

What? Hearing Screening is Important

Mark participated in the Linkages health assessment surveys. He is in his early 60's and lives in Oakland County with two roommates. Mark has a developmental disability. He answered the health assessment questions with assistance from his Direct Support Professional (DSP). When questions regarding audiology testing were asked, Mark's answers revealed that he had never had a hearing test. The questions related to audiology testing caught the attention of the DSP assisting Mark. She shared that Mark had been turning up the television in the past year. He's also been asking people more frequently to repeat what they were saying in conversations with him. His DSP checked Mark's medical record and it confirmed that he had not had a hearing test. The Linkages Coordinator facilitating Mark's assessment provided a referral for an audiologist practice near his home. She made sure that the audiologist accepted his health care insurance and that they had experience with people with disabilities. Mark's staff took him to his appointment at the Rontel Clinic in Royal Oak. At the 90-day follow-up assessment appointment, the Linkages Coordinator asked if the referral had been useful. Mark said that the physician and audiologist found he was experiencing a hearing loss, but not significant enough to use hearing aids. They suggested he return in a year for a follow up appointment. The audiologist explained that hearing loss is expected as people age. However, when hearing is not monitored, an opportunity can be missed to reverse or improve a hearing loss with medical treatment or aids. Mark and his DSP agreed that the medical office was welcoming, and that the office building was accessible.