction

Eastern Health is committed to taking reasonable precautions to protect and maintain the health and safety of those exposed to noise above permissible limits through their work activities and tasks.

In circumstances where exposure to various levels of noise exists and job functions/activities must be performed in accordance with the Newfoundland Occupational Health and Safety Act (NL OHSA) and Regulations, as well as specific CSA standards related to the measurement of noise exposure and the appropriate selection, use and care of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The principal objective of the program is to identify, evaluate, and control potential occupational noise hazards in the workplace and, in addition, the management of all employees who are potentially at risk for developing noise-induced hearing loss.

1.1 Scope

The program applies to all Eastern Health employees, physicians, students, volunteers, contractors and agents that are exposed to noise levels that exceed permissible limits as informed by your manager.

1.2 Purpose

The Hearing Conservation Program outlines the responsibilities, procedures and tools to ensure the health and safety of Eastern Health employees, physicians, students, volunteers, contractors and agents when exposed to potential noise hazards in the workplace that exceed permissible levels.

1.3 Policy

Eastern Health is committed to taking reasonable precautions to protect and maintain the health and safety of those potentially exposed to noise above permissible limits through their work activities and tasks. Individuals required or permitted to work in a place where there is an exposure to noise, and where accepted engineering or administrative controls are not sufficient to reduce noise to acceptable levels, or not practical, must wear hearing protective equipment appropriate to the circumstances in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, applicable Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards and this program

1.4 Applicable Legislation and Standards

1.4.1 Occupational Health and Safety Legislation 2012

Section 68 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations outlines the legislative requirements for Newfoundland and Labrador related to noise hazards in the workplace

1.4.2 Canadian Standards Association

Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard Z107.56 – "Measurement of Noise Exposure" outlines the detailed requirements for noise exposure in the workplace. In addition, (CSA) Standard Z94.2 – "Performance, Selection, Care, and Use" outlines the specific requirements for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) in circumstances where noise hazards cannot be controlled, and are exceeding permissible limits. As stated in the Newfoundland and Labrador Occupational Health and Safety Legislation (section 68), where hearing protection is required, a written Hearing Conservation Program that meets the requirements of this standard is required.

1.5 Definitions

ACGIH: The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists is a private, not for profit, nongovernmental corporation whose members are industrial hygienists or other occupational health and safety professionals dedicated to promoting health and safety within the workplace.

Audiometric Test: A hearing test to determine the extent of any existing hearing loss and to monitor for on-going changes in hearing ability.

Administrative Controls: Methods of controlling employee exposures by job rotation, work assignment, time periods away from the hazard, or training in specific work practices designed to reduce exposure.

Canadian Standards Association (CSA): Canadian Standards Association (CSA) is an independent, not-for-profit association serving industry, government, consumers and other interested parties in Canada and the global marketplace. As a leading solutions based standards organization, providing standards and code development, application products, training and selected advisory services.

Decibels (dB): The decibel is a unit of measurement of sound pressure level that is a logarithmic and dimensionless.

Engineering Control: Methods of controlling employee exposures by design or modifications to equipment, systems, and processes to reduce the source of exposure.

Hazardous: The existence or potential existence of an unsafe or harmful condition, substance or circumstance.

Hazard: A condition, substance, behavior or practice with the potential to cause loss due to injury, illness or property damage.

Hazard Assessment: A hazard assessment is conducted by a qualified person to determine the respiratory hazards present and to assist in the selection of an appropriate respirator where required.

Hierarchy of Controls: A term that refers to using the most effective means possible to control hazards. The order of effectiveness to control hazards are: engineering controls that include elimination of the hazard, substitution with a different product or process, isolation of the hazard; administrative controls to change the way the work is organized and using personal protective equipment as the last resort.

Hearing Protection: Hearing protective devices are defined as sound barrier devices that block a predetermined amount of sound energy from being transmitted to the middle and inner ear.

Noise: A sound that is loud or unpleasant or that causes disturbance.

Noise Dosimeter: Is a specialized device used to measure the noise level a person is exposed to over a period of time, in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations, and applicable CSA standards.

Noise hazard area: An area is considered a noise hazard if the sound levels regularly exceed 85 dBA.

Noise surveys: Noise survey is another noise assessment technique that provides valuable information regarding sound levels in an area. The most common type is a general noise survey which measures sound levels in A-weighted decibels (dBA). Another important type of noise survey is octave band frequency analysis. This type of analysis assists in the selection of potential noise control measures.

