

Improving Care, Outcomes and Efficiency Through the Use of Audiology Assistants (or Oto Techs)



FUEL YOUR FUTURE
NASHVILLE 2019

After this course, participants will be able to:

Explain how to utilize the Oto-Tech position within a practice.

Illustrate the positive financial aspects and enhanced patient care of Oto-Tech integration into a practice.

Define the scope of practice and plan for implementation, recruitment and integration into a practice.



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Introduction & Disclosures



Definitions of Terms

Audiology Assistant

Oto-Technician

Scope of Practice

Scope of Practice

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Audiology Assistant

Oto-Technician

Scope of Practice

Scope of Practice



Mixed feelings...



Mixed feelings...



Where did all the Audiologists go?

11,200 FTE in total

400 retire annually

<600 entering the
profession



16,000 licensed audiologists
in US

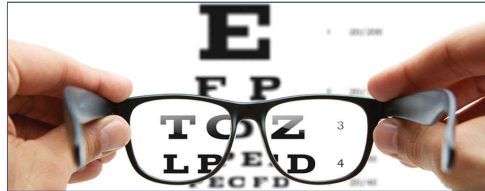
13,000 actually providing
patient care



Where did all the Audiologists go?



24,000 Enrolled Students



5,800 Enrolled Students



2,200 Enrolled Students



The Silver Tsunami

Those born between 1946 and 1964



22.9%



Scheduling!



The outcomes of Oto-Technicians



Availability of audiological services
Productivity of the department
Patient satisfaction



Wait times
Costs

Caveats:

- What does your state allow?
- Quality begets quality.
- Plan it out **FIRST!**



Scope of Practice



Scope of Practice



“Incident to”

Scope of Practice

“Direct Supervision”

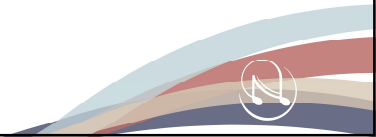
“Incident to”

-TC

- OAEs
- ABRs
- Vestibular Codes

Scope of Practice:

Other Insurance Carriers DO!



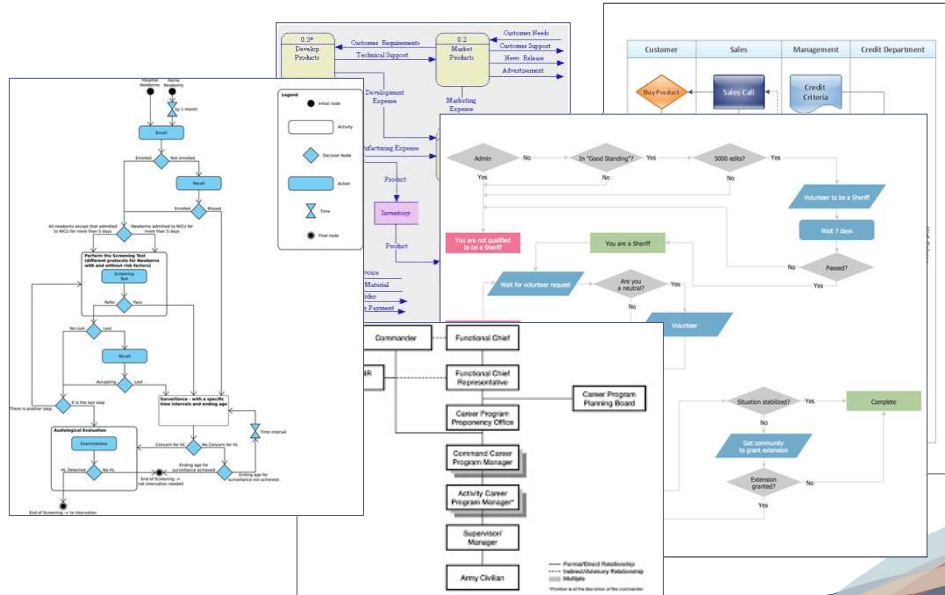
Scope of Practice

No charge visits for hearing aid checks
Hearing aid repair
Walk-in trouble shooting
Prepping new hearing aids
Sending out broken hearing aids
Follow-up calls

