

## **Abstract EFAS/DGA 2007**

### **Experience of newborn screening for deafness in slovenia**

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**Background:** an active approach of health service and professional expert teams is a prerequisite for early hearing loss detection. Newborn hearing screening has been shown to provide effective and cost-effective means of identification. It is the first step in early intervention programs.

**Methods:** in Slovenia neonatal hearing screening started in 1999, first in neonatal intensive care units. There are 14 maternity hospitals with altogether 17.500 births per year. Since 2005 hospital-based universal newborn hearing screening in all maternity hospitals was accepted. Further hearing evaluation of infants is done in three audiology units. The treatment of deaf children by cochlear implantation is performed in one centre on Univ. Dept. of Otorhinolaryngology in Ljubljana.

**Results:** in seven year period there were 383 infants who failed neonatal hearing screening reported to audiology division of Univ. Dept. of Otorhinolaryngology in Ljubljana. Out of them 40 (10.44 %) did not come to further diagnostic procedure. Deafness was confirmed in 61 infants but not all of them were implanted.

**Conclusions:** a newborn hearing screening based on whole population can deliver satisfactory outcomes in terms of age referral, identification and intervention. There is certain amount of infants who were lost to follow-up. Challenges arise in ensuring the elaboration of consciousness through the promotion of information to the babies mothers.