Permissible levels: Permissible levels refers to the amount of exposure that an employee is allowed to be exposed too over a duration of time according to standards set by the ACGIH. In this instance, the allowable noise level exposure for an eight hour day is 85db.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Personal Protective Equipment is specialized clothing or equipment worn by employees for protection against health and safety hazards. It is designed to protect many parts of the body, i.e., eyes, head, face, ears and feet. In this program, the PPE being referenced is ear protection.

Time-weighted average: The time-weighted average (TWA) represents the average (noise) exposure measured over a typical 8-hour workday.

Threshold Limit Values: Threshold Limit Values (TLV's) are guidelines (not standards) prepared by the American Conference of Governmental industrial Hygienists, Inc.(ACGIH) to assist industrial hygienists in making decisions regarding safe levels of exposure to various hazards found in the workplace.

2.0 Program Administration

2.1 Occupational Health Safety & Rehabilitation Services

2.1.1 Occupational Health and Safety Division

- Ensure and encourage compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and Regulations and reports on same.

- Ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities and advise the work of managers and staff of Eastern Health and function in an internal consulting capacity with respect to the Hearing Conservation Program.

- Ensure the development, implementation, and management of the Hearing Conservation Program.

- Conduct preliminary noise exposure measurements to determine areas with potentially hazardous noise levels and identify employees in these areas;

- Ensure noise measurement equipment is properly calibrated before conducting noise measurements.

- Facilitate dosimetry noise level testing where necessary to validate noise level exposure. Ensure hearing protective devices are provided when engineering and/or administrative controls are not practicable or fail to reduce noise exposure to acceptable levels. Where engineering controls have been implemented, noise level monitoring will be conducted with management to ensure the engineering control has reduced noise levels to permissible levels. Ensure noise level monitoring is repeated when notified by management of changes to work processes or equipment in an area that may generate new noise hazards or render previous controls inadequate

    - When noise levels cannot be reduced to permissible levels, the Occupational Health & Safety Division will notify the Occupational Health, Safety & Rehabilitation Division to ensure hearing testing is arranged for the applicable employees of the area/department.

- Maintain records for all noise level monitoring;

- Ensure hearing conservation program training in consultation with Occupational Health and Rehabilitation Division is available to employees identified as being exposed to hazardous noise environments in the fit, use and care of the protectors provided;

- Review, evaluate, and maintain the Hearing Conservation Program on an annual basis.

2.1.2 Occupational Health, and Rehabilitation Division

- In consultation with managers, identify the requirement through the interpretation of noise level testing for and coordinate audiometric testing for employees exposed to unacceptable noise levels.

    - Audiometric testing shall be completed within 3 months of hire

    - Audiometric testing is required for all employees identified as being exposed to noise hazards exceeding permissible limits on an annual basis or where otherwise recommended by an audiologist or occupational physician.

- Inform managers and supervisors of employees that are required to receive audiometric testing.

- Identify the requirement for baseline testing when the employee is screened through Occupational Health and Rehabilitation;

- Obtain consent to communicate with an employee's Health Care Physician regarding their audiology test results if follow up is required;

- Review reports received from designated audiologists;

- Ensure recommendations from the Occupational Health Physician are discussed with the employee and documented in the employees Occupational Health file.

- Ensure records of employees' baseline and audiometric test results are maintained by Occupational Health and Rehabilitation Division for the period of employment and stored for 20 years post departure from Eastern Health.

- Ensure hearing conservation program training in consultation with Occupational Health and Safety Division is available to employees identified as being exposed to hazardous noise environments in the fit, use and care of the protectors provided;

2.2 Executive Management

- Comply with this program and the Personal Protective Equipment- hearing Protection Policy and support its implementation in the workplace.
- Maintain a healthy work environment to protect all employees, patients, residents, clients and the general public from the risk associated with exposure to noise levels that are above acceptable limits through legislative compliance and Eastern Health's Hearing Conservation Program.

2.3 Managers & Supervisors

- Ensure the Hearing Conservation Program is adhered to and applicable components are implemented and enforced;
- Ensure employees under their responsibility are aware of all areas in which they may work, where noise levels exceed permissible limits.
- Ensure employees working in areas where noise levels exceed permissible limits complete the Hearing Conservation Program education and training and recertification training every 3 years, and maintain training records in HRIS;
- In consultation with Occupational Health and Rehabilitation, coordinate audiometric testing for employees exposed to unacceptable noise levels
    - Audiometric testing shall be completed within 3 months of hire.
    - Annual audiometric testing is required for all employees identified as being exposed to noise hazards exceeding permissible limits.
- Areas that exceed allowable noise exposure limits, where reasonably practicable, ensure engineering and administrative controls are implemented to reduce noise levels to permissible levels.
- Ensure the Occupational Health and Safety Division is notified of potential or existing noise hazards and request that preliminary noise exposure measurements be conducted to determine areas with potentially hazardous noise levels and identify employees in these areas.

