Starkey

# 2020 Blueprint for Growth

An Actionable Roadmap for Evolving your Practice

# A Letter from Starkey's President

As we work together to navigate the global health crisis and the resulting disruption around the world, it has become clear that we have both a need and opportunity to evolve the way we do business. The needs of our employees, patients and partners must all be considered as we move forward — while our commitment to connecting people and helping others remains our purpose.

With the 2020 Blueprint for Growth, we're providing you with specific guidance and pragmatic steps you can take — leveraging Starkey products, services and expertise — to more easily resume your operations during this "new normal."

***Hearing is essential.*** *It keeps us connected, informed and safe. The central importance of hearing becomes even more pronounced during a health crisis.*

Starkey has always believed that our caring technology in your hands provides the best hearing outcomes possible, and we are proud to be your partner in the continuity of this critical, essential service.

Brandon Sawalich

Brandon Sawalich, President
Starkey

# How to use this guide

The 2020 Blueprint for Growth focuses on five key areas of your practice and guides you through a series of recommended, step-by-step checklists to help evolve your practice and provide the resources you need to continue giving your patients the best hearing healthcare possible.

## To maximize the health and growth of your practice:

1. **Download and save the 2020 Blueprint for Growth to your computer.**
   Save a copy so you can monitor and evaluate your progress on a regular basis.

2. **Complete the 30-minute assessment.**
   Read through the blueprint and use it to track your progress as you complete each step. If your clinic has completed an item, click the checkbox. If you are unsure, leave the checkbox blank until you can review the step in more detail. Your progress will appear at the bottom of each key area and be rated on a scale from 1 to 5.

   At the end of the assessment, you will receive a summary highlighting your score in each of the key areas. This becomes your personal action plan and Blueprint for Growth moving forward. Use it to review and track your overall progress, identify where additional action is needed, and facilitate a conversation with your sales rep.

3. **Take one step at a time.**
   For each and every step, we have included direct links to the resources you need. This is about evolving your practice. Try to focus on one or two items each day and continue tracking and completing the steps along the way. Soon you will have completed all the steps necessary to confidently prepare your practice for the hearing healthcare future.

4. **Take advantage of your Starkey support teams.**
   Your Starkey sales, customer service and retail marketing teams are all here to support the growth and success of your practice.

**Reach out to us any time for solutions to your individual needs. We are committed to you and our partnership in delivering the best patient care possible.**

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This toolkit contains five sections focused on different aspects of clinical practice. The following sections will focus on each of these key areas.

# Business Operations

Being ready for business isn't what it used to be. At the same time, the steps necessary to get and keep your clinical practice ready for business do not need to be confusing or difficult.

## Five simple steps to evolving your business.

Click the box as you complete each step. Your progress is tallied at the bottom and included in a total on the final page.

- [ ] **Update your employee and workplace policies**

  New circumstances require us to look at policies of the past with fresh eyes. Due to our work with at-risk patient populations, having up-to-date and clear employee policies is a must.

- [ ] **Implement schedule blocking**

  Managing in-office patient volume is important. So is ensuring that your patient schedules are allocating appropriate amounts of time to on-going patient care, as well as revenue-generating new patient appointments.

- [ ] **Prescreen patients**

  Prior to patient appointments, introduce a new patient prescreening process that confirms appointments while identifying sick patients that need to be rescheduled.

- [ ] **Rethink patient flow**

  Optimizing the way patient appointments happen and how patients make their way though your clinic can create a safer environment, reduce cleaning times and keep your business moving in a methodical way.

- [ ] **Introduce curbside hearing services**

  Changing consumer needs have led many different businesses to begin to offer curbside services, and its convenience has been a surprise to many consumers. Even when the initial period of disruption passes, curbside services and delivery are likely to continue as important needs.

**Business Operations Total**

**How many of the above steps have you completed?**

OF 5

# Clinic Environment

The definition of "clean" has changed. Some very specific actions can ensure that your practice is taking the steps necessary to upgrade your clinical cleanliness.

## Four simple steps to evolving your clinic.

Click the box as you complete each step. Your progress is tallied at the bottom and included in a total on the final page.

☐ **Hang new door signage**

Keeping your clinic safe for your patients, your staff and yourself starts before patients even enter your practice. Post a request at your clinic door to reduce exposure to sick patients.

☐ **Prepare a safe environment**

While you have always kept your office clean, the standards of clinical cleanliness have changed. Additionally, some parts of a hearing clinic are easier to sanitize than others. Starkey experts provide suggestions and answers to common questions.

☐ **Implement a PPE use plan for your practice**

Using Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is an essential component of your infection control plan, especially given our vulnerable patient base. Stay up to date on the latest CDC guidelines, as well as your local and state regulations and recommendations.

☐ **Keep safety supplies in stock**

A new challenge for business owners can be access to adequate safety supplies. Starkey has worked to help ensure you have access to items like face masks, face shields and hand sanitizer.

**Clinic Environment Total**

**How many of the above steps have you completed?**

☐ OF 4

# Marketing

It is time to reevaluate your marketing. Whether fueled by a need to contemporize your marketing in general, right-sizing to your current situation or adapting to changing consumer needs, there are a few key measures to take now for enabling success.

## Three simple steps to evolving your marketing.

Click the box as you complete each step. Your progress is tallied at the bottom and included in a total on the final page.

- [ ] **Understand current patient needs**

While consumers are always changing, the needs of patients shift more rapidly during times of significant disruption. Many changes that occur during these periods often have a lasting impact on patient needs, attitudes and behaviors. Great patient care will always begin with having a true understanding of your patients.

- [ ] **Update your digital properties**

Ensuring your website and your social properties are giving your existing and prospective patients relevant information is critical. Starkey's expert retail marketing team offers guidance and tools to ensure your properties are working hard for your business.

- [ ] **Adjust your practice marketing strategy**

The marketing approach that has worked for you in the past may not be what works best to drive prospective patients into your practice today. Starkey's retail marketing strategists can help make sure your contact plan and your advertising messages get you the results you need.

**Marketing Total**

**How many of the above steps have you completed?**

OF 3

# Patient Care

2020 is the year of telehealth. Starkey's Chief Innovation Officer, Dave Fabry, likes to say, "It took 20 years for telehealth to become an overnight sensation in hearing healthcare."

**Five simple steps to evolving your patient care.**

Click the box as you complete each step. Your progress is tallied at the bottom and included in a total on the final page.

- [ ] **Get smart on telehealth**

  Telehealth offers an extraordinary ability for you to continue caring for your patients, even when you are unable to meet in person. Learn lessons from others who have implemented telehealth into their clinical practices, and get answers to common questions, like HIPAA compliance.

- [ ] **Understand Starkey's telehealth platform**

  All patients wearing Livio, Livio AI and Livio Edge AI devices across all technology tiers can be adjusted using Starkey's Hearing Care Anywhere remote programming technology.

- [ ] **Set up your remote programming dashboard**

  If you have not already done so, you will need to complete a simple set up of Hearing Care Anywhere before you can begin working with patients.

- [ ] **Get your clinic ready for telehealth**

  Incorporating telehealth into your practice gives you more opportunities to safely meet the needs of your patients.

- [ ] **Change the way you care for patients**

  Make telehealth a regular offering by integrating it consistently in your practice, not as a temporary solution, but as a regular offering.

**Patient Care Total**

**How many of the above steps have you completed?**

OF 5

# Success Drivers

Most of the skills you and your staff have relied on in the past will continue to sit at the heart of your business, but how you grow your business may be changing. Set yourself up for future growth.

**Four simple steps to drive success.**

Click the box as you complete each step. Your progress is tallied at the bottom and included in a total on the final page.

## Build new skills

Our historical approach to working with patients in the industry has been in person, but a significant proportion of your business can be completed over the phone. This can be beneficial to patients that prefer not to leave their homes, while being beneficial to you in allowing you to continue business operations. Selling over the phone is not new, just new to us. You and your staff are best positioned for success by understanding some best practices.

## Choose who to engage and how

Utilizing your patient database to identify additional opportunity can generate revenue for your practice and is a best practice worth adopting.

## Get up to speed on the latest products

From the world's first 2.4 GHz custom rechargeable hearing aids to the remarkable benefits of Livio Edge AI's Edge Mode, ensure that you and your staff are up to speed on all the latest products and features.

## Make it a habit

During periods of disruption, a healthy practice that adapts and transforms to incorporate new ways of addressing patient needs will be set up to recover and grow.

## Success Drivers Total

**How many of the above steps have you completed?**

OF 4

# 2020 Blueprint for Growth

An Actionable Roadmap for Evolving your Practice

Below is your current score from each critical area indicating your potential to evolve and adapt your practice in each area to thrive despite new challenges in our industry.

If you are having difficulty advancing on any item or in a particular area, contact us! At each step of the way, we are here to help enhance the service you offer to your patients.

| Business Operations | Clinical Environment | Marketing | Patient Care | Sucess Drivers |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| OF 5 | OF 4 | OF 3 | OF 5 | OF 4 |

This guidance is provided for general informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice on any subject matter.
We recommend that you always follow federal, state and local government mandates specific to your circumstances.

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# Update your employee and workplace policies

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**In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Update your employee and workplace policies

Having clear employee policies that you consistently apply keeps you and your employees safe and provide confidence to patients that you are taking important steps to keep them safe as well, reducing any concerns they may have about being in your office when it becomes necessary.

If you have employees that are not currently working, now is the time to consider when they should return to the office.  For all employees, you'll need to think about what they'll need to know about new protocols, including any changes to your employee/workplace policies.

**The following recommendations are intended to help you maintain a safe and well-planned transition for your employees as they return to work in your office.**

## As applicable, determine an employee transition plan.

- ❑ Check your state Governor's website for any Executive Order(s) that may provide return-to-work protocols or guidelines
- ❑ Consider whether to call all employees back to work or to implement a phased approach, depending on business need and any applicable protocols or guidelines
- ❑ If you decide on a phased approach, identify who returns to work and when based on business need

# Update your employee and workplace policies

**Review your existing employee policies and communicate any changes to your employees along with any new workplace policies.**

- ❑ Paid Time Off – including paid sick leave, vacation, personal days, paid time off
- ❑ Leaves of absence – family and medical leave, personal leave
- ❑ Review your policies for managing employee illness , inclusive of suspected and confirmed cases of COVID-19
  - Become familiar with specific public health reporting practices and legal requirements in your area.
  - Determine and communicate what specific information is your employee required to disclose and to whom.
  - Do not share any medical information; if you become aware of a positive case, gain consent from the employee before sharing the information with others
  - Be clear about how long employees will be required to remain away from work if they are suspected or confirmed to be sick.
  - Help employees identify if they are eligible for Federal Emergency Paid Sick Leave or other state or local leave or paid leave entitlements.
- ❑ Be prepared to manage employee concerns about returning to the workplace, including concerns about safety at work, employees with medical restrictions or family members of employees at higher risk of infection. Many employees are asking employers what precautions are being taken to help safeguard their safety.
- ❑ Prepare for office staff illnesses, absences and/or quarantine. With disruption to child care, schools and many other support services, your employees may have more obstacles than normal to maintain their typical work schedule.  Some of these reasons may be protected under law. Cross train staff for essential office and medical functions. on business need

# Update your employee and workplace policies

**Consider employee screening/testing measures to ensure the health and safety of everyone in your office.**

*These could include questionnaires; temperature and other symptom checks; and virus or antibody testing (if available and legally permissible).*


**Educate your employees and provide training on the new protocols you've established for your practice, including:**

- ❑ *Preparing a Safe Environment*
- ❑ *In-Office Appointment Flow*
- ❑ Employee/Workplace Policy Updates
- ❑ Advise employees of any changes in your Hours of Operation

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# Schedule Blocking

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**In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Schedule Blocking

Schedule blocking is the practice of organizing your practice calendar to prioritize your day, separating revenue and non-revenue appointments, allotting peak/preferred office times to appointments with high revenue-generating potential and clustering appointments by type.

