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Implementation & Evaluation of an Internet Test to Screen for Hearing at Work.

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An automatic internet test to screen for hearing at work has been launched successfully in April 2007. This test is comparable with the national telephone and internet test to screen for hearing in adults, which has been designed successfully by colleagues of the Free University Medical Centre in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, and completed by more than 400.000 adults since a couple of years. The National Hearing Foundation in The Netherlands stimulate to develop and sustain these tests to make it possible to perform a hearing health care control yourself at home or maybe also at work, as is usual for other health care items, like blood pressure, body temperature, etc. The second reason for initialising these tests is to achieve a better awareness of the issue of good hearing and to rehabilitate patients in an earlier stage than today: only one third of the hearing impaired and possible hearing-aid users have been seen by hearing experts. These figures are suitable for the whole western world! The third reason is the notification of the unexpected growth of the number of people at work who complain of hearing damage, partly caused by exposition to loud noise at work but also by exposition to loud music at leisure time. Robert J. Ruben (New York) showed that communication disorders, with hearing impairment as most important factor, caused almost 2% deficit of the BNP. Apart from implementation & evaluation figures, also first results of this new test combined with results of a short questionnaire will be demonstrated.