- Responsible for conducting hazard assessments in areas that have been identified by the Occupational Health and Safety Division as potentially hazardous noise levels.

- Ensure employees, who work in areas where noise levels exceed permissible limits, wear the appropriate hearing protection device and receive training in its use, when engineering and/or administrative controls are not practicable or fail to reduce noise exposure to acceptable levels.

- Ensure appropriate hearing protection devices are available for employees and visitors who must enter hazardous noise areas;

- Ensure proper signage is posted in areas where noise levels exceed allowable levels;

- Ensure the development and implementation of safe work practices and procedures to ensure the effectiveness of the hearing protection device.

- Ensure any concerns with the hearing conservation program are communicated to Occupational Health, Safety and Rehabilitation department;

- Ensure any changes to equipment/work processes that could potentially create a change in noise exposure or render previous controls inadequate is communicated to the Occupational Health, Safety and Division.

2.4 Employees, Physicians, Students, Volunteers

Who work in areas where noise levels exceed permissible levels shall:

- Participate in required education and training sessions on noise hazards, hearing loss, and proper use of hearing protection;
- Participate in baseline and annual hearing testing;
- Wear appropriate hearing protection devices in the designated hazardous noise area in accordance with safe work practices and procedures to ensure the effectiveness of the hearing protection device
- Report suspected noise hazards and any concerns/issues with the hearing protection devices provided, to their supervisor immediately and document the noise hazard on the Employee Incident/Accident Report and Investigation form;
- Maintain hearing protection in a clean condition and in proper working order.

2.5 Contractors and Agents

Who work in areas where noise levels exceed permissible levels shall:

- Wear appropriate hearing protection devices in the designated hazardous noise area in accordance with safe work practices and procedures to ensure the effectiveness of the hearing protection device
- Report suspected noise hazards and any concerns/issues with the hearing protection devices provided, to their supervisor immediately and document the noise hazard.
- Maintain hearing protection in a clean condition and in proper working order.

2.6 Occupational Health and Safety Committees & Worker Health and Safety Representatives

- Review incident/ accident statistics to identify trends and forward suggestive controls to the manager.
- Provide support and promote education and training in relation to hearing protection.

3.0 Program Components

The components of the Noise Control and Hearing Conservation Program are as follows:

3.1 Hazard Assessments

The manager will be responsible for conducting hazard assessments in areas that have existing or potential noise hazards. Part of the hazard assessment process managers must ensure preliminary noise exposure measurements are completed by the Occupational Health and Safety Division to determine areas with potentially hazardous noise levels and identify employees in these areas.

3.1.1 Purpose

The purpose of conducting a hazard assessment for potential noise hazards is to identify the noise level exposures to staff(s), that either have the potential to approach occupational exposure limits or have the potential to cause adverse health effects. Through the hazard assessment, these hazards will be identified, assessed and evaluated. Controls will be recommended by the Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator and implemented by the manager of the department, as per the hierarchy of controls using engineering and administrative controls, respectively, followed by personal protective equipment as a last control measure.

3.2 Conducting the Hazard Assessment

3.2.1 Hazard Identification

Eastern Health has identified various work areas, tools and equipment that are known to generate high levels of noise. Due to the geographical area and the large number of employees it encompasses in various positions, representative noise level assessments will be conducted throughout Eastern Health in areas deemed high priority as indicated below.

Areas deemed high priority:

• Kitchen Facilities;

• Mechanical Rooms – compressor, boiler, refrigeration, and emergency generator rooms;

• Laundry Facilities;

• Print Shops;

• Maintenance/Carpentry Workshops;

• Areas where there is use of handheld power tools/equipment – wet vacuums, paint shakers, sanders, hammers, saws, prosthetic finishing equipment, air compressors, routers, etc.

3.2.1.1 Area Noise Level Measurements:

These measurements indicate the level of noise that is present in an area at a given time. Noise levels must be constant and the worker must be staying in the area for the duration of their work shift.

Tool Used: In this instance, the tool used to measure the noise level is a sound level meter (See Image 1).