## What is Schedule Blocking?

Designating blocks of time for each appointment type holds powerful benefits for your practice. Practices actively using schedule blocking have noted the following benefits:

- Improved time allocation for revenue generating appointments
- Prioritization of private pay patients and the reserve of high-demand appointment times for them
- Conscious allocations of time to limited revenue opportunities, such as TPA fittings and prospective patients with a low propensity to act, ensuring these appointments are not obstacles to high revenue potential appointments
- Improved conversion from new patient consultations by scheduling appointments in succession
- Better ability for staff to establish a rhythm, enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and patient outcomes by clustering similar appointments

To effectively block your schedule, consider that appointment classification might require a new approach. Based on changes in patient needs and your service offering, your new appointment types may look like the following:

- Curbside Clean & Check
- In-Office Clean & Check
- In-Office Early Stage Consult for new patients likely not yet ready to act
- Virtual Early Stage Consult for new patients likely not yet ready to act
- In-Office New Patient Consult & Fit for new patients likely to act
- In-Office New Patient Fitting for patients needing the fitting only
- In-Office Demo
- In-Office TPA Fitting
- Virtual Care

Now, assign blocks of your weekly schedule to different types of similar appointments. As mentioned above, many practices have found it best to allocate high-demand appointment times to the most profitable types of appointments and limiting the amount of time allocated each week to lower revenue generating appointments. Of course, leaving enough time for non-revenue appointments is critical to delivering ongoing patient care, but balancing revenue-generating and non-revenue generating appointments is a critical part of building and maintain the health of your practice.

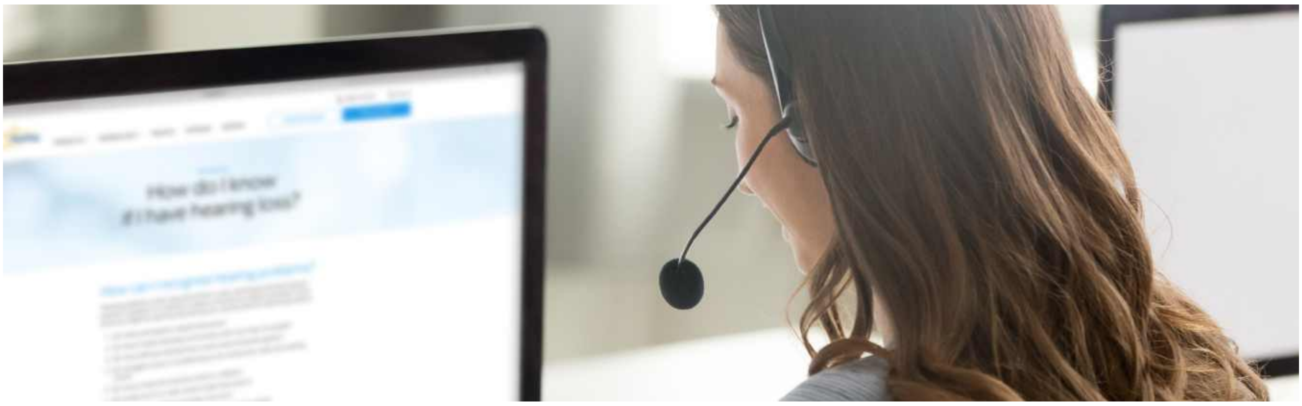
# Schedule Blocking

## Consider staggering your office hours

Staggered retail store hours is another tool available to you for schedule blocking. Many practices already use staggered hours to ensure they reduce the risk of losing a patient simply because of their schedule.

Consider how store hours of Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9-5 and Tuesday and Thursday from 10-7 allows greater options for patients with different schedules. Practices can also use store hours to assist in schedule blocking. For example, some practices elect to open on the first Saturday of each month, designating those high-demand weekend appointment times to new fitting appointments only.

As your practice adopts schedule blocking, you may discover a need to establish a patient wait list. A wait list allows you to put unfilled time in your schedule to good use. As unfilled times approach, a wait list can be populated through patient call-backs, opening future appointment times in the process.



## Pre-qualify patients before the appointment

Prequalification of new patients is an important requirement for effective schedule blocking and its value to your practice cannot be understated.

Qualifying your appointments and making decisions about how to handle the next patient can often allow a practice to see more patients per day and yield higher ROI while delivering patient benefits in the process, like limiting patient exposure to your staff, arming them with information if they are not interested in taking the next step to treat their loss, or being ready to fit them all in one session if they are.

Hearing professionals recognize that patients have different needs based on where they are in their hearing journey. Yet, many practices often set the same type and duration of appointment for patients with these differing needs. If you can identify patients that are early in their journey and less likely to take immediate steps to treat hearing loss from patients who are more likely to take action, you have an opportunity that can make a big difference for your practice and your patients.

Consider that patients early in their journey are gathering information about hearing loss, products and your practice. These patient needs can usually be addressed in a 30-minute investment of clinical time and the shorter appointments at this stage of the journey are often preferred by patients. In contrast, new patients that are better prepared to take action both require and are worth a greater investment of clinical time. Qualifying your appointments can often allow a practice to see more patients per day and yield higher ROI while then limiting patient exposure.

# Schedule Blocking

## How schedule blocking works

The following scenarios offer guidance for how new and existing patient qualification might be implemented in your practice.

### Scenario 1: Classifying New Patient Needs

- ❑ Patient responds to a referral or your practice marketing
- ❑ PCC completes discovery questions over the phone or in person to determine the likelihood of needing to be fit with hearing devices
- ❑ PCC qualifies the patient and classifies the type of appointment
    - **For those motivated and likely ready for hearing aids...**
        - PCC schedules two appointments (in place of a past practice of a 90-minute in-clinic appointment), offering open times based on the clinic's blocked schedule plan
            - 30-minute virtual consultation to discuss patient needs: technology, style and color
            - 60-minute in-clinic appointment for same day hearing test and fitting
        - Fitter completes virtual appointment with the patient and checks stock-on-hand to ensure the patient can be fit during their in-clinic appointment, placing a product order as necessary
        - Fitter completes in-clinic hearing test and fitting with the patient
        - Follow up is done virtually through Hearing Care Anywhere remote programming capability and in-clinic only if necessary
    - **For those motivated and likely ready for hearing aids...**
        - PCC schedules one 30-minute follow up appointment (in place of a past practice of a 90-minute in-clinic appointment), offering open times based on the clinic's blocked schedule plan, making an in-person consultation or a virtual consultation if necessary or preferred
        - Fitter completes consultation appointment with the patient and determines the next steps for the patient

# Schedule Blocking

## Scenario 2: Classifying Existing Patient Needs

- ❑ PCC fields in-bound existing patient call or places out-bound existing patient call, completing discovery questions to determine the likelihood of need to be fit with new hearing devices
- ❑ PCC qualifies the patient and classifies the type of appointment
- ❑ **For Clean & Check appointments and low likelihood of new fitting...**
  - PCC offers curbside hearing care service following blocked schedule plan
- ❑ **For Clean & Check appointments and potential for new fitting...**
  - PCC schedules a 60-minute in-clinic appointment following the blocked schedule plan
  - Based on patient history and information from PCC's discussion, Fitter determines what products the patient may need as an upgrade, checking stock-on-hand to ensure the patient can be fit during their in-clinic appointment and placing a product order as necessary in advance
  - Fitter completes in-clinic appointment using in-office demo devices and swap fit (as available) to allow the patient to experience the new technology during their in-office appointment
  - If patient upgrades, follow practice protocols and service
  - If the patient does not upgrade, Fitter advises on next steps with patient and directs PCC as to additional scheduled follow ups

# Schedule Blocking

## Scenario 3: Classifying New Patient Needs through Third Party Administrator

- ❑ PCC fields in-bound call from patient who indicates they have been directed to the practice to use their hearing aid benefit
- ❑ PCC schedules 60-minute in-clinic appointment based on schedule blocking plan (prioritizing private pay patients)
- ❑ PCC identifies hearing aids the patient is interested in, including technology, style and color
- ❑ PCC confirms the patient benefit
- ❑ Fitter checks stock-on-hand to ensure the patient can be fit during their in-clinic appointment, placing a product order as necessary in advance of the appointment
- ❑ Follow-up appointments are done virtually through Hearing Care Anywhere remote programming capability and in accordance with the practice's service protocol for TPA patients, offering in-clinic appointments only on an as-needed basis

In conclusion, schedule blocking is an approach that warrants your strong consideration for both new and existing patient appointments. It can help deliver the best of both worlds: better care for patients and a healthier practice. Used in conjunction with patient qualification, you can better deliver on patient needs while smartly investing your practice's investment in patients at different points of their journey.

# Patient Screening Guide

## Patient Screening

As you prepare to reopen your office, it is vital to implement a patient screening process immediately. Ideally, this screening would be completed before a patient comes into your office. Calling to confirm a patient's appointment provides an opportunity to do this screening in a gentle, calm and friendly manner. If a patient screening cannot be completed via phone prior to an appointment, it is recommended the screening be done in person at check-in, prior to the appointment itself.

## The following patient screening questions reflect CDC guidance*:

1. Do you have a history of recent international travel within the past 14 days?
2. Do you have a fever or symptoms of lower respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath?
3. Have you had close contact with any person, including healthcare workers, who is a lab-confirmed patient with COVID-19 within the past 14 days of symptom onset?

## If a patient answers yes to any one of the screening questions outlined above, it is suggested you implement the following guidelines:

- Treat patients with care and respect and make every effort to maintain their privacy.
- Respectfully inform the patient of the need to reschedule their appointment for a minimum of at least 14 days later.
- Recommend they call their healthcare professional as soon as possible if they have not already done so. If they answered yes to questions 1 and/or 2 specifically, you can also recommend they contact their State Department of Health for further direction.
- Professionally and privately request the patient leave your clinic.



*Continuously check back on CDC guidelines and your state laws and regulations to confirm you are utilizing the most up to date recommendations.
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# In-Office Appointment Flow

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**In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# In-Office Appointment Flow

To provide a responsible, safe and respectful environment for both your patients and staff, it is important to evolve your workflows used before, during and after in-office appointments.

## Before the Appointment

**Outreach**

Reach out to your patients to see how you can support them. If an appointment is necessary, talk with them to understand their comfort level to determine the best way to serve them. Be sure to share your cleaning and safety practices and protocols to ensure their safety and peace of mind while in your office.

**Patient Health Screening**

Implement a patient health screening process immediately. Ideally, this screening would be complete before a patient comes into your office.

## Patient Readiness Screening:

**Consider implementing a patient readiness screening** when new patients call to schedule an appointment. Now more than ever, patients and customers want to limit in-office exposure and are more willing to move through the patient journey all in one day. From a practice management standpoint, you need to be conscious of balancing your time between the needs of both new and returning patients. Both types of patients are essential to maintaining a healthy business.

**Ask a few simple questions** to assess how motivated the patient is to purchase hearing aids on the day of their appointment or if they are more interested in an initial consultation. Follow your intake protocol and listen for cues. If you ask: "What prompted you to give us a call today?" and the patient says, "I can't hear in meetings and need to find a solution," then schedule ample amount of time to allow for a hearing test and a fitting.

