

# QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING EQUIPMENT

Minnesota Newborn  
Screening Program



## Population Characteristics

- Will babies be screened in an out of hospital or home setting? Well-baby nursery? NICU? Some equipment may perform better in natural or noisy environment.
- How many babies do you plan to screen annually?
- When would screening occur?

## Staffing

- Who is available and when are they to perform this screening?
- How many different people will be doing the screening?

## Equipment

### Performance

- What are the rates of false positives and negatives? (Refer rate)
- Is the sensitivity & specificity data backed up by published research?
- What if the device does not perform as expected?
- Does the performance vary by the age of the baby?
- How many other programs/providers use this equipment in the same way I plan to? What are the results?
- What do the reviews of equipment say?
- How durable are the hardware and accessories?

### Training and daily use

- Is the equipment portable?
- How much training is required initially?
- How much time does each test take? (Include prep time, time to settle the newborn if needed, and clean up)
- How many tests can be stored in the device memory?
- Can a hard copy of results be printed for charting?
- What is required for equipment and sanitation?
- Does the ear tip / earphone design stay firmly in/on an infant ear?
- Are pass/refer criteria pre-set in the device according to accepted state and national guidelines? Is the pass/refer result clearly displayed at the end of the test?
- Can you visually see if the test is proceeding and understand what to do for an error message?
- Does the equipment require replaceable or rechargeable batteries, or both? How long does the unit run on a battery charge? Can it also be operated from a wall socket?
- How can records be exported into an electronic record?

## Cost

Less expensive equipment and lower supply costs are not necessarily most economical if the device does not function well and will result in more repeat screenings – which is more costly in terms of time and effort for provider and family.

- How much does the equipment cost?
- What is the total cost per test? (Include: supplies, equipment depreciation, personnel time to prepare baby, perform test, and document results)
- Is there an additional cost for a printer?
- What is the cost of disposable supplies?
- What is the accessory replacement cost? How long does it take to replace accessories?
- What is the charge for an extended warranty?
- What is the cost for annual calibration? For basic service? How often is this needed?
- Additional costs? (For example: portable case, back-up battery software updates)

## Vendor

- Will the vendor conduct on-site training and retraining when needed?
  - What does this include?
  - What materials are available?
  - Is there additional cost or is it included with the equipment purchase?
- Can the vendor provide a list of customers nationally and in my state that I may contact?
- What kind of Customer Service is available for technical questions or to place supply orders?
  - What hours are they available?
- What kind of background and training do the Customer Service personnel have?
- How quickly can the vendor send supplies?
- If the unit needs repair, how quickly can this be done?
- Are loaner units available? Is there a fee for the loaner unit?
- What is the standard warranty? What is the charge for an extended warranty?
- What is the return policy?

## Logistics

- How will results be reported in the chart, to the parents, to the primary physician, to the state?
- Is a protocol in place for babies who did not pass the screening or who missed their screening?
- How will annual calibration be handled?