

The Audiologist in the Field of Otorhinolaryngology

Jorge Humberto Martins*

Audiologist, Columbia, Portugal

***Corresponding Author:** Jorge Humberto Martins, Audiologist, Columbia, Portugal.

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Audiology is a science that encompasses the study of balance and hearing. It integrates several scientific areas such as: anatomic-physiology, physics, psychology, phonetics, acoustics, psycho-acoustics, among others. The Audiologist specializes in the assessment, diagnosis and rehabilitation of hearing and balance disorders, having at his disposal several complementary diagnostic tools for the assessment of balance and hearing problems. These tool, allows the audiologist to assess from neonatology to the geriatric population.

At pediatric age, the audiologist begins its activity in the implementation and execution of neonatal screening programs for deafness in maternity hospitals. These programs are extremely important for the early detection and rehabilitation of children with hearing loss. In the specific area of auditory rehabilitation, the intervention of this professional received new possibilities and new challenges with the increasing technological development in the area of auditory support systems. In this field, helping individuals improve their communication performance with hearing aids and hearing implants provides the audiologist a field of opportunities and the need to stay on top the technology development. Especially in the area of cochlear implants, his work is always carried out as an integral and active member of a multidisciplinary team, which has received new tools that allow remote evaluation.

In terms of hearing health in preschool and school age, there is still a huge amount of work that needs to be done, in the elaboration and implementation of hearing screening programs for this population. The implementation of these programs is extremely important due to the relevance that hearing problems can have in school success/failure as well as in social development.

In another aspect, it is necessary to implement and promote the evaluation and intervention in auditory processing problems of central origin, which in some countries is still in an embryonic state, but when it is better implemented, it will have a huge impact on various fields of education, especially in the group of children with learning difficulties.

In adult individuals, the response needs will naturally be different. The adult population presents itself to the audiologist with different challenges and needs, inherent to different pathologies and socio-professional needs. The clinical manifestations of audio-vestibular pathologies in the active adult population present particularities that differentiate them from the pediatric and geriatric population, implying an adequacy both in diagnosis and in terms of rehabilitation. The audiologist participates in the implementation of an individualized program in order to improve the individual's quality of life.

From the point of view of hearing education and public health, the Audiologist should be responsible for designing and implementing hearing screening programs in occupational medicine teams.

Another area of intervention that is increasingly frequent due to the characteristics of the population of developed countries is the care of elderly patients. This patient is necessarily one who increasingly presents a huge challenge. This patient, due to his anatomophysiological characteristics, often presents audiological conditions that are more difficult to rehabilitate, both from the auditory point of view and from the balance point of view, requiring a careful and lengthy intervention program whose results may be negatively

influenced by the multiple concomitant pathologies from which they often suffer, namely neurological.

In all areas of intervention, the work carried out must be done in close collaboration with the multidisciplinary team that intervenes in each specific situation.

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