If the patients expresses interest in an informational consultation, then consider your various appointment options and schedule the appropriate time allotment. These prospective patients still need your care. Be conscious of the valuable time you invest while focusing on what will best help them based on where they are in their own hearing journey.

With patients now valuing same-day appointments more so than they have in the past, it is important to consider the way you order and stock hearing aids. If you regularly ordered units on a per patient basis, an adjustment to have more ready-to-fit stock on-hand will ensure that you never miss the opportunity to provide the care a patient needs. Your sales rep can help you identify how to adjust and what levels of stock on-hand might best enable your practice.

# In-Office Appointment Flow

## For in-person appointments, upon arrival:

- When possible, meet patients in your parking lot to pick up and/or drop off hearing aids, batteries and other items.
- See patients one at time. Consider keeping your door locked to control patient flow. Have patients call upon arrival and wait in their cars until your office is clear of other patients. If necessary, reorganize your space to keep patients a minimum of 6' away from others.
- Greet patients as they arrive and inform them you are following proper disinfecting and social distancing guidelines. In this time of uncertainty, be as friendly as possible to help ease their anxiety.
- Provide patients with hand sanitizer and any necessary PPE.
- Make the check-in process as touch-free as possible. If the patient needs to fill out paperwork, have a sanitized pen and clipboard ready for them.

## During the Appointment:

- Put on new PPE between patients.
- Continuously practice social distancing guidelines throughout the appointment, keeping your patient's potential anxiety and fears of in-person interactions top of mind.
- Wash hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds and use hand sanitizer in front of patients to reduce anxiety.
- To conduct video otoscopy or cerumen management:
    - Ensure all equipment is clean and disinfected
    - Maintain appropriate distancing while capturing the image
    - Stand behind the patient so your face is not in front of their face
    - Stretch your arms out with the goal of remaining as far apart as possible
- Once in your procedure room, have a clean and disinfected tray available – consider using sanitary cloths that cover the tray that can be disposed of afterwards.

# In-Office Appointment Flow

## During the Appointment (continued):

- If your patient is a current hearing aid wearer, have them place their hearing aids in a tray and slide them across your desk or table. When you are done conducting your checks, disinfect the hearing aid, earmold and accessory surfaces with a non-alcohol based disinfectant such as Cavacide or possibly UV-C to protect the special coating. Place them back in the tray to return to your patient.
- If your patient needs fine-tuning or if this is an initial fitting, follow the hand-off procedure discussed above to connect hearing aids to the programmer and perform your adjustments.
- To reduce the number of required in-clinic appointments, ensure the patient is ready for remote adjustment. Make sure your patient has the **Thrive Hearing Control app** downloaded and working. Ensure they have **Hearing Care Anywhere** set up and counsel them on how to request remote fine-tuning sessions.

## After the Appointment:

- To continue limiting close proximity interaction, try to limit further discussions that you normally would have while in the appointment space. Instead, exit the room to complete paperwork and finalize patient needs.
- Discuss options for scheduling a follow-up appointment.
- Allow enough time to complete necessary cleaning between patients per your cleaning plan, including disinfecting testing equipment and surfaces touched during the appointment. Ideally, allow for 15 minutes before the next patient enters the room.

*For detailed information on preparing your office for patients, including ideas on how to set up and clean your space, download our **Preparing a Safe Environment guide***

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# Curbside Hearing Care Service

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**In this guide, you will find ideas for consideration to apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

Curbside is an excellent alternative for service when seeing a patient in-office is not possible or preferred. All care can be provided from a safe distance while the patient remains in their vehicle or outside. While a satellite setting for hearing support requires a bit of planning, it allows you to conveniently support your patients, provides revenue-generating opportunities, minimizes patient traffic in your office, and provides the opportunity for social distancing for patients who need in-office help. It can be an appreciated and differentiated option for your patients both now and in the long-term.

**Topics covered include:**

# Curbside Hearing Care Service

## Curbside Set-up Options

- **Consider locations** (such as parking lots) that can be secured and have a visible entrance and exit.
- **Check your state guidelines and secure any permits or permissions** you may need from the city or land owner prior to setting up curbside service.
- **Plan ahead and get creative** with the space you have available. If you are in a multi-tenant space, coordinate with other tenants on how curbside services could work within shared lots.
- **Mark dedicated parking spots** for curbside appointments.
- Consider setting up **"walk-through" stations**, as vehicle-only options may limit your patient access.

## Other Preparation

- Consider whether you will need to be able to **access patient records and audiograms** from outside your clinic and, if so, how you would do so.
- **Consider a cart on wheels** that can be equipped with office software, access to patient records and fitting software.
- **Provide a clear path for the staff member** to approach the patient.
- **Equip staff member with a tray** covered with a disposable sheet that the patient can deposit the device on from the car.
- **Have all necessary PPE** for your staff ready and easily accessible for all appointments. If you will have close contact with the patient, be sure to have PPE available for them as well.
- **Document** your curbside process and **train** your staff prior to going live.
- Be sure to **conduct a number of test appointments** to refine your process prior to accepting curbside patients.

### *Curbside Supply Pickup*

- Designate set days and hours for Supply Pickup.
- Give your patients a 15-minute window during designated times to pick up any needed supplies.
- Have patients prepay for items over the phone or online. You may have experienced resistance from patients in the past, but many are more open to this option in the current environment.
- Prior to the patient's pickup time, place their supplies in a marked envelope and leave in a secure/visible area that allows for contactless pickup. Another option is to have patients park in a designated area and leave the envelope outside of the car door for them to pick up once you are a safe distance away.

# Curbside Hearing Care Service

## Communicating and Scheduling

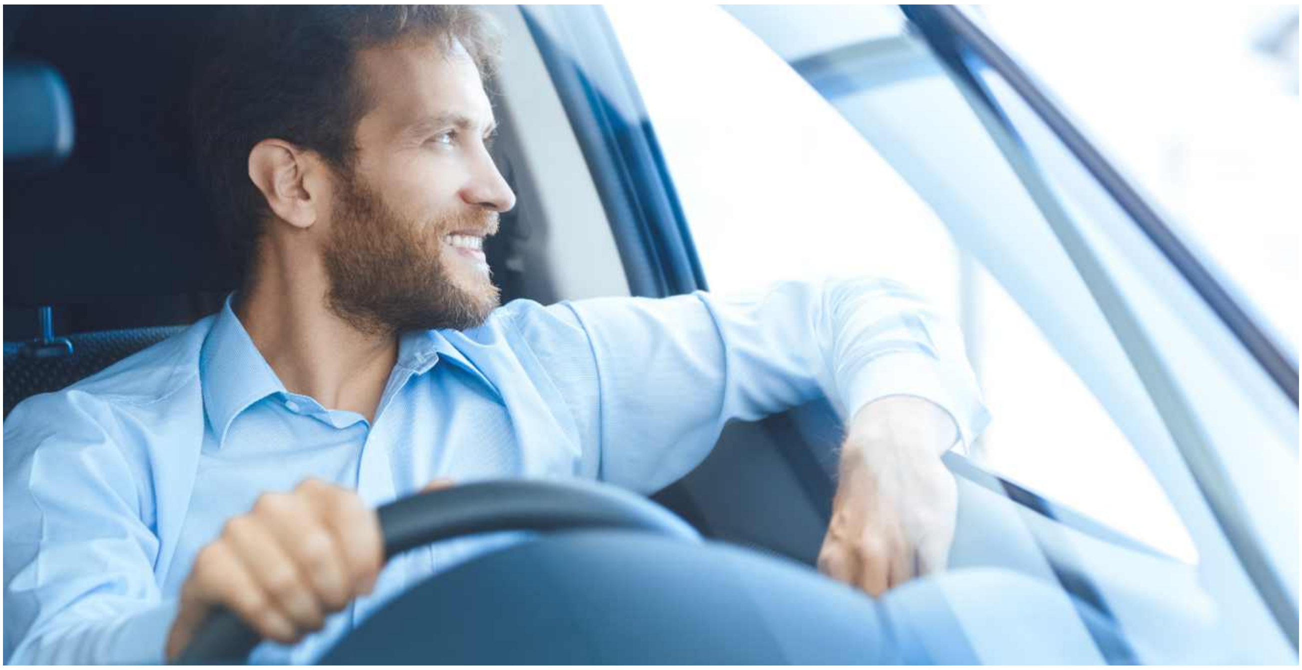
- Create and execute a plan to reach out to your existing contacts to proactively communicate your appointment options and that you are available to support them. Existing contacts include, but are not limited to, current hearing aid wearers who are in a trial period, are in need of fine tuning or counseling, would benefit from an accessory, or your tested-not-sold database who have a valid audiogram.
- Update your website, social media and "Google My Business" page with information about your curbside hearing care options, descriptions and expectations and where possible, available appointment dates and times.

## Before the Appointment

- You will need to screen patients before scheduling a curbside appointment.
- Provide details to the patient in their appointment reminders about what they can expect and what they should do upon arrival.
- Send any necessary paperwork to be filled out and returned ahead of time.
- Be sure to communicate your safety and cleaning protocols so the patient understands how you are ensuring their safety.

## Appointment Flow

- Instruct patients to park in dedicated spots or space outside your office.
- Provide a dedicated phone number they can dial, **before** entering the building, to notify you of their arrival.
- Have staff on-site in PPE (or a safe distance away from patients if not wearing PPE.)
- If needed, provide the patient with their own PPE.
- When you arrive at the vehicle, call the patient back to communicate with them while they remain in their car, following social distancing guidelines.



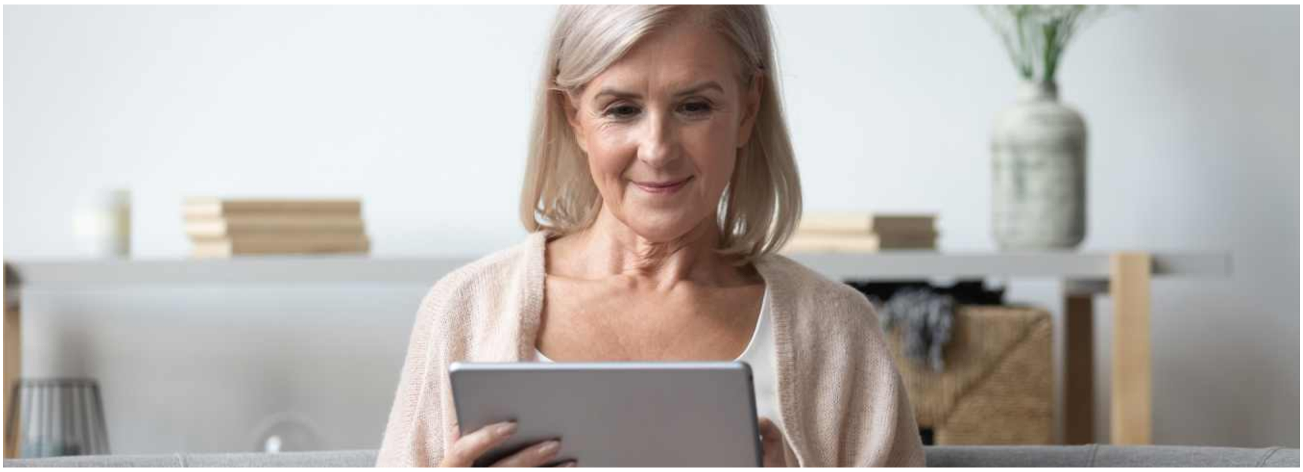
# Curbside Hearing Care Service

## For hearing aid adjustments and service appointments

- Have the patient lower their vehicle window so you can hand them a tray covered with a disposable sheet for their hearing aids or remain a minimum of six feet from the vehicle and instruct the patient to open the vehicle door and place their hearing aids on the tray you set on the ground.
- Have the patient remain in their car while you take the tray with the hearing aids inside.
- Complete your check of the hearing aids from inside your office, and disinfect the hearing aid, earmold and accessory surfaces with a non-alcohol based disinfectant, such as Cavacide or possibly UV-C to protect the special coating.
- Return to your patient's vehicle and return the aids on the tray in the same manner they were provided to you.
- After the patient inserts the hearing aids, ask your normal post-check quality control questions via the phone.
- If the patient needs a fine-tuning adjustment, bring a laptop with your programmer near the vehicle. Connect to their hearing aids and conduct the fine-tuning session while they remain in their vehicle. Again, ensure your patient is satisfied with their adjustments via the phone.
- Make sure your patient has the **Thrive Hearing Control app** downloaded and that it is working. Additionally, confirm that the Hearing Care Anywhere feature is properly set up and counsel your patient about how to request remote fine-tuning adjustments.
- Look for other revenue opportunities that also benefit the patient. Check to make sure they have enough supplies (batteries, wax guards, earbuds, accessories, etc.,) or ask if they'd like to extend their warranty plan.
- Discuss options for a follow-up appointment and schedule.