Image 1: Sound Level Meter

Image 2: Dosimeter

3.2.1.2 Personal Exposure Measurements:

This type of measurement refers to exposure to noise levels over a specific time frame, usually eight hours. The measurements are recorded by equipment that computes the total amount of sound energy taken in by the microphone.

Tool Used: A piece of equipment used to measure an individual's average noise level exposure over the duration of their shift, commonly referred to as a dosimeter (See image 2). An individual can clip this device to their belt accompanied with a small microphone that fastens to the person's collar, close to an ear. Wearing this device over a full work shift gives the average noise exposure for that particular person. This type of measurement is useful in situations where a person is changing locations and noise tends to vary in duration and intensity.

3.2.2 Hazard Evaluation

Noise level assessments will be conducted throughout Eastern Health in areas deemed high priority. The assessments will identify areas that exceed permissible noise exposure levels established by ACGIH.

3.2.3 Hazard Controls

Where noise levels have been measured and indicate levels that exceed allowable limits, the Occupational Health and Safety Division will ensure, where practicable, that the department manager have implemented engineering and administrative noise control methods in order to reduce noise hazards to permissible levels.

The hierarchy of controls includes engineering, administrative, and personal protective equipment methods. The Occupational Health and Safety Division will use a combination of all methods to reduce an employee's exposure to hazardous noise levels in the workplace as outlined below:

i. Engineering Controls

Engineering controls are the most effective and should be given first consideration. When implemented correctly, engineering controls can reduce noise levels to within acceptable limits and potentially eliminate the need for administrative controls or personal protective equipment. Engineering control methods reduce noise levels at the source, along the hearing pathway, and in the hearing zone of the worker. They include elimination of the noise source, substitution with a less noise producing machine, and/or design modification to devices/machines to reduce noise.

- Where engineering controls have been implemented, noise level assessments will be conducted to ensure the engineering control has reduced noise levels to permissible levels.

- Noise level assessments will be repeated where changes to work processes or equipment generate new noise hazards or render previous controls inadequate.

ii. Administrative Controls

Administrative controls alter the way work is done and is used to reduce the risk associated with hazardous noise levels. Administrative controls include safe work practices and procedures, education and training programs, signage, equipment maintenance, work-rest cycles, and job rotation.

Area/Program Managers will ensure signage is posted and maintained at entrances or on the periphery of the areas where noise levels are hazardous.

Signage will clearly state that a noise hazard exists and will describe the personal protective equipment that is required

iii. Personal Protective Equipment

When it is not practicable to control the hazard with engineering on administrative controls, personal protective equipment (PPE) must be used. Hearing protection devices such as earmuffs and earplugs must be selected in accordance with the most recent CSA Z94.2 "Hearing Protection Devices – Performance, Selection, Care and Use," standard and provided to employees.

3.4 Audiometric Testing

New and existing employees who work in areas that exceed permissible noise exposure levels established by ACGIH are required to have a baseline audiometric test completed and an annual audiometric test, or where otherwise recommended by an audiologist or occupational physician for the duration the employee is working in areas that exceed permissible noise levels.

Baseline Audiometric Testing

New Employees

I. Shall be completed within three months of hire.

II. Occupational Health Nurse identifies the need for baselines audiometric testing when the employee is screened through Occupational Health and Rehabilitation.

III. At the time of pre-placement, the Occupational Health Nurse must obtain consent to communicate with the workers' Health Care Physician regarding their audiology test results if required.

IV. The Occupational Health Nurse enters the new employees name into the shared Hearing Screening Drive. The name should be entered into the appropriate group/work area.

V. The designated administrative support for the applicable area/program will monitor entries into the shared drive and arrange for baseline testing through the approved external audiologist/company.

Existing Employees

I. The area/program manager in consultation with Occupational Health and Rehabilitation Division are responsible for identifying the need for audiometric testing for employees under his/her responsibility.

II. The area/program manager is responsible for coordinating audiometric testing with an external service provider in consultation with along with OHR division for employees under his/her responsibility.

Annual Audiometric Testing

I. Annual audiometric testing or where otherwise recommended by an audiologist or occupational physician, is required for all employees identified as being exposed to noise hazards exceeding permissible limits.

II. The area/program manager is to ensure annual hearing tests are scheduled for the applicable employees for the duration the employee is working in areas that exceed permissible noise levels.

Review of Audiologists Reports

I. Reports are received from the designated audiologists and reviewed by Occupational Health Nurse assigned to the area/program.

