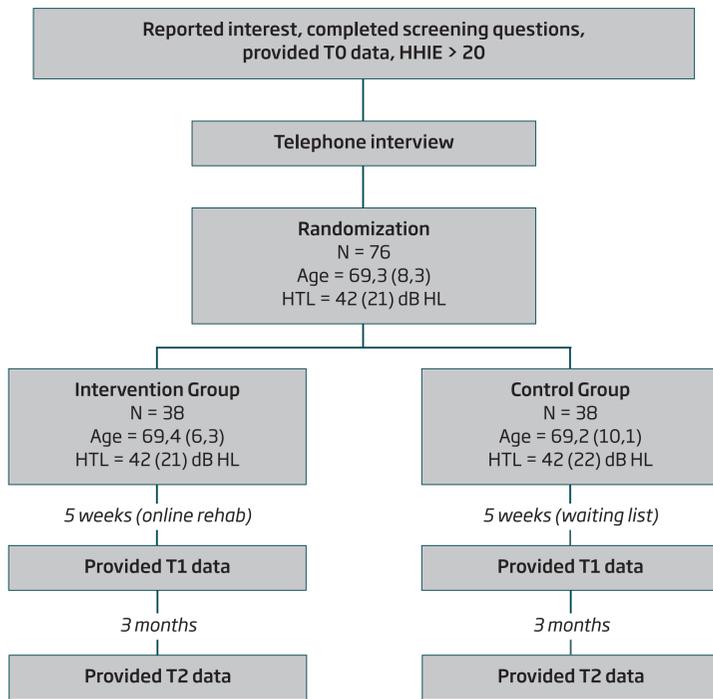


Online Rehabilitation of Hearing-impaired

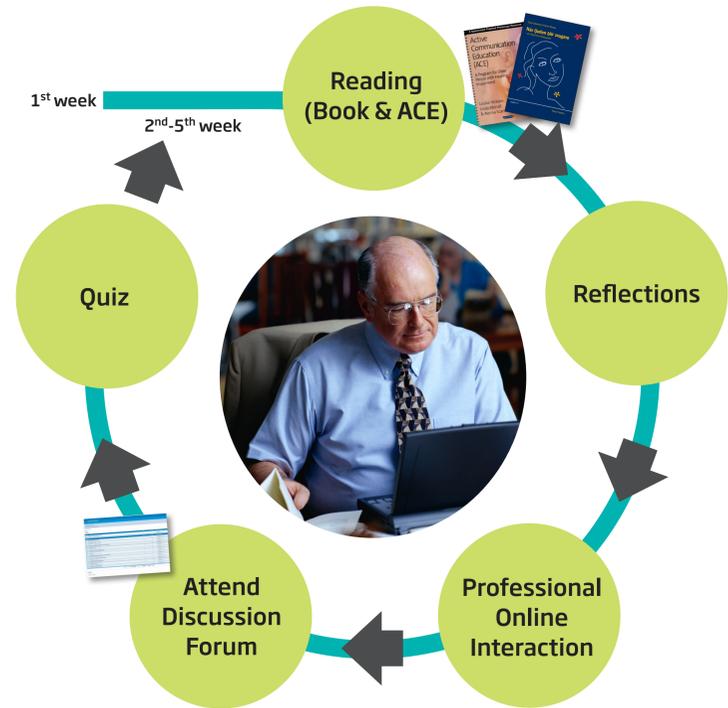
Elisabet Sundewall Thorén, M.Sc.^{1,3}; Gunilla Wämström, M.Sc.²; Marie Öberg, PhD^{2,3}; Gerhard Andersson, PhD⁴; Thomas Lunner, PhD^{1,4}
¹Eriksholm Research Centre, Oticon A/S, ²Linköping University Hospital, ³Dep. of Technical Audiology, Linköping University, ⁴Dep. of Learning & Behaviour, Linköping University

Evaluation of the effectiveness of online education for adult experienced hearing aid users

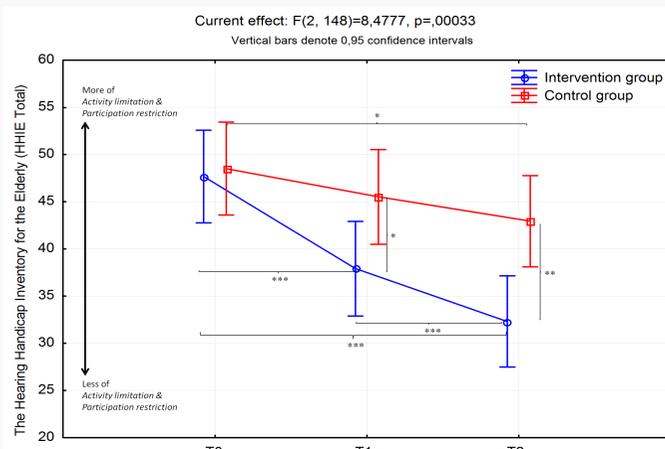
Methods



Procedure



Results



- The results (ANOVA, 2x3 design) showed a significant interaction effect for the total HHIE score ($p < 0.001$).
- Post hoc analysis (Fisher LSD) showed that the I-group decreased their scores significantly from T0-T1 ($p < 0.001$) and from T0-T2 ($p < 0.001$), whereas the C-group decreased their scores significantly from T0 to T2 ($p = 0.05$) but not from T0 to T1 ($p > 0.05$).

Discussion & Conclusions

- The results support the hypothesis; taking part in an online rehabilitation program, including professional guidance by an audiologist, significantly decreases participation restriction and activity limitation measured by the online questionnaire HHIE.
- Our results support the desire of creating online rehabilitative education with positive effects that are maintained in the long term.
 - The outcome of HHIE indicates that there is a long term effect of using online tools in the rehabilitation process of hearing impaired adults since a measurable decrease of participation restriction and activity limitation is observed 3 months after the online program was finished.
- The results show that it is possible to successfully use online tools in the rehabilitation process of adult experienced hearing-aid users.

For additional information please contact: Elisabet S. Thorén, Eriksholm Research Centre, esu@eriksholm.com

Background

Studies in adjacent fields (tinnitus, anxiety and panic disorders) have shown promising results when using the Internet as a way of supervising and treating patients (1, 2). Recent research has shown positive effects when combining hearing aids with additional rehabilitation (3-6). By using the Internet in the audiological rehabilitation process, it is possible in a cost-effective way to include additional rehabilitation components by informing and guiding hearing aid users about such topics as communication strategies, hearing tactics, and how to handle hearing aids (7, 8).

Objective

The aim in this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of online education programs (10) for adult experienced hearing aid users including professional guidance by an audiologist in a randomized controlled trial.

Hypothesis

Our hypothesis was that; participants taking part in online rehabilitation program would perceive a significant reduction of their activity limitations and participation restrictions when compared to the participants in a control group when measured by

the primary outcome measure The Hearing Handicap Inventory for the Elderly (HHIE; 9).

Recruitment

Advertisements were published in national Swedish daily newspapers in order to reach possible study participants. The inclusion criteria were; hearing impairment and subjectively reported, significant communication difficulties (defined as HHIE > 20), used hearing-aids for at least one year, were over 18 years old, had had Swedish as a first language and had access to a computer and the Internet.

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