Self-Efficacy, Communication Difficulties and Readiness Predict Outcomes in New Hearing Aid Users

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ABSTRACT (150 words max.)

Poor knowledge of hearing aids (HAs) may help to explain low adherence in older adults with hearing loss. To address this, a multimedia education program for first-time HA users was developed based on the concept of reusable learning objects (RLOs). The effectiveness of the RLOs was examined using a prospective, randomized controlled trial with two arms: (i) HAs plus RLOs (RLO+, n=103), (ii) HAs only (RLO-, n=100). Users of the RLOs had better knowledge of HAs and HA handling skills six-weeks post-fitting, and greater HA use in suboptimal users. To better understand the factors that contributed to the benefits observed, further analyses were performed and revealed that greater self-efficacy at HA fitting predicted greater use in both groups (RLO+, $\beta=8.07$, $p=.005$; RLO-, $\beta=1.08$, $p<.001$). However, the RLOs appeared to elevate the impact of communication difficulties and readiness on HA outcomes, because these factors were predictive in the RLO- group only.