*Look for other revenue opportunities that also benefit the patient.*

# Curbside Hearing Care Service



## For patients (who have a valid audiogram) looking to purchase a hearing aid

**Prior to the curbside appointment:**

- Conduct a phone or video appointment with your patient to review their audiogram, discuss their needs and determine recommended technology as you normally would in person.
    - As of late, some patients are having difficulty wearing their hearing aids while also wearing a face mask, as the hearing aids are falling off when they remove their mask. This could be a good opportunity to offer a custom product solution. Consider taking ear molds while they are in their car and you both are wearing appropriate PPE.
- During this conversation, use your best judgment to determine if something else may be going on that would warrant an in-person appointment or need for otoscopy prior to fitting. If this is the case, explain to your patient why you are recommending an in-person visit and the cleaning and safety protocols you are taking in office to help them feel comfortable with this next step.
- If your patient's audiogram is aged, consider having them download the **Starkey SoundCheck app.** They can take the hearing test through the app and email you their results. Once received, compare the results to their audiogram on file to look for any major differences or areas of concern.
- Additionally on this initial call, if you do not have the necessary ear measurements, ask the patient to hold a ruler up to their ear and take a picture to send to you. This will be easier with the help of a loved one with them. You can also do a video call to better direct the measurements live.
- Inform them about what to expect when they arrive for their curbside fitting.
- Prepare for the curbside appointment:
    - Assemble hearing aids and have extra sizes of buds, receivers and tubes available.
    - Complete a best fit through Inspire and set memories based on your knowledge of the patient.
    - Ensure the hearing aids are fully charged or have fresh batteries.

# Curbside Hearing Care Service

**For the curbside appointment:**

- Follow the same general flow for the current hearing aid wearers, but with a focus on the fine-tuning process.
- Provide guidance on how to place the hearing aids on their ears – you may need to bring an additional pair to show them on your own ear from a safe distance.
- Bring a laptop with your programmer near the vehicle. Connect to their hearing aids and conduct the fine-tuning session while they remain in their vehicle.
- Via phone, follow your normal in-office protocol to ensure the patient is experiencing a comfortable fit, are happy with their hearing aid settings, can complete basic functionality, and know what to expect prior to their next appointment.
- Make sure your patient has the **Thrive Hearing Control app** downloaded and that it is working. Additionally, confirm that the Hearing Care Anywhere feature is properly set up and counsel your patient about how to request remote fine-tuning adjustments.
- Inform them of help content available within the **Thrive Hearing Control app**
- Look for other revenue opportunities that also benefit the patient. Check to make sure they have enough supplies (batteries, wax guards, earbuds, accessories, etc.,) or ask if they'd like to extend their warranty plan.
- Discuss options for a follow-up appointment and schedule.

# For The Safety of Our Patients and Our Staff

If any of the below statements are true for you, call us before entering:

- You have traveled recently to an affected COVID-19 area.
- You have a fever or symptoms of lower respiratory illness such as cough, fever or shortness of breath.
- You have had close contact with any person, including healthcare workers, who is a lab-confirmed patient with COVID-19 within the past 14 days of symptom onset.

**Your safety and the safety of our staff are our top priority and we will continue to do everything we can to help with your hearing needs at this time.**

***We will get through this together!***

Proud partner of Starkey

# We're
# OPEN

## BUSINESS HOURS

Proud partner of Starkey

BEST PRACTICE SOLUTIONS
DIGITAL TOOL SERIES

# Preparing a Safe Environment

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas for consideration to apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Preparing a Safe Environment

As your office moves ahead to reopen, it is important to establish a safe environment for your patients and staff. Every situation is unique, and so you should do what works best for your office, staff, patients and situation. In this guide, you will find guidance to consider based on CDC and Health and Human Service guidelines. Be sure to regularly check CDC guidelines for the most up to date recommendations.

As you begin this process, an imperative place to start is with reviewing and updating your Infection Control Plan to include ***COVID-19 protocols***. According to OSHA, your plan should include:

- Categorization of Employees
- HBV Vaccination
- Training Plan and Training Records
- Work Practice Controls and Implementation Protocols
- Emergency Procedures
- Post-Exposure Evaluation and Follow-Up

**Consider having your staff participate in infection control training as you prepare to reopen.**

Starkey offers an Infection Control course on AudiologyOnline.
You can also view our infection control webinar:

***Precautions, Prevention and Preparedness Webinar***

# Preparing a Safe Environment

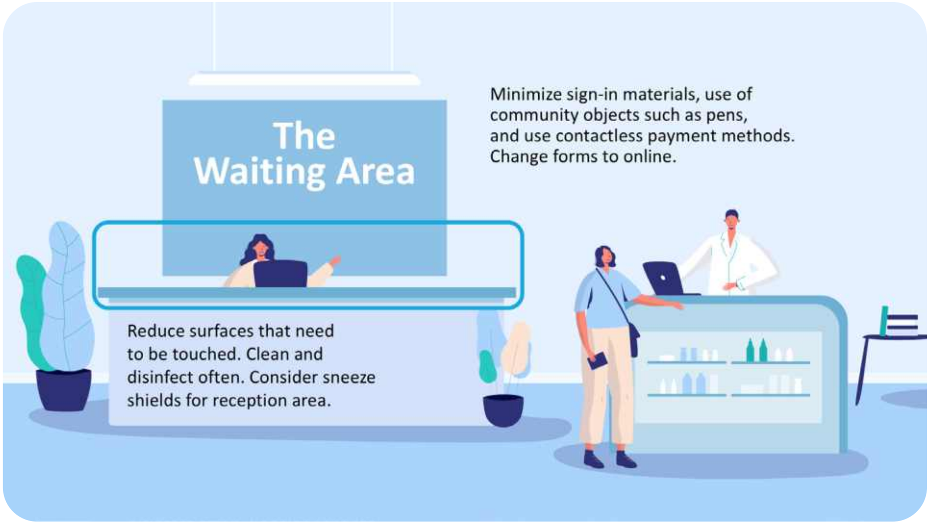
## Cleaning and Disinfecting your Space

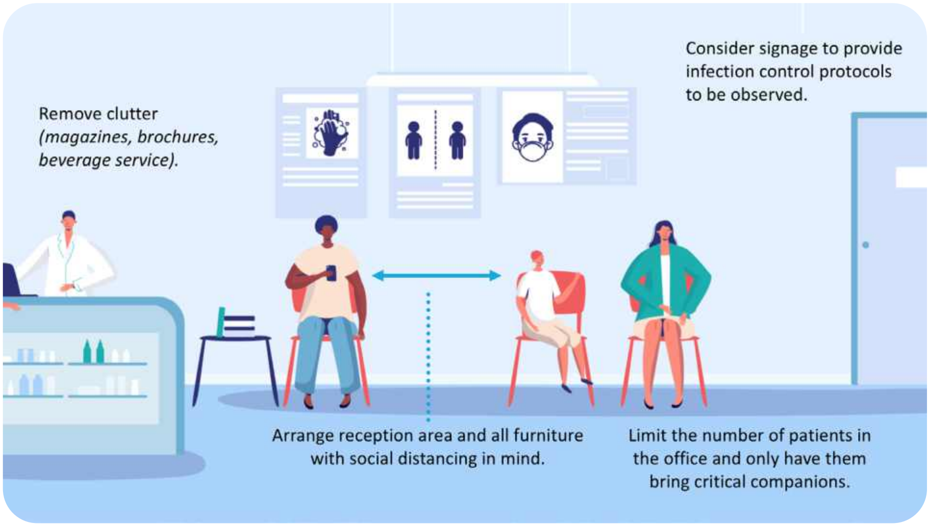
**Reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by cleaning, disinfecting and adjusting your office space is an important part of your Infection Control Plan. Reopening will require careful planning.**

### Determine what needs to be cleaned and disinfected

- ❑ Frequently touched surfaces or any surfaces that may be in contact with bodily substances or fluids will need to be cleaned and then disinfected. For those areas, first clean the surface or object with soap and water, and then disinfect using an *EPA-approved disinfectant*.
- ❑ High-touch surfaces will need routine disinfection. Examples include tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks, touch screens and testing equipment.
- ❑ Clinical items such as headphones, earmolds and instruments also need to be disinfected as long as they have not come in contact with blood, ear drainage, ceremun or bodily fluids. If they have been in contact, these items will need to be sterilized.
- ❑ Sterilization should occur for any instruments that come in contact with blood or other potentially infectious agents. Sterilization should occur with an autoclave or cold sterilization, involving soaking instruments in an EPA-approved solution for a specified time.
- ❑ Hearing aids, earmolds and accessories are made from specialized materials that require specific care.
    - Wear gloves and first wipe them down with a tissue
    - Then disinfect them with a non-alcohol-based disinfectant such as CavaCide or possibly UV-C
- ❑ Ensure you have no-touch waste containers throughout your office. Most items can be placed in a normal waste receptacle, however any items contaminated with bodily fluids should be placed in impermeable, puncture-resistant packaging.
- ❑ If your office or workplace has been unoccupied for at least seven days, you may only need to complete your normal routine cleaning to initially reopen the area.