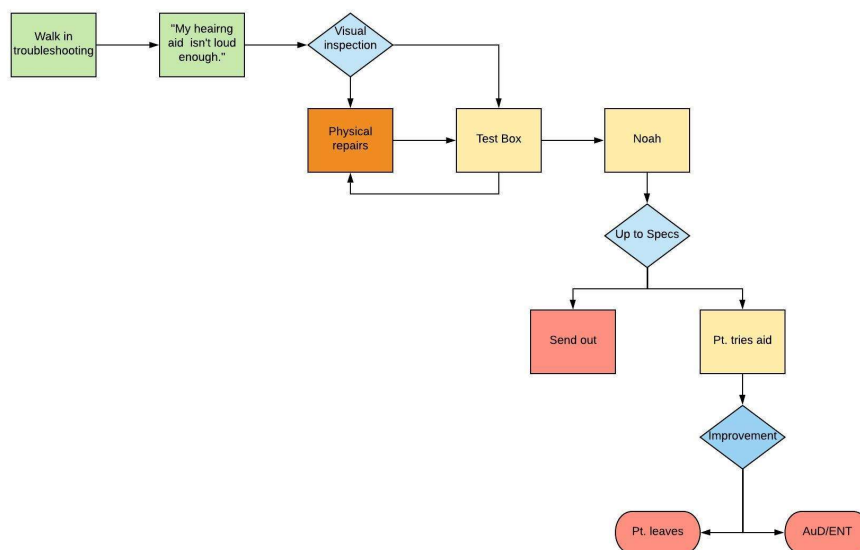
Routine Mundane



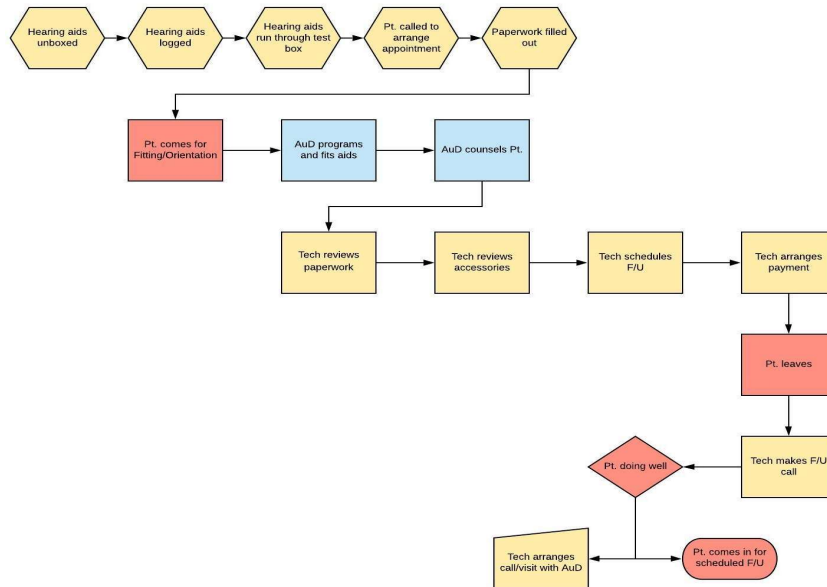
Forced-choice decision tracks



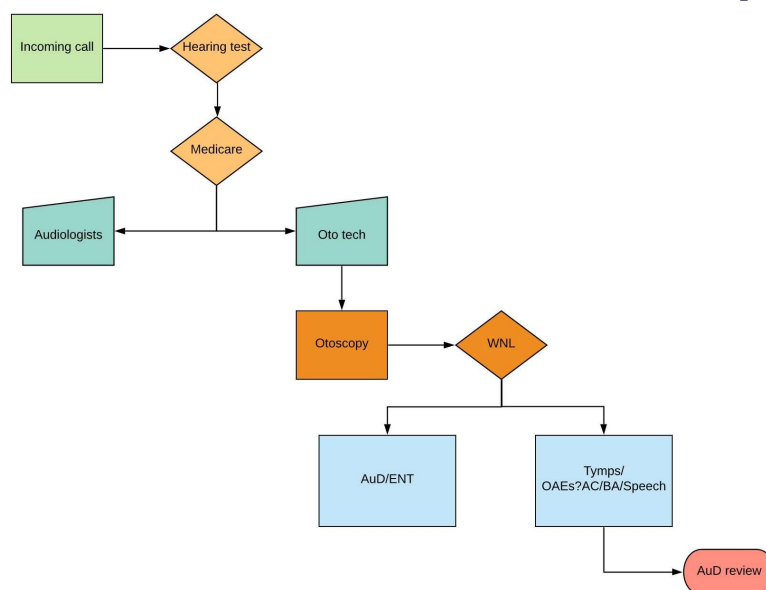
Decision Process Flow: Hearing aid repair



