Audiology Safe Use of the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill Guideline

Department/Service:	Countrywide Audiology Service
Guideline Author:	Joanne MJ Stanley
Date Guideline Created:	May 2025 – Reviewed July 2026
Accountable Countywide Audiology Manager:	Edward Southan
Approved by:	Audiology Governance Team
Date of approval:	May 2025 - Review approved July 2026
Guideline Review due:	This Guideline will be included in the Audiology Key Document Review Process. This is a 3 yearly cycle where there is an agreed date for all Audiology Documents to be reviewed. All reviews for this Guideline will take place on the next available agreed review date, and subsequent agreed review dates, which form the 3 yearly cycle of Audiology Key Document Reviews. 21st July 2029
Target Organisation(s):	Countywide Audiology Service at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Guideline Overview:
This Guideline applies to all Audiology Staff who carry out earmould modifications using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill and use of this equipment needs to be carried out in a Safe manner to minimise any risks to the safety of themselves of others. This Guideline is in place to ensure and demonstrate that safe use of the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill are upheld with all of this equipment and across all sites.

Please Note:
This guidance does not override the individual responsibility of health professionals to make appropriate decision according to the circumstances of the individual patient in consultation with the patient and /or carer. Health care professionals must be prepared to justify any deviation from this guidance.

Contents page:

1. Introduction 3
2. Definitions 3
3. Responsibility and Duties 3
4. Guideline detail 4
5. Implementation 5
5.1. Plan for Implementation 5
5.2. Dissemination 5
5.3. Training and Awareness 5
6. Monitoring and Compliance 6
7. Guideline Review 8
8. References 8
9. Appendices 8
10. Approval Process 8
11. Version Control 8
12. Equality Requirements – Equality Impact Assessment Form 9
13. Financial Impact Assessment 14

1. Introduction

This Guideline applies to all Audiology Staff who carry out earmould modifications using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill and use of this equipment needs to be carried out in a Safe manner to minimise any risks to the safety of themselves of others.

This Guideline is in place to ensure and demonstrate that safe use of the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill are upheld with all of this equipment and across all sites.

Benefits of following the Guideline include:
- To help maximise Health and Safety and to reduce the risk of injury
- To help assure the same safety standards across all sites
- To help assure the same safety standards across all types of this equipment
- To help ensure good practice
- To provide a learning tool to staff
- To identify areas for improvement
- To identify any training needs
- To contribute to the audit process

This document is designed to support Audiology professionals in their work. It should be used in conjunction with clinical judgement to attain optimal safety and optimal outcomes for our service users.

It applies to the Audiology Service of Worcester Acute NHS Trust across all Audiology sites

Any New Clinical Staff Starters who will carry out earmould modifications will have Training on use of this equipment, by a band 6 Audiologist or above, and will have a Safe Use of Grinder Training Form Completed, Signed and saved in their personal file.

2. Definitions

Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill equipment types and models may vary across sites, but this Guideline applies to all types of this equipment used in the modification of earmoulds.

3. Responsibility and Duties

It is the responsibility and duty of all Audiology Staff who carry out earmould modifications using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill for earmould modifications to use this equipment in a Safe manner to minimise any risks to the safety of themselves of others.

It is the responsibility and duty of all Audiology Staff who carry out earmould modification using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill to report and request any training needs they require regarding safe use of this equipment.

It is the responsibility of all Audiology staff to report any safety concerns or faults with the Grinder, Polisher, Hand Drill or Safety Equipment immediately via email to the appropriate band 7 and Countywide Audiology Services Manager.

It is the responsibility and duty of all Audiology Staff who carry out earmould modifications using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill for earmould modifications to ensure they maintain all infection control requirements.

It is the responsibility of the Audiology Department to ensure the availability of safety Equipment –

- Safety glasses that comply to BS EN 166
- Face mask that complies to BS EN 149
- Safety gloves

It is the responsibility of the Audiology Department to ensure that the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill across all sites has a safety check by an appropriate member of the Hospital Estates Team and a PAT Test carried out Annually.

It is the responsibility of the Audiology department to ensure that all New Clinical Staff Starters who will carry out earmould modifications will have Training on use of this equipment, by a band 6 Audiologist or above, and will have a Safe Use of Grinder Training Form Completed, Signed and saved in their personal file.

