Trends In Amplification

From the Editor

With all the technology, the measurements, the adjustments, and the decision making in fitting hearing aids, we can never lose site of the fact that the bottom line is patient outcomes. If the patient isn't receiving hearing aid benefit or isn't satisfied with their hearing aids, the fitting is a failure. It is for this reason that discussions of hearing aid outcomes have been featured so prominently in *Trends in Amplification*. Although there is little argument that hearing aid outcomes are important, the specific outcomes to measure and what they tell us, has been continuously debated.

- How many dimensions of outcome are there?
- What types of measures are useful for quantifying outcome in these dimensions?
- Which outcome measures provide novel information and which duplicate other measures?
- Can hearing aid outcomes be modeled in a complete and accurate way?
- What patient variables interact with hearing aid outcomes?

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to provide accurate answers to any of these questions through clinical practice. However, large scale research studies can provide important information that can be applied clinically. This will result not only in improved clinical practice, but should also improve clinical time efficiency. Fortunately, such research has

been started, and much more is known about appropriate outcome measures now than a few years ago. In this issue of *Trends in Amplification*, we are fortunate to have Larry E. Humes, PhD, an expert in the area of outcome measures, discuss a few recent studies aimed at improving our understanding of hearing aid outcomes and how factor analysis can be applied to begin to create a comprehensive outcomes model.

Dr. Humes is currently a professor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences, Indiana University. He received his Master's degree in clinical audiology from Central Michigan University in 1976 and his PhD in audiology and hearing science from Northwestern University in 1979. He has been at Indiana University since 1986 and prior to that was on the faculty at Vanderbilt University for 8 years.

He has served on the editorial board for the *Journal of the American Academy of Audiology* and the *Australian Journal of Audiology*, as section editor or associate editor for *Ear and Hearing* and the *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, and as editor-for-hearing for the latter journal. He has over 120 scholarly publications and more than 165 presentations on a variety of topics in audiology and hearing science. His most recent research activities have been focused on age-related changes in auditory perception, including speech-recognition ability, and on outcome measures for hearing aids.

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