



## INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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<b>TO:</b>	<b>DISTRICT DIRECTORS</b> <b>CES DCES:ESSS</b> <b>EDUCATION THERAPIST SPECIALISTS: AUDIOLOGISTS</b> <b>EDUCATION THERAPIST SPECIALISTS: SPEECH LANGUAGE THERAPISTS</b> <b>ALL SCHOOL PRINCIPALS</b> <b>ALL EDUCATORS</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DIRECTOR: MR. S NCAPAYI</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>SCREENING OF LEARNERS WITH EDUCATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT HEARING LOSS IN SCHOOLS BY EDUCATORS</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>28 NOVEMBER 2022</b>

1. The Directorate Inclusive Education is introducing a screening instrument to enable educators to screen for educationally significant hearing loss in the classroom.
2. This tool is known as the **Screening Instrument for Targeting Educational Risk (S.I.F.T.E.R.)** which is specifically designed to enable educators to objectively screen for hearing loss.
3. It is recommended that this tool be utilised in the fourth term of 2022, as by this time of the year teachers are familiar with all learners in their classroom who might be suspected of hearing difficulties.
4. This tool aims to play a critical role in improving the early identification and intervention outcomes of learners with unidentified hearing loss in the province. Most importantly, this tool will help speed up the detection/identification of learners with hearing related problems.
5. Untreated hearing loss poses a significant barrier to a child's developmental, education, and social integration. The implications of untreated hearing loss extend far beyond speech and language difficulties; they also have a detrimental effect on educational performance.



6. Educators can play a crucial role in the early detection of hearing loss by making observations directly related to a learner's ability to hear and listen during the teaching process.
7. Approximately 466 million people, or 6% of the global population, have disabling hearing loss; approximately 32 million of these are children (WHO, 2020). According to the World Health Organization, majority of people with disabling hearing loss reside in low- and middle-income nations like South Africa (WHO, 2020).
8. Educators are frequently aware of a learner's academic, language, or communication difficulties, but they may not associate these difficulties with hearing loss.

9. **HEARING SCREENING IN THE YEAR 2020-2021 IN THE PROVINCE**

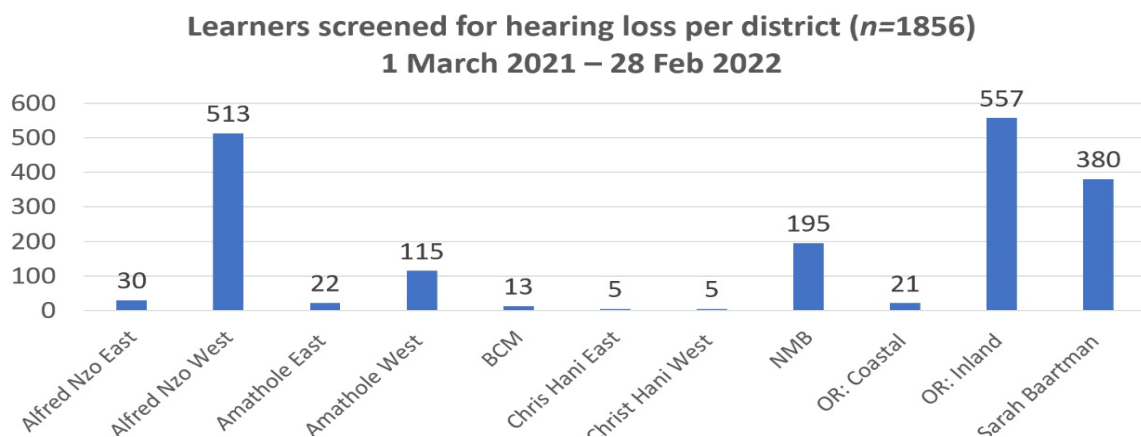




Figure 1 shows learners screened per district for the academic year 1 March 2020 – February 2021.

10. The implementation and utilization of this instrument will play a crucial role towards increasing the number of learners formally screened for hearing loss in the province.
11. **TARGET:** The program is targeting learners in the following grades: **Pre-school, Gr R, Gr 1, Gr 4, Gr 8, and Progressed learners in any grade.** Learners that fall outside of the above grades, but showing signs and symptoms of hearing loss their educators must also complete the [S.I.F.T.E.R.](#) form.


## 12. PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN SCREENING LEARNERS WITH EDUCATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT HEARING LOSS IN SCHOOLS BY EDUCATORS

- (1) Educators complete the SIFTER for all learners in his or her class.
  - (a) Variety of options to access the tool listed below.
- (2) District Audiologists will score the SIFTERs received from educators.
- (3) **ONLY** Learners that fail in one or more content areas will be added to the target list of learners that will be followed up starting with direct ear disease and hearing screening in the 2023 calendar year.
  - (a) This process should be completed by June of 2023.
  - (b) In the case of districts without an Audiologists and/or a Speech Language Therapists (SLTs), arrangements will be made via head office for ear disease and hearing loss screening to be done by Audiologists and/or SLTs nearest to that district.
- (4) Learners that fail the ear disease and/or hearing screening in one or both ears will be referred for further Medical and/or Clinical Audiology assessments and treatments at their local or nearest clinic or hospital.
- (5) Learners diagnosed with hearing loss will be supported appropriately by the Education Therapist Specialists: Audiologists and/or Speech Language Therapists in collaboration with the educators of the respective schools.

## 13. TOOLS TO BE USED IN THE SCREENING PROJECT


Name	Target	Link to PDF	Link to online form	QR code to open online form
SIFTER – Preschool	Preschool Grade R	<a href="#">Preschool_SIFTER.pdf</a>	<a href="https://forms.office.com/r/bUhqN63PaZ">https://forms.office.com/r/bUhqN63PaZ</a>	
SIFTER	Grade 1 and Grade 4 and/or any other learners between grades 2 to 7.	<a href="#">Primary school SIFTER.pdf</a>	<a href="https://forms.office.com/r/xbheWcEwD2">https://forms.office.com/r/xbheWcEwD2</a>	



SIFTER – Secondary	Grade 8 and/or any other learners between grades 9-12	<a href="#">Secondary High_SIFTER.pdf</a>	<a href="https://forms.office.com/r/9evVxJ2LKe">https://forms.office.com/r/9evVxJ2LKe</a>	
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**Table 1: Hearing Screening tools: SIFTER**

If you have any questions about the screening of learners with educationally significant hearing loss in schools by educators in the fourth term, please contact Mr. Rodney Sekgobela: 060 523 6772 or [rodney.sekgobela@ecdoe.gov.za](mailto:rodney.sekgobela@ecdoe.gov.za), Mrs. Lineo Mawisa :062 151 9334 or [lineo.mawisa@ecdoe.gov.za](mailto:lineo.mawisa@ecdoe.gov.za) or Mr. Mesfin Kidane: 072 265 5625 [mesfin.kidane@ecdoe.gov](mailto:mesfin.kidane@ecdoe.gov).

  
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**DATE**