It is the responsibility of the ATO or designated Audiologist to fully clean the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill once a week on each site.

4. Guideline detail

Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill equipment types and models may vary across sites, but this Guideline applies to all types of this equipment used in the modification of earmoulds.

It is the responsibility and duty of all Audiology Staff who carry out earmould modifications using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill for earmould modifications to use this equipment in a Safe manner to minimise any risks to the safety of themselves of others by…..

Ensuring -

- They are wearing safety glasses that comply to BS EN 166
- They are wearing a face mask that complies to BS EN 149
- They are wearing safety gloves – if required and if appropriate
- They are using the equipment with caution and care
- They have no loose items (Sleeves/Hair/Lanyard/etc)
- Other staff/patients have vacated the immediate vicinity
- The extractor fan has been switched on and is working
- The equipment is switched off when not in use
- The foot pedal to the hand drill is stored out of the way and cannot be accidentally used
- They report any equipment faults immediately by email to the appropriate band 7 and the Countywide Audiology Services Manager
- They report any safety equipment faults immediately by email to the appropriate band 7 and the Countywide Audiology Services Manager
- They read the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill safety poster as a reminder

Infection Control Requirements –

It is the responsibility and duty of all Audiology Staff who carry out earmould modifications using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill for earmould modifications to ensure they maintain all infection control requirements by…..

- Cleaning safety glasses before and after each use
- Using their own single person face mask or disposal of single use face mask
- Ensuring hand hygiene before and after use of safety gloves
- Cleaning the earmould before and after modification
- Cleaning the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill before and after use

- Once a week on each site the ATO or designated Audiologist will fully clean the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill

The Audiology Department will ensure -

- The availability of safety glasses that comply to BS EN 166
- The availability of face masks that comply to BS EN 149
- The availability of appropriate safety gloves
- The Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill across all sites have an Annual safety check by an appropriate member of the Hospital Estates Team
- The Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill across all sites have an Annual PAT Test
- There is a Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill safety poster near the equipment

New Clinical Starters –

Any New Clinical Staff Starters who will carry out earmould modifications will have Training on use of this equipment, by a band 6 Audiologist or above, and will have a Safe Use of Grinder Training Form Completed, Signed and saved in their personal file.

Audit –

An Audit will be carried out, either within Peer Review Audit or separately, to monitor the process for efficiency and accuracy and to monitor its impacts on the Audiology Staff Safety, Service and Patients.

The Audit will
- Evaluate the safety record of Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill use
- Be used to provide a learning tool to staff
- Be used to identify areas for improvement
- Be used to identify gaps in process and address any training needs

The Audit process will also assist to monitor and identify any gaps in process, any areas for improvement and any additional training needs.

5. Implementation

5.1. Plan for Implementation

This Guideline will be implemented as soon as it has been approved by the Audiology Governance Team and disseminated to all appropriate Audiology Staff.

5.2. Dissemination

As soon as this Guideline has been approved by the Audiology Governance Team it will be –
- saved into the Audiology Shared Drive
- emailed to all appropriate Audiology Staff
- added to the Audiology Document Read Compliance sheet for appropriate staff
- added to Worcestershire Acute NHS Trust key documents Audiology web page
- discussed at Countywide Audiology meetings or most appropriate equivalent meeting

5.3. Training and Awareness

Any training needs will be identified by individual Audiology staff and their Line Manager, appropriate training will then be discussed and provided as required.

