

## Quality Standards for use of personal FM systems: promoting easier listening for deaf children.

'The challenge of personal FM systems is more than ever one which must by now be met'. So reads the Foreword by John Bamford in a long awaited publication: *'Quality Standards for use of personal FM systems: promoting easier listening for deaf children'*.

The UK Children's FM Working Group in association with the NDCS is producing a first edition of quality standards and guidance for best practice in relation to personal FM systems.

The group which was established in 2004, comprises representatives of FM system manufacturers, the modernising children's hearing aid services team, national organisations, and practitioners in education and cochlear implant services. The aim of the group is mutual sharing of information, promoting joint working and good practice and encouraging developments in the field of FM technology for children and young people. This first publication aims to fulfil a key objective of supporting teachers, audiologists and others involved in any aspect of FM system use. Its purpose is twofold:

1. To provide a framework with realistic and attainable quality standards against which health and education personnel can audit
2. To describe good practices through examples and additional information which support the fulfilment of the quality standards

The quality standards relate to all children and young people from pre-school through to school leavers, and apply to all hearing instruments. The content includes sections on candidacy and finance, fitting and set up, management, use, and evaluation of the system for the individual. This is contained in a hard copy publication following the format of the other quality standards series and forms Part 1. Each of the quality standards is linked to practical information or case study material to support the realisation of that particular standard. This forms Part 2 and is known as the *Good Practice Guide (GPG)*. It is found on a CD inside the publication as well as being available as downloadable PDF documents from [www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk). Each part complements the other and has extensive reference and glossary pages to enable further understanding and development. The range of topics is wide, naming just a few to whet your appetite:

- Recording child's independence in managing equipment
- A new procedure for testing speech in noise
- Evidence of joint working between health and education
- Testing a personal FM system and Cochlear Nucleus Freedom in a test box
- Case study to define what is meant by 'regular' testing

The hope is that colleagues will 'embrace' this content, pilot some of the ideas, incorporate them into their practice and produce data which will further inform and improve expertise in this area. This in turn can then be shared across the profession.

The benefits of personal FM systems are widely recognised and technology is constantly changing for the better. The aim of the UK Children's FM Working Group and this NDCS publication is to promote consistent, optimum use of personal FM systems. With informed practice deaf children can be assured of easier listening so driving improved achievement and better communication and social interaction.

Consistent application of a few quality standards, 13 to be precise, can make a real difference to the learning and social experience of every deaf child – *each of whom should* be a potential candidate for a personal FM system. Please look out for the publication and use it!

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