

Lost Cochlear Implant System and Lost Hearing Aid Policy



Updated by Catherine Totten
Revised: 9 November 2019
Due for revision: November 2021

LOST COCHLEAR IMPLANT SYSTEM AND LOST HEARING AID GUIDE

It is extremely important that extra care is taken in looking after sound processors, hearing aids and rechargeable batteries. During the last year alone we have replaced over **27 lost processors** at a cost of **£148,500** to the NHS. Each lost processor costs just **over £5500** to replace. We are all aware the NHS funding is limited and lost processors and other lost items therefore have significant impact on our resources. Patients can help reduce the risk of loss by ensuring that processors are securely attached at all times.

If a processor, hearing aid or rechargeable battery is lost you must:-

1. Thoroughly search for the lost item: Re-trace your steps if you were out when the item was lost. If the items were lost in a public place, speak to the Manager or Security Officer. Put up notices in the park/street.
2. Report a lost processor or hearing aid to the Police who will issue you with a lost property number. If you have problems with this please let us have the name of the Duty Officer and telephone number of your local police station and we can call them on your behalf. A lost property number is helpful because it means the item will be returned to you if it is handed in.
3. Please contact the Yorkshire Auditory Implant Service (YAIS) immediately to inform us that a sound processor, hearing aid or rechargeable battery has been lost. Once we are informed of the loss we will endeavour to ensure that they are replaced within two working days. You will need to collect the replacement item/s from the Listening for Life Centre in Bradford. An "Accidental Loss of Sound Processor" form (Appendix 1), will need to be completed when you collect the item/s.
4. We will replace a lost processor with a device which is compatible with the internal component of the implant. However, this means that we cannot guarantee your choice of colour or, in the case of children who have two implants and one processor is lost, the processors may not match.
5. **Patients/carers will be advised that the upgrade date for a new processor or hearing aid will be delayed by five years from when the item was lost, plus an additional 12 months for a processor lost in the first year of issue.**
6. If more than one processor is lost, patients/carer will be asked to attend a meeting with the Consultant ENT Surgeon and Service Co-ordinator to discuss how and why the processor was lost unless it is over 10 years ago. Following this meeting the processor will be replaced with a device which may be an older generation or a body worn style of processor.
7. Parents/carers will again be advised that the upgrade date for a new processor will be delayed a further five years from the date of the additional loss.

Wearing the processor securely:

Parents are advised and reminded at every appointment about how to keep the processor/s safe. We encourage children to use either a **huggy** (a plastic loop), a **snug fit** (a special ear hook) or an **ear mould** to keep their processor(s) secure.

For **children under 11 years old** (at primary school and younger), who have all or part of the processor worn behind the ear, to wear a **critter clip** attached to the processor and to their clothes when doing outside play activities. This stops the processor from getting lost if it falls off.

Some sound processor systems have a battery pack worn clipped to the child's clothes. This is called 'litewear', 'babyworn' or 'off the ear power options'.



A critter clip looks like this or alternative versions can be purchased privately via the internet

It is important that the way in which processors are attached is not changed without first checking with the Cochlear Implant team.

Insurance

The sound processor is the property of the NHS. However, you are responsible for it. Please look after your processor/s and equipment carefully and seriously consider insuring the devices or adding them to your household insurance policy as a named item. There are details of an insurer who specialises in insuring cochlear implant systems on the BCIG website (www.bcig.org.uk)

If a sound processor is insured against loss, the Service Co-ordinator must be informed. Patients/carers will then be provided with the replacement cost information which can be forwarded to the insurer.

PLEASE REMEMBER – A SOUND PROCESSOR COSTS THE SAME AS A CAR!



1 sound processor = 1 small car



If you have any questions then please call us on 01274 364853.

The Yorkshire Auditory Implant Service.
The Listening for Life Centre
Bradford Royal Infirmary
Duckworth Lane
BD9 6RJ