# Preparing a Safe Environment



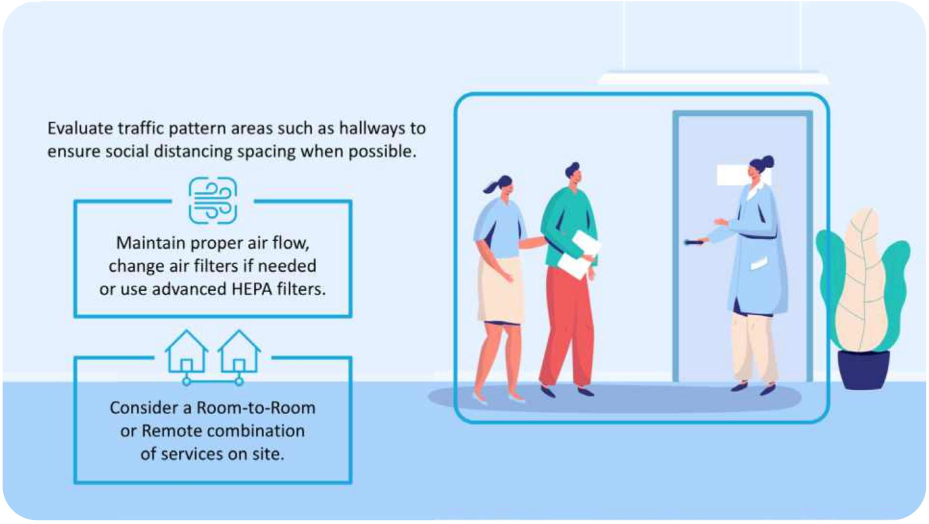

## Physical Office Set-up

**Your physical office set-up will also need adjusting. To start, walk through your office and look at every touchpoint in detail from your perspective and from the perspective of your patients. Look for ways to minimize these physical touchpoints throughout the patient experience. For every touchpoint or service, think about what you need to do make the experience safe and positive.**

## The Waiting Area

- Print and post the **safety signage** on your office door and in your check-in space
- Sanitizing wipes, sanitizers or soap and water should be provided throughout your space
- Consider removing soft and porous materials, such as area rugs to reduce challenges with cleaning and disinfecting them
- Provide no-touch waste containers with disposable liners in all areas of your office
- Print and post the ***CDC Stop the Spread of Germs poster***

# Preparing a Safe Environment





## Treatment Area

- Sanitizing wipes, sanitizers or soap and water should be provided throughout your space
- Ensure easy access to disposable gloves

*Be sure to fully educate your staff on your updated infection control plan, cleaning and disinfecting policies, new workflow procedures and physical touchpoint changes.*

BEST PRACTICE SOLUTIONS
DIGITAL TOOL SERIES

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas for consideration to apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Using PPE is an essential component of your Infection Control plan and reopening, especially given our vulnerable patient base. Be sure to stay up to date on the latest ***CDC guidelines***, as well as your local and state regulations. You can learn more about the proper use of PPE through Starkey's ***Infection Control Training*** on AudiologyOnline.

## Make a PPE Usage Plan for Your Office

- Start by listing every point of contact in your office, including limited and full contact services.
- Detail out what type of PPE or procedure should be used for each identified touch point. This could include actions (like proper hand hygiene) and each piece of PPE.
- Use your plan to determine what supplies you need for your office.
- Educate your staff on the PPE usage plan, expectations and proper way(s) to wear the assigned PPE.
- Standard PPE includes face masks and coverings, gloves, glasses and gowns.
- Review CDC guidelines regularly for the most updated information and develop a plan that works best for your situation.

## Starkey Cares Safety Kits Available for Order

**In continued efforts to support the health and safety of our customers and patients, Starkey has made multiple PPE and cleaning items available for purchase in eStore.**

- **Starkey Cares Safety Kits:** 78015-000
  - Includes approximately a one-month supply of materials
  - 50 single-use masks, 200 single-use gloves (or 100 pairs), six 8 oz. bottles of hand sanitizer, 1 gallon of non-diluted surface sanitizer with a mixing container and spray bottle, and 5 single-use face shields
- **Protective Face Shield:** 42049-000
- **Dust Mask without Respirator:** 10 Pack; 90338-010

*Using PPE is an essential component of your Infection Control plan*

# Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

## Masks and Face Coverings

Masks have been a universal recommendation for safety precautions. Face masks cover your mouth and nose and are designed to protect others. They can block the release of virus-filled droplets in the air when you cough, sneeze or even talk, which can help slow the spread of COVID-19.

- With the current shortage of surgical masks and N95 respirators, it is recommended that these supplies be reserved for healthcare workers and medical first responders. Many other face coverings are now commercially available.
- Given masks impact speech understanding and communication, consider clear mask options.
- Face shields are an acceptable alternative to face masks. They are effective for communication with a large clear area and can also be used with a face mask for direct patient contact.

## Gowns and Glasses

Gowns and protective glasses should be prioritized during both of the following care activities:

- Splashes and sprays are anticipated
- High-contact patient care activities (provide opportunities for transfer of pathogens to the hands and clothing of providers)
- Surgical gowns should be be prioritized for surgical and sterile procedures.

## Gloves

Gloves should be worn when open wounds or visible blood is present, cleaning or disinfecting instruments contaminated with bodily substances, submersion or removal of instruments into or from cold sterilant and when contamination with potentially infections materials (including cerumen) is likely. During the COVID-19 pandemic, is is also recommended to expand the use of gloves when cleaning and disinfecting all surfaces.

- Gloves are designed to be used once, then disposed of immediately.
- Nitrile gloves can be used safely with impression material, but latex gloves can keep impression material from setting up. To avoid latex allergies, non-latex vinyl or nitrile gloves are preferred.

BEST PRACTICE SOLUTIONS
DIGITAL TOOL SERIES

# Updating your Digital Properties

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas for consideration to apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Updating Your Digital Properties

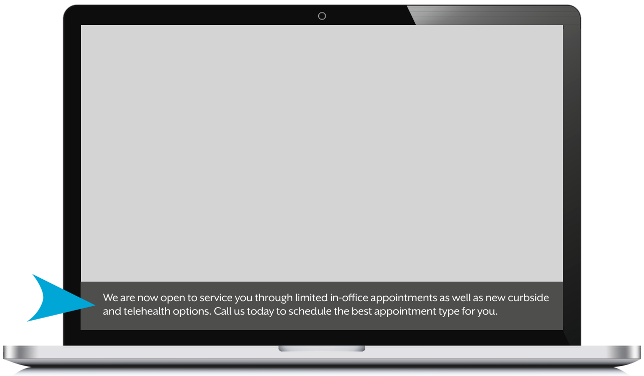
## Updating Your Digital Properties

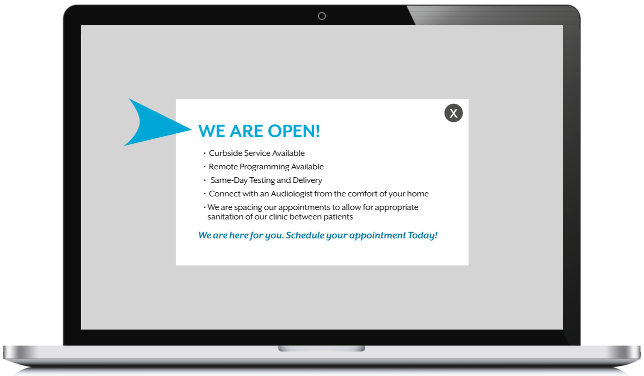
It is important to ensure your patients – existing and prospective – have clear information about what's going on with your business at this moment. As your status and available services continue to change, it is key to keep your digital properties updated with the most recent, accurate information. Consumers will be looking for such information as: if you are open, when you are open, the types of services you are now offering, how to make an appointment, and how to engage with you.

## Website Messaging

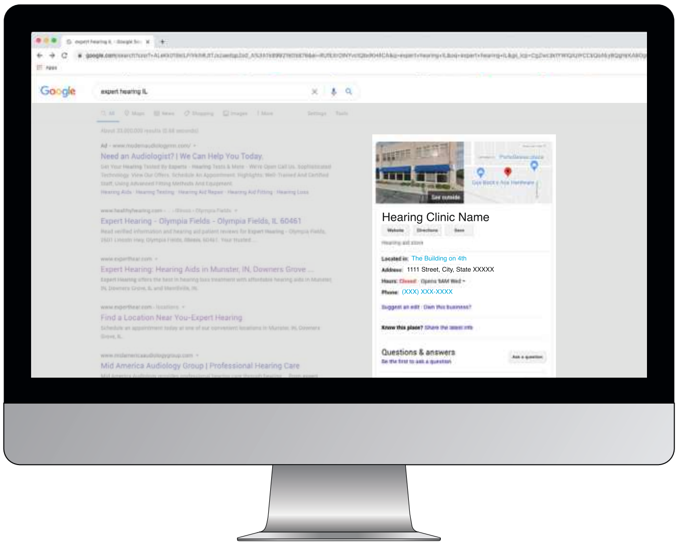
**A short but informative message on your website will help patients know if you are open and what services are available:**

- Keep the message short so it doesn't negatively impact the user experience on your website.
- Include whether you are open or closed, adjusted hours of operations, and other important information patients need to know.
- Keep the website message up to date as your situation changes.
- The message should be clearly visible on your homepage – use a banner with text on the top or bottom of the site.



# Updating Your Digital Properties




## Google Local Listings

**Update your Google local listing to reflect your current hours of operation or adjusted services:**

- Changes are made through Google My Business.
- Google has updated the interface to include a COVID-19 message feature that businesses can utilize.
- Businesses also have the option to mark their practice as temporarily closed (don't forget to update this!).
- Some changes may take longer than usual to update due to delays at Google.
- While Google should always be a top priority, you should update your business information anywhere it appears online.

## Update Patients via Social Media Channels

**Utilize your social channels to keep patients up to date:**

- Update your hours on your Facebook page.
- Post updates on the status of your business and care – including revenue-generating services such as in-office appointments, curbside and telehealth opportunities.
- Tell your patients how you are abiding by social distancing and keeping a clean and sterile office.
- Make sure your posts are sensitive to social distancing and the current situation.

BEST PRACTICE SOLUTIONS
DIGITAL TOOL SERIES

# Integrate Telehealth into Your Practice

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas for consideration to apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Integrate Telehealth into Your Practice

Telehealth offers the opportunity to safely meet the needs of your patients who value your professional attention and the ability to receive that attention remotely.

Live conversations with patients are always best. While phone visits are great, video connections add a personal touch and value to remote care visits that make them feel more like an in-office visit.

## Communicating and Scheduling

- ❑ Make sure you are prepared to promote your telehealth options in all communication channels:
    - ❑ Update your website home page and hours, social media and Google My Business page with information about your telehealth appointment options, descriptions and expectations of the service, and where possible, available appointment dates and times.
    - ❑ Promote the appointment option in your other outreach, including email, newsletters and marketing materials.
- ❑ Reach out to your current patient list and those with a valid audiogram who are in need of a hearing aid to complete an initial check-in with them:
    - ❑ Make sure you are familiar with their case history, audiogram and hearing aids so that relevant questions can be asked.
    - ❑ On top of your normal check-in and care questions, other important questions given the current situation include:
        - Are your hearing aids functioning correctly?
        - If they have a Livio product, ask:<br>"Are you using Self Check to confirm if the device is working properly?"
        - Are you able to hear TV news sources?<br>**If not, consider TV streamer or fine-tuning.**
        - Are you able to hear and communicate with someone wearing a mask?<br>**If not, consider fine-tuning or the sale of a Table Microphone.**
    - ❑ During these calls, you should be assessing your patient's needs, as well as their level of comfort and ability, to determine the best way to service them after the check-in
    - ❑ Once you have determined their needs, schedule their appointment and help them understand what to expect next.

# Integrate Telehealth into Your Practice

## Before the Appointment

- ❑ Provide details on how the patient should prepare for the telehealth appointment, including: technology needs, an invitation link for the appointment and what the patient should expect. If you will be using **Hearing Care Anywhere**, make sure they have the **Thrive Hearing Control app** downloaded and are fully set up prior to the appointment.
- ❑ Consider an additional reminder communication the day of the appointment to remind them of the time, how to access and to confirm they are prepared.
- ❑ Ensure you have your Hearing Care Anywhere dashboard set-up fully.

