

## The 'Total Concept': risk management to prevent noise deafness'

The consequences of exposure to high sound levels are very often undervalued. Let's think about the decrease of productivity by communication disorder, stress and loss of concentration and on the other hand the higher risk of working accidents and the increase of claims for the professional illness deafness. The legislation and rules are very strict concerning prevention of hearing damage caused by noise in the workplace. Based on statistics we have to conclude that these regulations are not very successful, noise deafness is one of the most common professional illnesses.

If people want to fight against hearing damage, a consistent policy needs to be drafted. It is very important to first fight the sound at the source. If it is not possible in this way to decrease the sound to a safe limit, the person himself needs to be protected. Statistics from professional illnesses show that hearing protectors only is not a solution.



# Hearing Coach



After years of experience and expertise the Variphone® hearing protector appears to be perfect to use for the hearing programmes. Because of the unique 2-channel design of this adjustable hearing protector it is possible to confirm the attenuation, on the basis of compact REM equipment, very fast and reliable. On the other hand, the adjustable filter makes sure that alternative attenuations can be adjusted very fast and without the exchange of other elements.

Noise deafness has become second in the list of most common professional illnesses. The only way to prevent noise deafness successfully and to minimize the social and financial risks of noise at work is to make use of the so called 'Hearing Conservation Programs' (HCP). 'HearingCoach' is a practical example of such a programme and is based on the following principles:

*By individual exposed to the risk, a multidisciplinary action plan for long term is formulated. The most important actions are:*

- Measurement of the personal noise levels (Lex, 8hr) with the help of dosimetrics;
- Formulating an individual risk profile according to ISO 1999;
- Inform the employees and the management about the risks that are linked to the exposure in the workplace (by individual / group employees);
- Check the attenuation of the hearing protectors 'while wearing' and at the same noise level as during work.;

Every action has been worked out in advance and in detail and has been planned and sent in advance automatically.

Results and opinions will be automatically saved in a personal and historical central database.

On the basis of yearly controls in the built up trackrecord, professionals are capable of taking the appropriate preventive and/or corrective measurements.



- Tracing possible damage with Oto Acoustic Emissions (OAE) and formulate the OAE diagram (% damage of the exterior tritl haircells by frequency);
- Coaching and counselling (possible refer to someone else) of participants to the HearingCoach programme;
- Evaluating and yearly certification of the HearingCoach programme

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