



## PRESS RELEASE

# Over a third of UK adults avoiding hearing checks, due to stigma and embarrassment

A groundbreaking new study from the UK leader in ear and hearing health innovation, TympaHealth has uncovered concerning insights into ear and hearing health among adults, revealing significant social and psychological barriers that are preventing crucial ear and hearing care interventions.

The study, which has surveyed over 1000 representative adults from 18 to 65 and over, has revealed that more than one in three people (35%) have experience of hearing loss, with over half (56%) stating it has had a negative impact on their mental health, over one in three (35%) have never had their hearing checked.

The study pinpoints key obstacles preventing people from seeking hearing care:

- Embarrassment emerges as a primary deterrent, with 31% expressing concerns about potentially having to wear hearing aids, viewing this as a barrier to seeking treatment.
- This was even higher for younger respondents, with 38% of 18-24- and 25-34-year-olds stating they would be worried about this, compared to 23% of 45-54-year-olds and 19% of 55-64-year-olds
- Over one in five (23%) of respondents cite social stigma around the association of hearing loss and aging as a reason for inaction. This rises to 30% for those aged 25-34

The research reveals the majority (53%) of people either occasionally or often avoid social situations due to hearing difficulties, potentially as a result of these factors, highlighting the profound impact of hearing challenges on social interactions and mental well-being.

However, the data also shows a worrying lack of awareness among UK adults of the negative impact hearing loss can have on brain health, with over half (53%) of people reporting they're unaware of the long-term health implications of unaddressed hearing loss. This rises to 57% for 18-24-year-olds and 63% for 25-34 year olds.

This lack of awareness among younger generations is particularly concerning, due to the preventative role addressing ear and hearing health can play in reducing mental health difficulties and cognitive decline.

Over half (53%) of all respondents said they not aware at all about hearing loss being potentially linked to dementia, while over a quarter (28%) of young people said the same.

[The Lancet](#) found that the greatest risk factors associated with people developing conditions such as dementia are hearing impairment (7%) and social isolation (5%). Research by [The University of Oxford](#), also found building cognitive resilience at a young age will make the brain more robust and potentially better able to fight off conditions such as dementia in later life.

The survey also revealed that waiting list duration was a key barrier for 28% of people in addressing ear and hearing health. However, the study revealed a lack of awareness among respondents that hearing loss could be checked by their local pharmacy, with over a quarter (28%) stating that they didn't know this was a potential option.

**Professor Adrian Davis OBE, Technical advisor for the World Health Organisation (WHO), said:**

“These findings underscore the urgent need to destigmatise hearing health and create supportive local people friendly environments that encourage auditory well-being.

“This new research serves as a critical wake-up call, emphasising the importance of early hearing protection and timely early interventions. By prioritising the psychological and social barriers, NHS and private sector healthcare providers and community leaders can help adults maintain their ear and hearing health and quality of life.”

**Dr Krishan Ramdoo, CEO & Founder of TympaHealth and ENT surgeon, said:**

“Our research findings show that ear and hearing health is being overlooked by people, due to a variety of factors, but perhaps most concerningly people are worried about the social implications of addressing their ear and hearing health.

“It's a myth that ear and hearing health only impacts older people. It can affect people at any age. Early and timely intervention makes a significant difference to people's lives, it can prevent long term issues from arising, including poor mental health and cognitive decline, and ensure people can fulfil their potential.

“We are committed to raising awareness, and providing the critical assessment and support needed to help young people take charge of their hearing health, while alleviating pressure on the healthcare system.”

**Ends**