## During the Appointment

- ❑ Allow extra time for your first few telehealth appointments.
- ❑ Login to the appointment link early so you are set up and ready to go prior to your patient's arrival.
- ❑ Make sure your patient feels comfortable, as you would in-office. Use their name, compliment them so they know you can see them, ask about them their day and create an easy transition into their appointment.
- ❑ Practice the strategies below when communicating with patients:
  - Make sure lip reading is possible
  - Ask whether your voice is loud enough
  - Narrate actions with patient
  - Verbalize and clarify next steps, such as follow-up appointments and care plan
  - Pause to allow transmission delay
  - Speak clearly and deliberately
  - Use empathetic language
  - Use non-verbal language to show you are listening
- ❑ Treat the remote care virtual visit exactly as you would an in-office visit. Do not cut corners. Ask the same questions, follow the same clinic protocols, and schedule your follow-ups.

*For ideas on how to prepare your office, set up your telehealth space, and technology requirements, **download our detailed guide**.*

# Integrate Telehealth into Your Practice

## For Existing Hearing Aid Wearers

### Fine-Tuning Appointment

**For patients in need of fine-tuning, you can create an experience very similar to an in-person office visit by using Hearing Care Anywhere with a live synchronous video appointment.**

- ❑ Join the appointment via your preferred video platform and guide the patient through the **Hearing Care Anywhere** connection. To initiate the request, have the patient choose 'Submit Quick Request' to share their hearing aid settings with you.
- ❑ Conduct the appointment similar to an in-person visit by obtaining and understanding the patient's issues and then make the programming changes while still on the video call with the patient.
- ❑ Send the settings back to the patient via **Hearing Care Anywhere** and have them listen to the changes while you are on the video call. Offer ways for them to best listen and test the changes, such as listening to the TV or having a quick conversation with someone with them. If they are happy with the settings, direct them to save the selected changes. If they need further fine-tuning, repeat the above process until they are satisfied.
- ❑ Look for other revenue opportunities that also benefit the patient - check to make sure they have enough supplies – batteries, wax guards, earbuds, accessories, or if they'd like to extend their warranty plan.
- ❑ Discuss options for a follow-up appointment and schedule it.
- ❑ Call the patient 24-hours after the appointment to follow up and make sure they are happy with their visit. Also, consider sending a personalized follow-up video or message to your patient.

# Integrate Telehealth into Your Practice

## For Existing Hearing Aid Wearers *(continued)*

### Remote Troubleshooting

**A majority of common troubleshooting issues such as non-functioning hearing aids, hearing aids not connecting to the app, hearing aids not charging, or issues with streaming can be resolved through a telehealth appointment versus an in-office visit.**

- ❑ Most remote troubleshooting sessions can be resolved by calling the patient on the phone or with a synchronous telehealth video appointment.
- ❑ Join the appointment via phone or your preferred video platform and allow the patient to explain the issue they are experiencing.
- ❑ Once you understand the issue, either explain to them over the phone how to resolve it, or ideally, show them via video with actual product.
- ❑ Depending on the specific problem, once you have resolved it for the patient, follow up with a how-to video, so next time this issue occurs, they can remember how to do the service by watching the video.

# Integrate Telehealth into Your Practice

## For patients looking to purchase a hearing aid and have a valid audiogram

**You may have a patient with a valid audiogram (check your state regulations for guidance on the definition of a valid audiogram) but has not yet purchased or is in need of an upgrade. By getting creative, these patients can be fit via a telehealth solution and be allowed to experience better hearing prior to when they can safely come into your office for an in-person appointment.**

### Step 1: Consultative Appointment

- ❑ Join the appointment via your preferred video platform to review the patient's audiogram, discuss their needs, and determine recommended technology as you would in person during a normal initial testing appointment.
- ❑ During this conversation, use your best judgement to determine if something else may be going on that would warrant an in-person appointment or need for an otoscopy prior to fitting. If this is the case, explain to your patient why they need to come in, and the cleaning and safety protocols you are taking in-office to help them feel comfortable with this next step.
- ❑ If your patient's audiogram is outdated, consider having them download the **Starkey SoundCheck** app. They can take the hearing test through the app and email you their results. Once received, compare the results to their audiogram on file to look for any major differences or areas of question or concern.
- ❑ Also, during this initial appointment, if you do not have the necessary ear measurements, ask the patient to hold up a ruler to their ear so you can see the measurements – this will be easier with the help of someone with them.
- ❑ Schedule the follow-up telehealth fitting appointment after expected delivery of the hearing aids.

# Integrate Telehealth into Your Practice

## For patients looking to purchase a hearing aid and have a valid audiogram *(continued)*

### Step 2: Providing the Hearing Aids to the Patient

- ❑ In preparation for the fitting appointment, prepare the hearing aids ahead of time:
  - Assemble aids and have extra sizes of buds, receivers and tubes available
  - Ensure the right and left hearing aids are clearly marked
  - Complete a best fit through Inspire
  - Ensure the hearing aids are fully charged or have fresh batteries
  - If an accessory was purchased, make sure it is synced to the hearing aids
  - Provide all necessary supporting parts and materials, including purchase agreements and/or delivery confirmation with instructions for the patient to sign and return
- ❑ You will need to get the hearing aids to the patient prior to their telehealth fitting appointment. Do what works best for your office and what aligns with your comfort level. You could consider mailing the hearing aids, doing a direct drop-off at their home, or having the patient or a loved one pick up in your office or via a curbside option.
- ❑ Before the second fitting appointment, make sure your patient has the **Thrive Hearing Control app** downloaded so you can walk them through how to set-up both the app and **Hearing Care Anwyhere**

### Step 3: Fitting Appointment

- ❑ Join the appointment via your preferred video platform and follow your normal in-office protocol to ensure the patient is experiencing a comfortable fit, is happy with their hearing aid settings, can complete basic functionality and knows what to expect prior to their next appointment.
- ❑ Make sure your patient has the **Thrive Hearing Control app** downloaded and working. Ensure they have Hearing Care Anywhere set up and counsel them on how to request remote fine-tuning sessions without the need to come back to the office.
- ❑ If immediate fine-tuning is needed, it can be completed in real-time via **Hearing Care Anywhere**.
- ❑ Inform them of helpful content available within the Thrive app and on Starkey.com.
- ❑ Discuss options for a follow-up appointment and schedule it.
- ❑ Call the patient 24-hours after the appointment to check-in and make sure their they are happy with their Thrive hearing aids and experience.  Also, consider sending a personalized follow-up video or message with helpful tips and things to know.

BEST PRACTICE SOLUTIONS
DIGITAL TOOL SERIES

# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

Telehealth offers the opportunity to safely meet the needs of your patients who value your professional attention but are not comfortable, able or who you may not need to meet in person. For many of your patients, this appointment solution may be a celebrated option to help them immediately hear better.

**While telehealth technology has been available for many years, a culmination of environmental factors has driven acceptance of it among both providers and patients. Some of these key factors include:**

- The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the increased need to protect the safety of patients and providers
- Relaxed HIPAA privacy and security rules for Telehealth
- Advancing technology
- The empowerment of the patient and increasing expectations of convenience, control and cost-savings – especially among Baby Boomers

*The benefits of implementing Telehealth are not just specific to the patient. Many benefits to the provider have also become clear.*

- **Improved Satisfaction:**
  It has been well documented that telehealth provides improved benefit and satisfaction for hearing aid users, in terms of improved satisfaction received via remote support versus face-to-face care alone.*
- **Improved Patient Engagement:**
  You can't be with patients 24/7. Telehealth enables you to make adjustments directly to a patient's hearing aids whenever and wherever they need help.
- **Increased Efficiency:**
  Telehealth appointments remove many logistical inconveniences and inefficiencies of in-office visits, freeing up time to support additional patients.
- **Opportunity for Schedule Optimization:**
  Telehealth appointments allow you to take care of fine-tuning and troubleshooting needs, while keeping your in-office appointments available for more revenue-generating opportunities. This is especially true if you are currently working reduced hours.
- **Increased Access:**
  Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth allows you to reach patients who may not be comfortable or able to come to your office for an in-person appointment.
- **Improved Hearing Outcomes:**
  Research has demonstrated that patients prefer the combination of face-to-face interaction and remote care results over the traditional clinical model, as it allows more personalization to their specific listening needs. In turn, this enhances – rather than threatens – the patient-provider relationship.**

*Molini-Avejonas DR, Rondon-Melo S, Amato CA, Samelli AG. (2015). A Systematic Review of the Use of Telehealth in Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences. J Telemed Telecare. 21(7):367-76.

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# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

## Updates to OCR Telehealth Guidelines

**During the COVID-19 pandemic, The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights (OCR) provided relaxed HIPAA privacy and security rules for telehealth. This ruling does not have an end date, but a new communication will be issued as the situation changes. This is a dynamic situation and should be checked regularly.**

- Telehealth should be conducted in private locations with patients at home or in another clinic. If the patient cannot be in a private setting, you should implement reasonable HIPAA safeguards to protect PHI including using a lowered voice, not using a speaker phone or recommending the patient move a reasonable distance from others.
- Providers can use non-public facing video platforms that employ end-to-end communication and allow only the intended parties to participate. Examples include Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Webex, What's App video and Zoom.
- The new guidelines do not cover violations of state licensing laws and ethical standards or the use of public-facing remote communication products such as Tik Tok, Facebook Live or Slack.

# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

## Telehealth Options

**Telehealth includes services provided through audio, mobile or video communication technology that allows providers to connect with multiple types of patients remotely.**

- **Patient types:**
  - ❑ Patients in a trial period
  - ❑ Patients in need of fine-tuning
  - ❑ Patients in need of troubleshooting help
  - ❑ Patients in need of counseling
  - ❑ Patients who could benefit from an accessory or assistive device
  - ❑ Patients in need of hearing aids that have a valid audiogram, as permitted by state regulations

**Telehealth is most commonly executed in two ways:**

**Asynchronous -** Store-and-forward technologies that collect images and data to be transmitted and interpreted later without the expectation of an immediate response.

- **Hearing Care Anywhere** remote programming allows your patients to request fine-tuning adjustments at any time with the expectation of a timely, but not immediate response. This allows you to respond to their requests as you are able to and without interfering with your current patient schedule. For many clinics, a significant number of appointments are for minor adjustments that could be handled via Hearing Care Anywhere. Now that Hearing Care Anywhere is enabled for all patients across all tiers of Starkey's Livio, Livio AI and Livio Edge AI hearing aids, remote programming is a service you can offer to patients when they may not be comfortable coming into the office, can be helped through fine-tuning, and allow for your office to better and safely treat the patients who need an in-person appointment.

# Taking Advantage of Telehealth

## Telehealth Options *(continued)*

**Synchronous -** Real-time, audio-video communication that connect providers and patients in different locations:

- **Synchronous Telehealth** can be executed in multiple ways and with multiple types of patients depending on your specific set-up and needs
- **Ways to execute:**
  - ❑ Text messaging
  - ❑ Phone call
  - ❑ Video technology — using a non-public facing platform
  - ❑ "In-Office" Telehealth – If your patient does not have accessible technology for a telehealth appointment, consider creating a room in your office where they can join a video call with you from a separate room. You will be able to better communicate with them without the need for a mask during the conversation and they can still feel comfortable by completing an appointment that is not fully in-person.

  *Use **Hearing Care Anywhere** during a telehealth appointment to implement real-time adjustments and interaction.*

*To learn more about how to implement telehealth into your office, download our **Integrate Telehealth into Your Office Guide***

*Video connections can go a long ways. While phone visits are great, video connections add a personal touch and value to remote care visits that make them feel more like an in-office visit.*



This guidance is provided for general informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal advice on any subject matter. We recommend you always follow federal, state and local government mandates specific to your circumstances.