6. Monitoring and Compliance

Section number:	Key control:	Checks to be carried out to confirm compliance with the policy:	How often the check will be carried out?	Responsible for carrying out the check:	Results of the check reported to: *(Responsible for also ensuring actions are developed to address areas of non-compliance)*	Frequency of reporting:
No.	**WHAT?**	**HOW?**	**WHEN?**	**WHO?**	**WHERE?**	**WHEN?**
Relevant section number	These are the 'key' parts of the process that we a relying on to manage risk. We may not be able to monitor every part of the process, but we MUST monitor key elements, otherwise we won't know whether we are keeping patients, visitors and/or staff safe.	What are we going to do to make sure the key parts of the process we have identified are being followed? (Some techniques to consider are; audits, spot-checks, analysis of incident trends, monitoring of attendance at training.)	Be realistic. Set achievable frequencies. Use terms such as '10 times a year' instead of 'monthly'.	Who is responsible for the check? Is it listed in the 'duties' section of the Policy? Is it in the job description?	Who will receive the monitoring results? Where this is a committee the committee's specific responsibility for monitoring the process must be described within its terms of reference.	Use terms, such as, '10 times a year' instead of 'monthly'.
All	Appropriate safety equipment will be available near the equipment.	All safety equipment will be replaced. New safety equipment that complies to appropriate standard will be ordered and made available.	Annually	Named individual carrying out the safety equipment ordering and maintenance and overall responsibility is the Countywide Audiology Manager.	Named individual will carry out the safety equipment ordering and maintenance and report results and findings to the Countywide Audiology Manager	Annually
All	The Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill across all sites have an	Estates will be contacted to carry	Annually	Named individual who is responsible	Named individual who is responsible	Annually

	Annual safety check and Annual PAT Test by an appropriate member of the Hospital Estates Team.	out Annual equipment safety check. Equipment will be included in Annual PAT Testing.		for equipment maintenance and repair monitoring and overall responsibility is the Countywide Audiology Manager.	for equipment maintenance and repair monitoring and report results and findings to the Countywide Audiology Manager	
All	All new clinical staff who will be carrying out earmould modifications will have training on safe use of the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill and Training form will be signed and saved in their personal file.	All new staff who will be carrying out earmould modifications will have Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill safety training, Form will be signed and saved in their personal file.	Training will be carried out before any earmould modifications are carried out.	Appropriate Audiologist band 6 or above will carry out training. Named individual carrying out the safe Grinder use compliance and overall responsibility is the Countywide Audiology Manager.	Named individual will carry out the safe grinder use form check and report results and findings to the Countywide Audiology Manager	Once new starters have Safe Grinder use training completed which is before they carry out any earmould modifications

7. Guideline Review

Countywide Audiology Guidelines will be reviewed every 3 years by the document author, where appropriate, or another designated member of Audiology Staff.
Overall responsibility for ensuring Review is undertaken is the responsibility of the Countywide Audiology Manager.

8. References

Government website – Health and Safety Executive - HSE Document - Safety in the use of abrasive wheels
Universal Laboratories – Earmould Manufacturer also Advised
Good Practice

9. Appendices

Grinder Safety Poster
Safe Use of Grinder Training Form

10. Approval Process

This Guideline is submitted to the Audiology Governance Team for approval, and Guideline Approval will be included in the relevant Audiology Governance Meeting minutes.

11. Version Control

On each occasion where this Guideline is Reviewed – any key amendments will be included in the table below and Guideline Version Number will be updated on the Guideline.

Key Amendments to this Document

Date	Amendment	Approved by:
July 2026	Document changed to Audiology Standardised Guideline Template by Original Author	Audiology Governance Team
July 2026	Audit specification added - Audit can be carried out either within Peer Review Audit or separately.	Audiology Governance Team

12. Equality Requirements – Equality Impact Assessment Form

To be completed by the key document author and included when the document is submitted to the Audiology Governance Team for consideration and approval.

NHS Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

Herefordshire & Worcestershire STP - Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form
Please read EIA guidelines when completing this form

Section 1 - Name of Organisation (please tick)

Herefordshire & Worcestershire STP		Herefordshire Council		Herefordshire CCG	
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	✓	Worcestershire County Council		Worcestershire CCGs	
Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust		Wye Valley NHS Trust		Other (please state)	

Name of Lead for Activity	**Joanne MJ Stanley and Edward Southan**

Details of individuals completing this assessment	**Name**	**Job title**	**e-mail contact**
	Edward Southan	Edward Southan	Edward Southan
	Countywide Audiology Manager	Countywide Audiology Manager	Countywide Audiology Manager
Date assessment completed	**Initially – at date document created then reviewed at each Document Review**		