II. If the audiology report indicates normal findings as indicated by the audiologist, the Occupational Health Nurse will enter the date for follow up testing into the Shared Hearing Drive.

III. Approved audiologist/company provides a copy of the employee's hearing assessment report to the employee.

IV. Based on their assessment, the approved external audiologist/company will refer employee to Ear, Nose and Throat Physician, if necessary.

V. The designated administrative support for the area/program is responsible for arranging follow up testing.

VI. The Occupational Health Nurse will forward any reports that indicate abnormal findings noted by the audiologist to the Occupational Health Physician for review.

VII. The Occupational Health Physician will review the report within 2 weeks and send recommendations back to the designated Occupational Health Nurse.

VIII. The Occupational Health Nurse will arrange for the implementation and communication of the Occupational Health Physicians recommendations to the Occupational Health & Safety Coordinator, area manager, and the employee.

3.5 Hearing Protection Devices

Personal hearing protection devices are sound barrier devices that block a predetermined amount of sound energy from being transmitted from the surrounding environment to the middle and inner ear. The level of protection provided by a hearing protection device is indicated by a grade, class, or noise reduction rating (NRR). Employees will be required to wear approved hearing protection devices when engineering and administrative controls are not practicable or fail to reduce noise exposure levels to permissible levels as indicated by ACGIH.

The Occupational Health and Safety Division will provide guidance to managers in the selection of the appropriate hearing protection devices for their department in accordance with CSA Z94.2"Hearing Protection Devices – Performance, Selection, Care and Use."
(See Appendix A for hearing protection guidelines)

3.5.1 Hearing Protection - Selection

Appropriate hearing protection devices will be determined by the Occupational Health and Safety Department using the following processes/considerations:

I. Noise level assessment of a work area.

II. Calculated time weighted average (TWA) in relation to the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists threshold limit values.

III. Amount of sound reduction required to reduce noise levels to permissible levels and in accordance with the most recent version of CSA Z94.2 standard ""Hearing Protection Devices – Performance, Selection, Care and Use." (See Appendix A)

V. Other considerations include:

- Comfort level;
- Interference with other PPE;
- Physical restrictions, i.e., ear canal size, cheekbone and ear shape and size;
- Environmental Factors, i.e., temperature in the workplace, chemicals present in the workplace and its effects on HPD materials.
- Overprotection (See Overprotection Guidelines for more information –Appendix A);

• Double Hearing Protection (See Double Hearing Protection Guidelines for more information – Appendix

3.5.2 Hearing Protection – Types

I. **Aural Inserts (Ear plugs) –** placed into or against the ear or the entrance of the ear canal to form a seal or block sound. Can be generally categorized as foam, pre-molded, formable, custom molded, and semi-insert (caps) styles.

Semi-insert (caps) Ear Plugs

Custom-Molded Ear Plugs

Formable Foam Ear Plugs

Pre- Molded Ear Plugs

II. **Circum-aural protectors (Ear muffs) –** consist of rigid molded plastic ear cups that are filled with fluid, foam, or gel filled cushions, and held in place by spring loaded headbands. Ear muffs surround the ear and create a seal to prevent hazardous noise from entering the auditory canal.

3.5.3 Hearing Protection Factor

Selection of Hearing Protection Based upon Grade and Noise Exposure in dBA

Hearing Protection Based upon Grade and Noise Exposure		
dBA Average per 8 Hours	Grade	Class
≤90	1	C
≤95	2	B
≤100	3	A
≤105	4	A
≤110	Dual Hearing Protection Required. Use a minimum of a Grade 2 or Class B earmuff and a Grade 3 or Class A earplug.	

Double Hearing Protection Guidelines

Double hearing protection (earplugs in combination with earmuffs) is required where hazardous noise exposure levels are greater than 105 decibels on an A weighted scale for a period equivalent to an 8 hour exposure.

Wearing double hearing protection can be uncomfortable and lead to resistance in wearing hearing protection. Where hazardous noise levels require the use of double hearing protection, careful evaluation of the noise exposure must take place and the implementation of engineering and administrative controls should be considered first.

Overprotection Guidelines

Reduction of hazardous noise levels must be reduced to the recommended 8 hour sound level exposure of 85dBA, however reducing noise levels below 70 dBA by means of hearing protection is not recommended. Noise reduction below 70 dBA may result in the wearer feeling isolated and/or distort the sound of speech, machinery, and warning sounds.