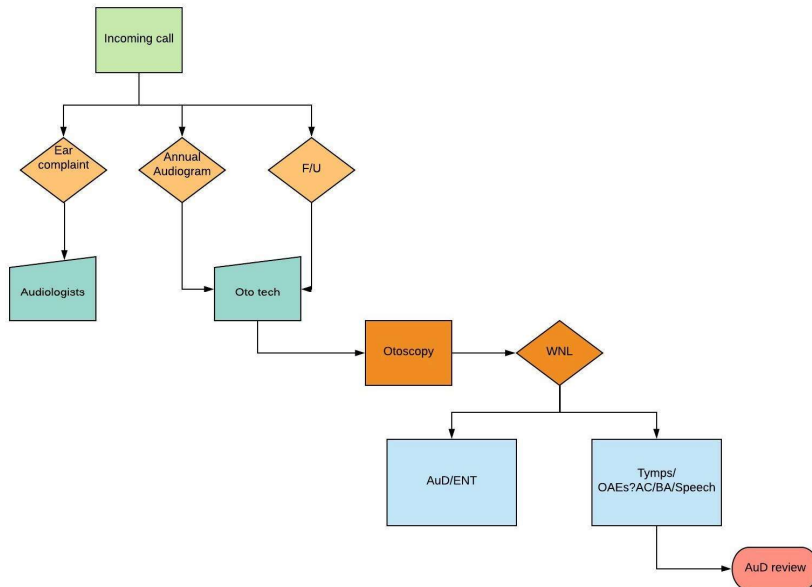
Decision Process Flow: Hearing aid orientation



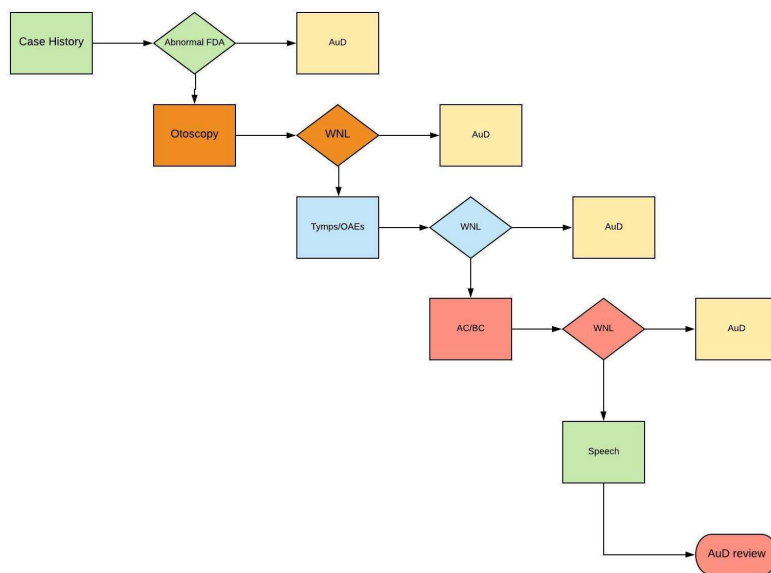
Decision Process Flow: New patient



Decision Process Flow: New patient (option 2)



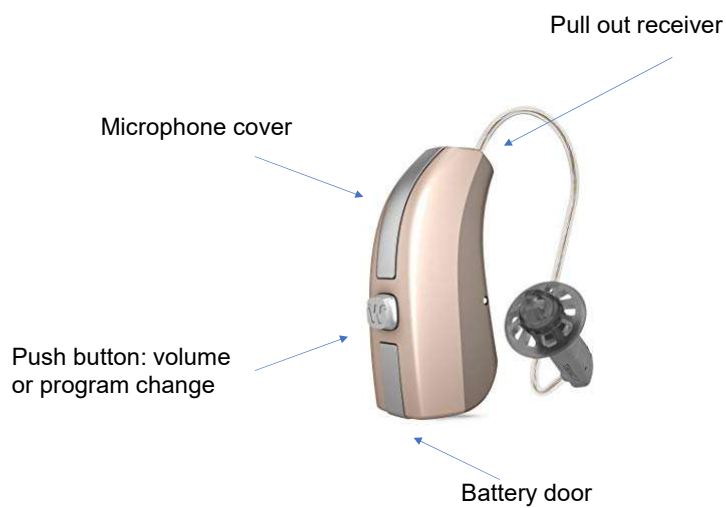
Decision Process Flow: Testing



Training and updates count!