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# Telehealth Office Setup and Tech Requirements

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Telehealth Office Setup and Tech Requirements

Implementing telehealth services requires a bit of planning but creates an additional way to support your patients and provides multiple benefits for your practice.


## Preparing Your Office

### Workflow Planning

Telehealth activities should be designed to complement your standard practices, not complicate or interrupt them. These appointments will likely require an adjusted workflow to ensure you are offering a positive experience for both your patients and staff. These adjustments, however, can save time in the end and provide efficiency in your schedule while also delivering much needed and appreciated services to your patients.

As you get started, try to understand the needs of your patients and staff — such as the times of day that may work best for them and what barriers might prevent them from engaging in a telehealth visit — to ensure your workflow accounts for these details.

### Testing the process and preparing your team

- ❑ Document your process.
- ❑ Train your staff prior to going live. Consider starting with your most enthusiastic staff and implementing a "train the trainer" approach.
- ❑ Complete a number of test appointments to refine your process prior to your first appointments with patients.

# Telehealth Office Setup and Tech Requirements

## Preparing Your Office (continued)

### Setting up your appointment space

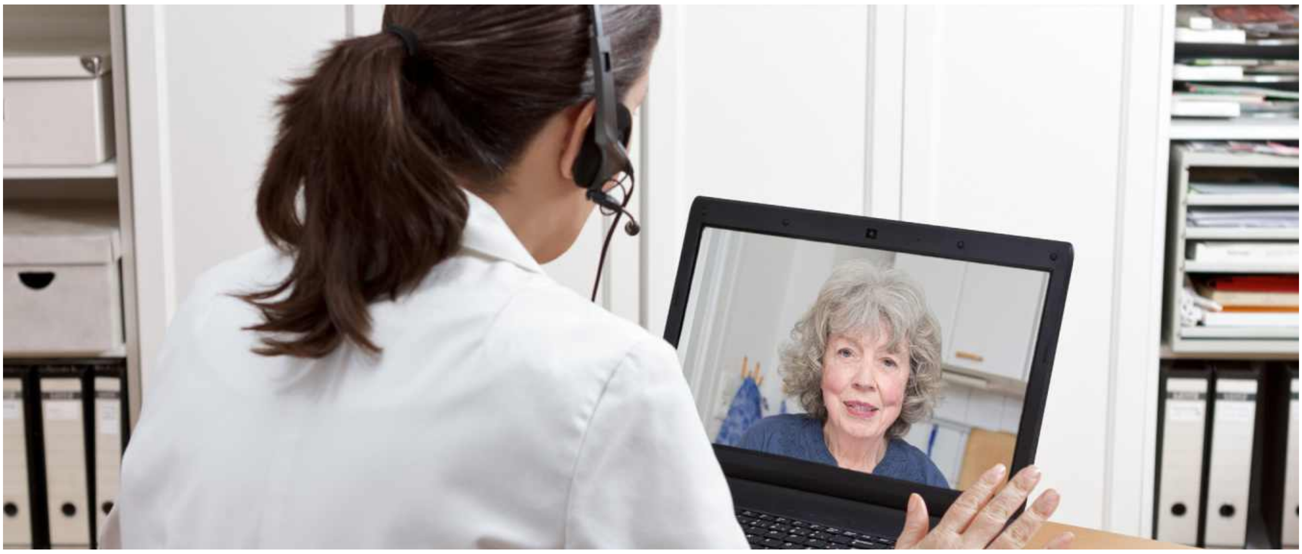
- ❑ When setting up your telehealth space pay special attention to furniture placement, lighting, acoustics and wall color:
  - If possible, use a space with a flat and calming or neutral paint color to avoid any reflection off the wall. If the wall color is too light, the camera lets in less light, resulting in darkened faces. If the wall color is too dark, the camera lets in more light, making faces look washed out or too light.
  - Make sure your light source is in front of your face, not behind you. Try to use soft or natural lighting. Facing a window is often helpful, but avoid back lighting from windows or overhead lights.
- ❑ To ensure privacy, identify a suitable room that is quiet, private and free of distractions.
- ❑ To keep background noise to a minimum, close any doors and shut any windows. Consider hanging a "do not disturb" sign on the door to avoid interruptions.
- ❑ Before each session, check what's in the patient's field of vision and remove all clutter and unnecessary objects.
- ❑ Plan for how you will dress for the event, make sure you appear as professional as possible and even consider wearing a lab coat.
- ❑ Create a credible environment by hanging your certificates and licenses as a backdrop. But, remember to keep your background simple, uncluttered and free of any moving objects.
- ❑ Position your camera:
  - External cameras should be mounted so that both participants (you and the patient) are looking directly at each other during a video call. If the camera is placed too high above the monitor, you will appear to be looking down at the monitor rather than directly at the patient.
  - Remain consistent eye contact and avoid looking at other screens or taking notes, as that can be distracting to the patient. It's good practice to be mindful of this and explain out loud when looking away may be necessary.

# Telehealth Office Setup and Tech Requirements

## Technology Requirements

### Computers

- While you can use any PC, Mac or tablet with a high-quality integrated camera, microphone and speakers, you may consider purchasing a new device. Newer devices (purchased in the last two years) will be better equipped to provide Telehealth sessions.
- Having dual screens will help with documentation and note taking.



### Video platforms

- Per the updated ***HHS Office for Civil Rights Telehealth Guidelines****, providers can use non-public facing video platforms that employ end-to-end communication and allow only the intended parties to participate: Examples include Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video, Microsoft Teams, Skype, WebEx, What's App Video and Zoom.
- The new guidelines do not cover violations of state licensing laws and ethical standards, or the use of public-facing remote communication products such as Facebook Live, Slack or Tik Tok.

*The updated guidelines do not have an end date, but a new communication will be issued as the situation changes. Given this is a dynamic situation, continue to check for updates.

# Telehealth Office Setup and Tech Requirements

## Technology Requirements *(continued)*

### Internet speed

- Test your internet connection speed. For optimal results, a reliable, high-speed internet connection with a bandwidth of at least 10 Mbps will minimize connection issues and provide the best quality.
- Many free internet speed tests are available. Simply search for "internet speed test" on your favorite online search engine to find one. If either your upload or download speed is less than 2 Mbps, your internet connection will not be reliable enough. You will need to consult with your internet provider and improve your connection speeds before implementing telehealth services.
- Use a wired ethernet instead of WiFi whenever possible. While WiFi connections work, you may experience lag and interference, which can cause disruptions in your video and audio. If your computer doesn't have an ethernet port, you can purchase an ethernet adapter.

### Inspire

In order to use Hearing Care Anywhere, you will need a fitting computer with Inspire 2020.0 or higher.

### Hearing Care Anywhere

- Review the **Hearing Care Anywhere Guide**
- Office System Requirements: Fitting computer, Inspire 2020.0 or higher, Hearing Care Anywhere Dashboard and reliable internet connection
- Hearing Aid User Requirements: 2.4GHz Thrive platform hearing aids, smart device, Thrive Hearing Control app and reliable internet connection

### General tips

- Restart your computer every 1-2 days for it to run as efficiently as possible.
- Close any unnecessary programs and applications on your computer, as they take away from resources needed for your computer to run efficiently.
- Install recommended updates only from sources you trust, such as Microsoft and Apple. Keeping software up-to-date will help ensure the performance and compatibility of your computer.
- Locate the volume control on your device. You may need to adjust the volume or mute/unmute your speakers.

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# Hearing Care Anywhere Remote Programming

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas for consideration to apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Hearing Care Anywhere Remote Programming

Hearing Care Anywhere is Starkey's Telehealth application for remote hearing aid programming adjustment. With it, hearing professionals are able to improve the patient experience by delivering programming adjustments directly to a patient's smart device and hearing aids with no need for an in-person office visit. Many professionals have reported that effectively integrating Hearing Care Anywhere into office protocols has resulted in gains in their productivity.

If you have been fitting patients with Livio, Livio AI and Livio Edge AI hearing aids, good news! Remote adjustments are possible for all of these patients across all technology tiers through Hearing Care Anywhere.

## How it works

1. A patient requests adjustment through the Thrive mobile app, either independently or as coached by their hearing professional.
2. The professional receives the patient request via the Hearing Care Dashboard.
3. The professional makes the adjustment and sends the updated settings back to the patient using Inspire.
4. The patient receives the adjustment and compares the new settings to their previous settings with an option to save whichever they prefer.

## What to do

- ❑ Complete Hearing Care Anywhere ***Online Training***.
- ❑ Complete the steps for initial Hearing Care Anywhere setup for your clinic outlined below.
- ❑ Review your schedule of upcoming appointments and identify adjustment appointments that can be completed remotely using Hearing Care Anywhere.
- ❑ Follow the recommended ***Hearing Care Anywhere Protocol*** or your own adaptation of the protocol.

# Hearing Care Anywhere Remote Programming

## Step One:

## Set up Your Dashboard

### What you'll need:

- Fitting computer
- Inspire X 2020.0a or higher
- Hearing Care Dashboard
- Internet connection

### Step One:
### Checklist for Registering the Office

1. Choose an Administrator to register the office
2. Set up the Hearing Care Anywhere Dashboard by following the step-by-step prompts to add the following information:
   – Office Locations
   – Office Hours
   – Custom Messaging
   – Manage Users (Add Professionals)
   – Manage Groups
3. Have each professional check their email to verify their email address and log in to their Dashboard

# Hearing Care Anywhere Remote Programming

## Step Two:

### Remote Programming System Set up for your Patient

**Step Two:**
**Checklist for Activating Hearing Care Anywhere**

1. Log into the Hearing Care Dashboard
2. Open Inspire X
3. Generate a unique remote programming code to give to the patient
4. Help the patient create or log in to their cloud account and enter the unique code provided to establish a secure cloud connection with you as their professional

# Hearing Care Anywhere Remote Programming

## Step Three:

### Instruct the Patient on How to Send a Hearing Care Anywhere Help Request

### What your patient will need:

- Thrive Hearing Control app
- Livio Edge AI, Livio AI or Livio hearing aids
- Smart Device
  (Compatible with both iOS and Android)
- Internet access (cellular or WiFi)

## Step Three: Checklist for the Patient

1. Launch the Thrive Hearing Control app
2. Tap the Settings Menu icon and select Hearing Care Anywhere
3. Select Submit new Help Request
4. Follow the prompts to complete the Help Request
5. When new settings are available from the professional, there will be a red exclamation point by the Settings Menu icon in the Thrive app
6. Select Hearing Care Anywhere and follow the trail of red indicators to access the new settings
7. Toggle between current and new settings to determine which are optimal and save the preferred settings
8. Provide a satisfaction rating

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# Choose Who to Engage and How

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas you can apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Schedule Blocking

## Who should you engage?

The greatest opportunity for generating revenue is to tap into your existing patient database, which includes contacts that represent high revenue potential for the practice. The most critical qualifier for identifying those high revenue potential contacts is the patient's history with hearing aids. By focusing on existing wearers, you increase your chances of driving revenue for your practice dramatically.

Our recommended best practice approach is to review and segment your existing patient database, establish an outreach plan for you and your staff and to take action by calling your patients.

