

Monitoring the Quality of Your OAE Screening and Follow-up Practices

The following are three recommended ways to monitor the quality of your OAE hearing screening and follow-up practices.

1. Monitor screening skills

Use the *OAE Screening Skills Acquisition Checklist* to determine how well you are employing effective screening strategies. Evaluate your own skills using the Checklist or have any of the following people observe you and give you feedback:

- Peer Screener
- Supervisor
- Consulting audiologist

2. Monitor Pass, Refer and Can't Test rates for the initial (OAE 1) screening

Your initial Pass rate should be approximately 75-80%. Your Pass rate may be slightly lower when you are first learning to screen, but this should improve once you become more experienced. A "PASS" on the protocol pertains to having obtained a "PASS" on both ears during a given screening session OR having ultimately passed each ear at some point across more than one screening session.

Note: During certain seasons, many children may have head colds which can temporarily result in lower than expected Pass rates. This should not change your screening and follow-up protocol.

3. Monitor adherence with the screening and follow-up protocol

There are two related elements of the protocol that are equally important in monitoring the quality of your screening and follow-up practices:

- a) **Sequence** of screening and follow-up activities (i.e., are the steps for rescreening and referral occurring in the recommended order?)
- b) **Timing** of screening and follow-up activities (i.e., are the steps for rescreening and referral occurring within the recommended timeframe?)

The more closely you comply with the sequence and the timing of the steps recommended in the screening and follow-up protocol, the more effective you will be in identifying children with hearing-health needs.

How to address quality improvement needs

- Review Training Materials (written & video) and access additional resources from www.infantheating.org/earlychildhood
- Use the *OAE Screening Skills Acquisition Checklist*
- Screen with peers who are effective screeners
- Screen in teams whenever possible (with another screener or with a teacher/parent who can use quiet toys to distract the child)
- Seek telephone technical assistance from audiological consultants
- Seek hands-on technical assistance/follow-up training from audiological consultants
- Contact the equipment manufacturer or distributor if you think your equipment is malfunctioning (e.g., you are getting the same results for all children or you are consistently getting error messages)
- Evaluate your tracking and follow-up data management system to see if it provides sufficient prompts to help you adhere to the protocol