
MAHCP Career Profile

AUDIOLOGIST

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Currently, the MAHCP represents 11.1 EFT Audiology positions. This includes the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) (HSC – 4.8 EFT, St. Boniface – 2.0 EFT), the Burntwood Regional Health Authority (BURHA) (1.0 EFT), the South Eastman Health/Sante Sud-Est Inc. (SHE/SSE) Regional Health Authority (1.0 EFT – with 0.4 EFT contracted to North Eastman Health Association Inc. (NEHA)), the Brandon Regional Health Authority (BRHA) (1.3 EFT) and the NorMan Regional Health Authority (NMRHA) (1.0 EFT).

Audiologists are independent, professional providers of primary hearing health care, who specialize in the prevention of hearing loss and in the identification, assessment, diagnosis, management, and treatment of hearing and balance disorders (Canadian Academy of Audiology). **Identification** includes participating in or overseeing screening programs to detect individuals with hearing impairment, from neonatal through geriatric ages. HSC, St. Boniface and Burntwood offer a High-Risk neonatal hearing-screening program. Brandon has recently implemented a Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) program. **Assessment** of hearing includes the administration and interpretation of behavioral, electroacoustic, and electrophysiologic (adult and pediatric ABR) measures of the peripheral and central auditory systems. Audiologists are responsible for the interpretation of test results, including the determination of the site of lesion within the auditory system and/or the probable etiology of the impairment. Audiologists provide **counseling** regarding the degree and type of hearing loss present, the effects of the hearing loss on communication and psychosocial status in personal, social, educational and to vocational areas, as well as providing methods facilitate communication. **Management and treatment** includes the prescription, fitting, evaluation and verification of hearing aids; the provision of

speech language pathologists, and many other professionals, ie. social workers). This applies to pediatrics and adults, which can require very different strategies. Audiologists are involved in teaching clients, families, students, physicians, health care professionals (ie. nurses, homecare staff), teachers, special education resource staff, and community members regarding hearing, hearing loss prevention, hearing loss, the impact of hearing loss and methods for minimizing the negative impact of hearing loss. The audiologists within the MAHCP also provide **educational audiological services** to school age children with hearing impairments. This includes fitting and maintenance of FM systems, written educational recommendations, and consultations with teachers, administrators, and consultants of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Audiologists at HSC provide services to Nunavut, and the Audiologist in Burntwood provides services to Churchill RHA.

In Manitoba, Audiologists must hold a Masters or doctoral degree in Audiology, and must be registered by the Manitoba Speech and Hearing Association (MSHA) in order to practice. National registration and certification by the Canadian Association of Speech Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA) is also encouraged. Audiology is a growing profession which has a large technological component and advances rapidly with changing equipment and professional requirements.

Current research clearly indicates a growing need for audiological services due to an aging baby-boomer population, a move towards early identification and intervention, and a significant increase in the incidence of noise induced hearing loss.