



# What happens to your application for hearing aid(s)?



- Your audiologist sends the application to one of the Ministry of Health's providers of Equipment and Modification Services (EMS) and gives it a **Priority 1** or **Priority 2** status. Accessable manages this service for the Ministry in the Auckland and Northland regions and Enable New Zealand manages it for the rest of New Zealand.
- The EMS Provider (Accessable or Enable New Zealand):
  1. Checks that:
    - a. The recommended hearing aid(s) is a cost-effective solution to meet your needs
    - b. All the necessary information has been supplied by your audiologist
  2. Approves the application if it meets the Ministry of Health criteria for funding.

## Priority 1 Urgent

If your application is a Priority 1, and you need your hearing aids to meet urgent safety needs, your audiologist will contact you within 2 – 4 weeks and advise you that you can begin trialling your hearing aids.

## Priority 1

If your application is a Priority 1, and there is not enough budget available, your application will be waitlisted until funding becomes available. The time frame for this is difficult to determine, but it could be within 1 month or up to 9 months, or longer if there is a very high demand for services.

## Priority 2

If your application is a Priority 2 and you do not need hearing aids to meet urgent safety needs, your application will be waitlisted. The time frame for this is difficult to predict, but it could range from 3 months to 12 months or more. This is because the demand on the budget for equipment and modification services is greater than the funding available.

After you have been waiting for more than 6 months from the date of your application being approved, you will be sent a letter by the EMS provider telling you that the application is still waitlisted and will be approved for funding once budget is available.

If your needs or circumstances change while you are waiting for final funding approval for your hearing aids, please contact your audiologist, as they can reconsider the priority of your application. They will then contact the EMS provider to discuss the reasons for this.

The EMS provider will update you about your application at 6 monthly intervals.

The Ministry of Health is working on developing a fairer and more transparent system of prioritising equipment and modification services. We acknowledge that the long wait while the funding is approved may be difficult for some people and are continuing to work on improvements to this.

The table below describes the priority ratings for all equipment and modification services funded by the Ministry of Health - hearing aids are part of these services.

Description of Waiting Lists		Examples of service type
<p><b>Priority 1 Urgent</b> (a temporary arrangement due to current budget pressures)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The person needs the service to meet urgent safety needs and no other solution is available.</li> <li>Clinical decision required by Team Leader (e.g. Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist or senior audiologist)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equipment such as pressure care mattresses where the person is at risk of developing pressure areas and may need to be admitted to hospital for treatment</li> <li>Wheelchairs for children who have grown out of their existing wheelchair or their current wheelchair is unsafe and can no longer be used</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority 1</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applications as above but all those which have not been identified by a senior clinician as needing immediate funding to meet the person's urgent safety needs</li> <li>Applications for children under 16 years are generally given a Priority 1 ranking because their needs change more frequently</li> <li>Maximum waiting time now up to 10 months unless person's needs change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All complex equipment items which are not on the EMS providers' tender price lists such as standing frames, beds and hoists</li> <li>Majority of housing modifications such as ramps and level access showers</li> <li>Hearing aids where specific safety needs have been identified e.g. the person is unable to hear safety alarms on equipment they use in their workplace or to enable a person to care for someone who is dependent on them for support (such as a young child)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority 2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No applications for children –</li> <li>Applications for people who do not have an urgent safety need for services, and/or have access to other support options (such as personal care support in their home).</li> <li>Applications for people who need services to enable them to work, study at tertiary level, do voluntary work or care for a dependent person</li> <li>Average length of time on waiting list up to 12 months unless person's needs change – no likelihood of funding available in the foreseeable future</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearing aids where no safety needs are identified</li> <li>Equipment to enable a person to undertake work or study</li> <li>Wheelchair for person living in residential care</li> </ul>