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Toward Standardization of Pediatric Audiology Outcome Measures in Malaysia: A Conceptual Review of Current Practices, Challenges, and Recommendations

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Abstract

Standardized outcome measures are essential for evidence-based pediatric audiology practice, yet Malaysia lacks unified national guidelines, risking inconsistent care quality and inequitable service delivery for children with hearing loss. This conceptual review presents a national perspective on pediatric audiology outcome measures, synthesizing findings from expert panel discussions, literature integration, and practice assessment through triangulation. Key insights were gathered through the Seventh Malaysian Audiology Scientific Conference forum, involving structured panels with government, private sector, and international representatives, plus insights from 180 forum participants. Current landscape analysis reveals public sector services follow established protocols with government investment in equipment upgrades, while private sector practices demonstrate

significant variability. Critical gaps include sector variability, absence of unified standards, inadequate inter-facility comparison capabilities, and the need for tiered implementation approaches. Implementation challenges include fragmented service delivery, limited access to advanced tools outside specialized centers, workforce and infrastructure gaps, and private sector constraints. International examples, particularly the Welsh Primary Care Audiology Pathway, demonstrate successful integration models enhancing service consistency and equity. Strategic recommendations propose a three-phase framework: foundation (stakeholder coordination), development (culturally-adapted standards), and sustainability (monitoring and evaluation). A national task force comprising key stakeholders is recommended to lead standardization efforts, ensuring consistent, evidence-based care for children with hearing loss across Malaysia's diverse healthcare settings. © 2025. Thieme. All rights reserved.

Author keywords

Malaysia; outcome measures; pediatric audiology; standard

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