3.5.2 Hearing Protection – Use & Care

Hearing protection will be provided in either disposable or reusable form. Employees shall follow safe work practices and procedures to ensure the effectiveness of the hearing protection device. Such practices will include, but are not limited to:

- Using hearing protection devices in accordance with manufacturer instructions.
- Ensuring clean hands when inserting or removing earplugs.
- Checking the integrity of the device prior to use and reporting any deficiencies to his/her supervisor.
- Wearing hearing protection devices prior to entering and while working in a work area where noise levels are above permissible limits.
- Employees using reusable devices shall ensure they are cleaned regularly.
- Earmuffs should be inspected to check for cracked cups, hardened or deformed cushions or weakened band cushions, and should be replaces when deficiencies are identified
- Disposable hearing protection devices should be thrown in garbage after each use. Do not reuse disposable hearing protection. Do not share disposable hearing protection.
- Inform their supervisor/manager immediately if employees experience any issues while wearing hearing protection devices.
- Ensure staff and management consult the manufacturer and adhere to recommendations concerning the frequency of replacing ear cushions and entire ear muffs for optimal use.

Note: Headphones are not hearing protection devices and do not provide protection against hazardous noise levels.

For additional information on the care of Hearing Protection Devices, See Hearing Protection – Care Guidelines **(Appendix A)**

3.6 Education and Training

An essential part of a Hearing Conservation Program is education and training. Employees should understand why hearing protection is important, how they can protect themselves from hearing loss, and the process Eastern Health follows to ensure employees are protected. Therefore, it is a requirement that all new and existing employees that work in areas where noise levels exceed permissible limits, take part in Hearing Conservation Program education and training (as prescribed by Occupational Health, Safety and Rehabilitation Department).

Developed by the Occupational Health Safety & Rehabilitation Department, the education and training program will cover the following components:

- The health effects of noise
- Noise level assessment tools;
- The purpose and procedure for audiometric testing;
- Noise control methods;
- The purpose of hearing protection, advantages/disadvantages and attenuation of various types, including instructions on the proper selection, fitting, use and care;
- How to inspect, fit, and remove hearing protection.
- How to report a suspected noise hazard;
- Roles and responsibilities of employers and employees in the hearing conservation program and
- Legislative requirements.

Existing Employees

i. The Occupational Health, Safety & Rehabilitation Department will ensure the hearing conservation program training is available to employees identified as being exposed to hazardous noise environments in the fit, use and care of the protectors provided;

ii. The area/program manager will provide the education and training session, and ensure the training is recertified every 3 years.

New Employees

i. Employees requiring Hearing Conservation Program education and training are identified as part of the hazard assessment process.
ii. Area / Program Managers are provided the education and training materials from Occupational Health, Safety, and Rehabilitation Department.
iii. Area / Program Managers provide hearing conservation education and training session as part of new employee orientation.

3.7 Recordkeeping

The following Hearing conservation program records will be maintained by Eastern Health:

Hazard Assessments

I. Occupational Health and Safety Division and the Department Manager will maintain copies of hazard assessments.

Noise Level Surveys

I. Occupational Health & Safety Division are responsible for conducting preliminary noise level measurements using a noise level meter to identify areas that exceed permissible noise levels established by the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH). Such documents will be maintained by the Occupational Health and Safety Division and the Department Manager

II. When dosimetry testing is required, an approved external Industrial Hygienist will be contacted to provide the service and the Occupational Health and Safety Division and the Department Manager will maintain the results who will in turn provide copies to the employees.

Audiometric Testing Results

I. Occupational Health and Rehabilitation will ensure records of employees' baseline and audiometric test results are maintained by OHSR for the period of employment and stored for 20 years post departure from Eastern Health

II. Upon termination of employment, the employee may request a record of noise exposure.

Education and Training Records

I. Documentation of Hearing Conservation Program training will be kept with the departmental manager.

II. Hearing Conservation Program training records will be maintained in HRIS by the Occupational Health and Safety Division.

3.8 Program Evaluation and Improvement

I. Occupational Health, Safety and Rehabilitation will review the Hearing Conservation Program on an annual basis. The program review will include an evaluation of:

   a. The need for further noise assessment;

   b. The adequacy of hazardous noise controls;

   c. Hearing testing data from year to year;

   d. Effectiveness of education and training program.

II. Issues identified from the program review will be documented in an action plan and deficiencies will be promptly addressed as determined by the Occupational Health, Safety, and Rehabilitation Department as well as Occupational Health and Safety Committees