Section 2

Activity being assessed (e.g. policy/procedure, document, service redesign, policy, strategy etc.)	**Title: Audiology Safe Use of Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill Guideline**			
What is the aim, purpose and/or intended outcomes of this Activity?	To improve the Health and Safety of using the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for earmould modifications across all sites.			
Who will be affected by the development & implementation of this activity?	❑ X X ❑	Service User Patient Carers Visitors	X ❑ ❑ ❑	Staff Communities Other _____

Is this:	❑ Review of an existing activity X New activity ❑ Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?
What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (Please name sources, eg demographic information for patients / services / staff groups affected, complaints etc.	Current process reviewed, Government website – Health and Safety Executive - HSE Document - Safety in the use of abrasive wheels considered, Safety equipment researched and sourced and Advice and Guidance obtained from Universal Laboratories – Earmould Manufacturer.
Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (e.g. who and how have you engaged with, or why do you believe this is not required)	Consultation with Countywide Audiology manager and countywide Audiology team.
Summary of relevant findings	Implementing this is a necessary step to ensure and demonstrate Safe use of the Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for earmould modifications across all sites.

Section 3

Please consider the potential impact of this activity (during development & implementation) on each of the equality groups outlined below. **Please tick one or more impact box below for each Equality Group and explain your rationale**. Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group and this should be recorded. Remember to consider the impact on e.g. staff, public, patients, carers etc. in these equality groups.

Equality Group	Potential positive impact	Potential neutral impact	Potential negative impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Age	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Disability	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Gender Reassignment	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Marriage & Civil Partnerships	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Pregnancy & Maternity	X	X	X	Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group However - Any Pregnant staff who may be carrying out this activity will need to discuss any potential risks of this activity with their Medical professional and / or Occupational Health.

Equality Group	Potential positive impact	Potential neutral impact	Potential negative impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
				Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Race including Traveling Communities	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Religion & Belief	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Sex	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Sexual Orientation	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Other Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups (e.g. carers; care leavers; homeless; Social/Economic deprivation, travelling communities etc.)	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.
Health Inequalities (any preventable, unfair & unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from the unequal distribution of social, environmental & economic conditions within societies)	X	X		Grinder, Polisher and Hand Drill used for Earmoulds Modifications are used regardless of this Equality Group. Implementing the guideline will hopefully contribute to greater Safety of this activity.

Section 4

What actions will you take to mitigate any potential negative impacts?	Risk identified	Actions required to reduce / eliminate negative impact	Who will lead on the action?	Timeframe
	Potential Negative impacts may apply to any Pregnant staff who may be	Any Pregnant staff who may be carrying out this activity will need to discuss any potential risks of	The Pregnant staff who may be carrying out this activity	As required

	carrying out this activity.	this activity with their Medical professional and / or Occupational Health.	are responsible for discussing potential negative impacts with their Medical professional and / or Occupational Health	
How will you monitor these actions?	Any changes in service provision is monitored by the Countywide Audiology Manager			
When will you review this EIA? (e.g in a service redesign, this EIA should be revisited regularly throughout the design & implementation)	**Each time the Guideline is Reviewed.**			

Section 5 - Please read and agree to the following Equality Statement

1. Equality Statement

1.1. All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on the 9 protected characteristics: Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Marriage & Civil Partnership; Pregnancy & Maternity; Race; Religion & Belief; Sex; Sexual Orientation
1.2. Our Organisations will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and aims to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.
1.3. All staff are expected to deliver services and provide services and care in a manner which respects the individuality of service users, patients, carer's etc, and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, paying due regard to the 9 protected characteristics.

Name of person completing EIA	Joanne MJ Stanley
Date signed	July 2026
Comments:	Originally completed May 2025
Name of the Countywide Audiology Manager who is the Lead Person for this activity	Edward Southan
Date signed	July 2026
Comments:	Originally completed May 2025

13. Financial Impact Assessment

To be completed by the key document author and included when the document is submitted to the appropriate committee for consideration and approval.

ID	Financial Impact:	Yes/No
1.	Does the implementation of this document require any additional Capital resources	No
2.	Does the implementation of this document require additional revenue	No
3.	Does the implementation of this document require additional manpower	No
4.	Does the implementation of this document release any manpower costs through a change in practice	No
5.	Are there additional staff training costs associated with implementing this document which cannot be delivered through current training programmes or allocated training times for staff	No
Other comments:		
None		