

**ImproHear - improving the Danish Hearing Rehabilitation
a PhD proposal**

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An estimated 1.5 billion people worldwide live with some degree of hearing loss and approximately 800.000 in Denmark alone. Hearing Loss affects the ability to engage in social interactions and untreated age-related hearing loss is linked to functional decline, depression, a reduce in quality of life and a possible earlier onset of dementia. Since the 1990's there has been an increased focus on patient involvement in a healthcare setting and the benefits of including the patients in the decision-making process. Patient involvement in an audiology setting has shown to mitigate post-treatment regret and improve hearing aid adaption and outcome [1,2,3,4]

MOTIVATION AND OBJECTIVES

Studies show that hearing aid users experience a lack of information regarding maintenance, perceived differences between the public and the private sector and inadequate audiological services at times.

Furthermore, 32% of Hearing-Impaired non-users do not know where to go, to obtain hearing aids and in Denmark alone 7% who own hearing aids do not use them at all and 15% use them less than an hour a day [3,5,6,7,8].

There might be a lack of transparency in the system and hearing aid users might need more guidance and information during their journey to obtain and use their hearing aids regularly.

It is therefore imperative that we investigate what hearing aid users in Denmark need during their journey and gain insight into the incitements behind the choices they make during their hearing rehabilitation.

The aim of the study is to identify:

- 1) the most important experiences and points of view from patients receiving hearing aid treatment from both the private and public sector in Denmark.
- 2) the most important needs in hearing healthcare.
- 3) the most important incitement and knowledge determining between private og public intervention opportunities.

0.1. FOCUS GROUP

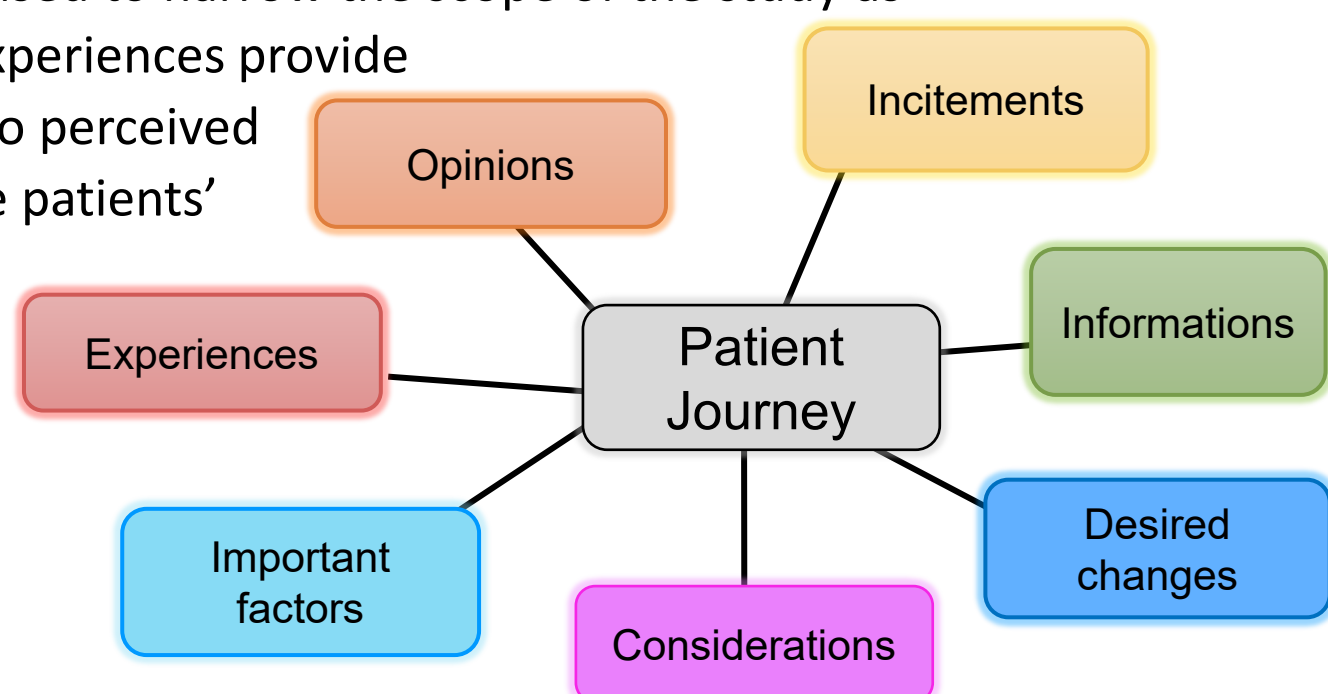
Aim: To involve and facilitate patients and the public in the process of developing this research

Participants:

Patients with a hearing impairment ≥ 18 years, with public acquired hearing aids (n=5)

Patients with a hearing impairment ≥ 18 years, with private acquired hearing aids (n=5)

Results will be used to narrow the scope of the study as patients own experiences provide good insight into perceived pitfalls from the patients' perspective.



RESEARCH PLAN

0.1 Focus Group
Patient & Public
Involvement

Ph.D.
starts 2024

MOTIVATED BY
FOCUS GROUP
INTERVIEWS

1.1 Review of existing literature
Patient Journey with hearing loss.

YEAR 2

2.1 The needs of hearing aid users
when choosing between
rehabilitation options

DEFINED FROM
RESULTS OF STUDY 2

2.2 Ongoing data collection

YEAR 3

3.1 Real-time experiences for
hearing aid users in private and
public treatment pathways

To facilitate
patients to make
informed
decisions
throughout the
patient journey

2.1. NEEDS OF HEARING AID USERS

Qualitative study
Semi-structured interviews
Purposeful sampling
Thematic analysis
Socioeconomic data
Composite audiograms

3.1. REAL-TIME EXPERIENCES FOR HEARING AID USERS

$H_0: \Delta_{QoL\ private} = \Delta_{QoL\ public}$
 $H_1: \Delta_{QoL\ private} \neq \Delta_{QoL\ public}$
Mixed Method study
Longitudinal Prospective Design
QoL measurements
- Baseline
- 3 months
Questionnaires

PATIENT JOURNEY

AWARENESS

MOVEMENT

DIAGNOSTICS

REHABILITATION

SELF-EVALUATION

RESOLUTION

Figure adapted from (Manchaiah & Stephens, 2012; Manchaiah et al., 2011) [9,10]

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