Training and updates count!



Training and updates count!



Are you ready for an Assistant or Tech?

*There is no cookie
cutter approach.*

AuDs and Assistants/Techs by the Numbers

	Audiologist	Assistant/Technician
Yearly Salary	\$85,000.00	\$45,000.00
Weekly Salary	\$1,634.61	\$865.38
Daily Salary	\$326.92	\$173.07
Hourly Salary	\$40.80	\$21.6
92557 Reimbursement \$32	1.25 tests	.67 tests



Audiologist's Schedule

Appointment Type	Number of Appointments	Time per Appointment (minutes)	Total Time per Day (hours)
Hearing Aid Eval	1	60	1
Audio	8	30	4
Hearing Aid F/U	3	30	1.5
Clean and Check	4	15	1
Lunch	1	30	.5

- 4 more hearing aid evals per week
- Closure Rate of 50%



Audiologist's Schedule

Number of Communication Needs Assessment	Closure Rate	Average Sale Price (per Unit)	Weekly Revenue	Yearly Revenue
2	52%	\$2,224	\$4,625	\$240,547
3	52%	\$2,224	\$6,938	\$360,776
4	52%	\$2,224	\$9,251	\$481,095
5	73%	\$2,641	\$19,278	\$1,002,523

Case Study: VA Audiology Clinics



Audiologists

↑ 83%

Techs

↑ 720%

5:1

Case Study: ENT Practice 1

Locations: Three
Physicians: Five
Audiologists: Four
Oto-Technicians: Two
Incorporated into the practice: Four years ago

- Non-Medicare 92557
- Walk-in trouble shooting
- Clerical process

Results:
12% of diagnostic revenue
No no-charge visits in 2.5 years

Case Study: ENT Practice 2

Locations: One
Physicians: Three
Audiologists: Two
Oto-Technicians: Two
Incorporated into the practice: Four years ago

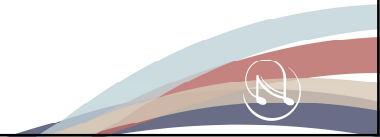
- Walk-in trouble-shooting
- Clerical process

Results:
12 Months – 1041 Walk-in visits

86 hours!

What can you do with 86 extra hours?

$$86 \text{ CNAs} \times 52\% \text{ Closure Rate} \times \$2,224 = \$198,914$$



Training & Implementation

Self Study

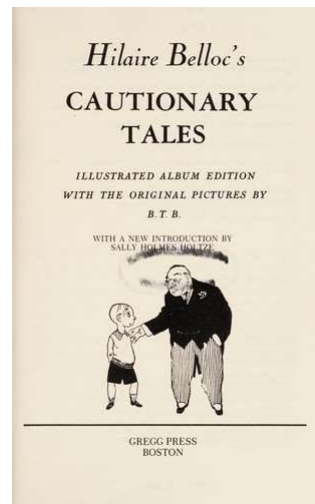
Hands-On Workshop

Six Month Supervised Period

Certification Awarded



Cautionary Tales:



Flawed decision making

Under appreciated?

Fuel Staffing & Procedure Survey

Turnover rate for Audiologists 3.77 Years

Turnover rate for Oto-Technicians 4.8 Years

Who should be an Oto-Technician?

Someone who likes PEOPLE



Problem Solver

Know what they don't know.....



Are you ready for an Oto-Technician?

There is no cookie cutter approach.

One hour or more of no charge visits?
One hour or more on paperwork and mailing?
Less than 20 minutes for an audio?
Pulled from a hearing aid eval for an add on?



Are you ready for an Oto-Technician?

Considerations:

Does your state allow it?
Do you have the room?
Does your culture allow it?
Is there proper supervision?
Have you spoken to your billing specialist?



How to get started.....

Examine your scheduling
Speak to your billing specialist
Discuss the opportunity with the audiologists on staff
Determine a scope of practice that you can stand behind
Decide to hire from outside or promote from within
Develop a curriculum that makes sense for the scope of practice
Proper training before autonomy



Good Luck!!!!