## Segment your database

- **Focus your attention on patients with 3+ year-old hearing aids and that have been to your office within the last year.** This will likely be the largest segment within your patient database. They will be more receptive to hearing from you and have the greatest revenue generating potential. In fact, some hearing practices report that up to 50% of their revenue can come from selling new technology to previously fit patients.
- **Your second priority group should be patients with 3+ year old hearing aids who have not been to your office within the last year, but whom you have seen in the past two years.** This group is less likely to engage, but still a group that can generate revenue for your practice. Note that very limited success is seen by contacting patients you have not seen in more than 2 years. Contacting this group is not recommended and often better served through your marketing efforts and referrals.
- **When you have reached out to patients in these first two groups, start talking to patients that had their hearing tested but opted not to purchase.** Again, the most receptive patients will be those you have seen within the last year and it is recommended that you refrain from contacting patients with whom you have no recent history or relationship.
- **Any patients in your database that are currently wearing competitive product should also be considered.** Let them know that you are open and ready to help them with any issues they are having at no charge. This may go a long way in converting them to a sale down the road. During times of disruption, some patients have had to look for care from other providers that are open.

# Schedule Blocking

## Establish an outreach plan

Patients may react more positively to a call from a professional that has helped them achieve better hearing in the past. Your administrative staff (PCCs) should also participate in outreach efforts. Don't be easily discouraged. Even amongst some of your best prospecting groups, only one in six calls may generate a quality conversation with a patient. Remember that the more you engage with patients over the phone, the more familiar it will become and the more successful you and your staff will be.

Consider a soft approach as you reach out to patients. Ask them how they are doing and how well their hearing aids are working for them currently. This could be an opportunity to assist them remotely with whatever problems they present – directing them to resources on your website and or talking them through a solution.

Ask them about any current hearing challenges they're experiencing, especially in specific circumstances such as hearing others, listening to the television or speaking over the phone. This may open an opportunity to talk about the benefits of wireless accessories, like the TV Streamer.

Another successful approach is talking to patients about upgrading to the Livio family of products so that you, as the professional, can provide care and troubleshoot any issues remotely through the Hearing Care Anywhere feature, saving them from having to leave their home and come into the office for care.

Lastly, many patients express frustration about changing batteries or not having an adequate supply of batteries. The convenience and comfort of Starkey's portfolio of rechargeable hearing aids may be technology they'd like to learn more about.

## Take action and start calling your patients

Schedule time in your day for these calls – they are important! Be sure to note the calls and specific follow up actions you need to take in your office management system and/or in the patient's file.

Confirm the patient's email address, so that you can follow up via email. Initial email communications could focus on helpful information like tips for changing wax guards or cleaning their hearing aids. Ultimately, this could lead to a promotional offer to upgrade to new technology.

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# Connect with your patients over the phone

## Table of Contents

**In this guide, you will find ideas for consideration to apply and modify to your specific situation and opportunity.**

**Topics covered include:**

# Curbside Hearing Care Service

## Preparing for outbound phone calls

Outbound phone calls do take time, but can be very effective if planned properly.

You may have several employees within your office who are responsible for outbound phone calls. Being fully prepared by taking the time to understand who you are calling and the objective of the call is well worth the time.

### *Know who you are calling and for what purpose*

- ❑ Current patient for wellness check
- ❑ Current patient to schedule service appointment
- ❑ Current patient for annual hearing evaluation
- ❑ Current patient for annual hearing evaluation/upgrade
- ❑ Prospect to schedule hearing evaluation appointment
- ❑ Prospect to reschedule hearing evaluation appointment

### **Current** Patient

- **Familiarize yourself with their activity by reviewing their patient file and/or notes in your Office Management System (OMS):**
    - When was the last time they were seen?
    - How old are their current hearing aids?
- **Verify contact information and contact permissions. Be sure to complete and confirm the contact information in your OMS.**
    - Accurate phone number landline and/or cell phone
    - Email address
    - Full mailing address
    - Is their record marked with “do not call,” “do not email,” or “do not mail”?
    - Emergency contact information

### **Prospective** Patient

- **How did they originally find your office?**
    - Direct mail
    - Referral
    - Open house
    - Advertising
- **What is the reason for follow-up?**
- **How long ago was their most recent interaction?**
    - Prospects have a shorter window when it comes to telemarketing. If you have not been in touch for 3+ months, make sure that their phone number is not on your state’s Do Not Call list. With privacy regulations, you will need to show that you have an in-office process.
- **Prepare your questions and scripts as needed.**

# Curbside Hearing Care Service

## Best practices to follow during your phone call

**This phone call represents you, your colleagues and your business or practice.**

**Think positively and remember to smile. You want the patient to feel how important they are and to understand that your main concern is to help them hear their best.**

- ❑ Put a smile in your voice
- ❑ Initially address the patient/prospect by first and last name,unless you have an established relationship with an existing patient and feel comfortable using their first name.
- ❑ Let the patient know your name, what office you are calling from, and why you are calling
- ❑ Speak slowly and clearly. Remember, we typically are communicating with households who have an older demographic. Make an effort to help them hear you the first time.
- ❑ Subsequently use their first name during the course of your conversation – this is a personal call, about their individual situation. Listen. Allow the patient some time to fully express their thoughts and answer your questions.
- ❑ Be conversational. Ask your script questions, let the patient answer, and then ask follow-up questions if necessary for more clarification.
- ❑ Verify address, phone number and email if this information hadn't been verified within the past year.
- ❑ Take good notes about the conversation. These notes should be included in their OMS record or file and available to other office staff members for review. You will be happy you added these notes when you pick up the phone to call them again the next time.

# Curbside Hearing Care Service

## Tips for ending a call and important follow-ups

**Close:**

- **Lead your conversation toward the objective of the call. For example,**
  - Curbside check-in
  - Appointment for updated hearing evaluation
  - Trial of new hearing aids
- **Thank them for their time and let them know you look forward to seeing them.**
- **If no action is taken today, ask for their permission to follow-up again in "XX" weeks/months.**
  - "I know you aren't ready to schedule your appointment with us today. Would you mind if I followed up with you again next month?"

**Follow-Up:**

- **Add all notes to their record in your OMS and/or Patient File.**
- **Add appointment and any appointment reminder processes to your OMS and/or Patient File.**
- **Add next call/follow-up to your call calendar.**

*Think positively and remember to put a smile in your voice. You want the patient to feel how important they are and that your main concern is to help them hear their best.*

# Curbside Hearing Care Service

## Do Not Call State and National Regulations

Most of the time, when you are outbound calling patients within your own database, your risk of non-compliance within state telemarketing laws would be low. You should be familiar with regulations and gain access to the state level Do Not Call lists.

A nuance surrounding telemarketing is the "established business relationship provision." Although a consumer may have placed their phone number on a Do Not Call list, if you have an existing business relationship, the regulation is relaxed.

*A company with which a consumer has an established business relationship may call for up to 18 months after the consumer's last purchase or last delivery or last payment, unless the consumer asks the company not to call again. In that case, the company must honor the request not to call. If the company calls again, it may be subject to a fine.*

*If a consumer makes an inquiry or submits an application to a company, the company can call for three months. Once again, if the consumer makes a specific request to that company not to call, the company may not call, even if it has an established business relationship with the consumer.*

*A consumer whose number is not on the national registry can still prohibit individual telemarketers from calling by asking to be put on the company's own Do Not Call list.*

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# Outbound Wellness Check Script

Audience: Current hearing aid wearers with hearing aids OVER three years old and seen in the practice within the last 1-2 years

## Goals

1. Check-in: Overall how are they doing?
2. Hearing Aids: Overall satisfaction
3. Hearing Aids: Identify if/where they are struggling and solve issues
4. Education: New hearing aids, how new features could help, Hearing Care Anywhere
5. Action:
   - ❑ Schedule service appointment (curbside if needed)
   - ❑ Schedule hearing test if needed
   - ❑ Offer demo of new hearing aids for 30 days
   - ❑ Offer any financing, trade-in or special pricing promotions

# Update your employee and workplace policies

## Outbound Phone Call to Patient

- *"Hello, may I please speak with <Patient Name>"?*
- *"Hello <Patient Name>, this is <Hearing Professional Name> from <Clinic name>. I am calling to check in with you. How have you and your family been?"*

**Allow patient to respond. Most likely they'll bring up the current situation (COVID-19) and how it's affected them. Listen...acknowledge...and engage them with hearing-related questions, for example:**

- *"We're hearing from many people how this situation has magnified the importance of hearing well — whether it's keeping up with important news and information, feeling safe and healthy, hearing people who are wearing masks and, of course, staying socially connected to family and friends.'*
- *"How has your hearing been?"*
- *"Are you able to hear the TV and keep up easily with events and news?"*
- *"How about hearing on the phone – and staying connected to people, especially now, as we're being asked to socially distance ourselves?"*
- *"How you have been able to hear people who are wearing masks?"*
- *"Have you had more people at home more hours of the day? How are you handling people talking in other rooms?"*

**Allow patient to respond, understand issues completely, walk through any tech support issues and determine best way to service.**

- Can the issue be solved over the phone?
- Is curbside service an option?
- Is it necessary that they come into the office for hearing test or other?

**Next, begin to talk about firmware updates and/or educate them about the newest hearing aids, new features, the ability to diagnose and program hearing aids remotely.**

- *"We like to think of the programs in your hearing aid as a prescription, and like any other prescription we want to check on it at least annually to be sure that we have everything set to your needs and also that the latest firmware updates have been applied to your hearing aids. We should try to get you into the office within the next week or two. Do you have availability on <Date/time>?*

# Update your employee and workplace policies

## Outbound Phone Call to Patient *(continued)*

**Curbside check-in appointment + possibility of "demo" or "trial" of newest hearing aids:**

- *Your hearing aids are over "X" years old, and the newest technology offers so much more flexibility for adjustments. Our newest hearing aids allow us to diagnose and program hearing aids remotely. For instance, for many of the adjustments that you have been in the office over the years, we are now able to us an APP through your phone to make those adjustments, while you are in the comfort of your own home. By the way, what kind of phone do you have? Smart phones are allowing us to provide many new remote services, not to mention allowing you to have a lot more personal control of your hearing aids. (apply any further features that may be interesting to patients' lifestyle)*
- *Are you interested in a trial of the new technology?*
- **If seem interested, mention any financing, trade-in or special offer promotions**.
- **If hearing aids need to be sent in for repair and there are stock hearing aids available for "loan":** *I would love to have you test drive some new hearing aids and try new technology. While we are waiting for your hearing aids to come back, I would like you to wear these hearing aids. They should give you a good idea of how much the technology has advanced. While your hearing aids are sent in for repair, you can be experiencing new technology. Is that something you would like to try?*
    - **If Yes:** *Great. Here is how we can make that work....*
    - **If No:** *No problem. I just want you to know what is available to you. It is something you should keep in mind. Most of my patients are happiest when they update their hearing aids every three to four years, to take full advantage of the newest advancements. Let's make sure that we get you scheduled in for your service appointment and an updated hearing evaluation in <Month>. What days of the week are best for you?*
- *"It is important that we see you and that we get an updated hearing evaluation – just to make sure that your hearing hasn't changed significantly. We would like to get you in as soon as possible. There are a few processes that we have had to change due to the COVID-19, and we want to make sure to keep all of our patients and staff safe. We would like to schedule you in a couple of weeks. Would you be able to bring your "spouse" in with you? It would be good to be able to touch base with both of you on how things are going. Does <date/time> work for you?*
    - *Important that spouse or loved one attends as well*

**Closing**

- *Thank you for your time today and I look forward to seeing you.*
- **OR, if no remote, curbside or appointment scheduled**.
- *Thank you for your time today. Please make sure to give us a call any time you need us and we will check back in with you in <timeline>. Here is the best phone number to reach us: <xxx-xxx-xxxx>*

Starkey