



## Hearing Loss and Equity Gaps

Vermont's policies are intended to promote health equity and eradicate health disparities among Vermonters, including particularly those who are Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color; individuals who are LGBTQ; and individuals with disabilities. Hearing loss and the lack of access to hearing aids has a greater negative impact in populations that have been denied access to equitable health care services.

- Large gender and racial/ethnic differences exist in hearing aid use. Males and white people have access to and use hearing aids much more frequently than women and Black and Hispanic people.
- Higher socioeconomic individuals are more likely to wear hearing aids, even when Black individuals were more likely to have had a recent hearing test. In Vermont, the rate of disability is 10% higher in Black Vermonters than in Whites. Black women have the lowest rates of hearing aids use.
- Older adults living below the federal poverty level own hearing aids less often. 64% of people with severe hearing loss reported that they could not afford a hearing aid and over 75% identified financial factors as a barrier.
- People with untreated hearing loss have lower rates of graduating from high school and college, being employed and making wages above poverty levels. The negative employment and wage impacts are worse for women.
- The use of hearing aids has been shown to mitigate the impact of income loss by 90%-100% for those with milder hearing losses and from 65%-77% for those with severe to moderate hearing loss.

## Resources – Hearing Loss and Equity Gaps

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3999213/pdf/nihms541764.pdf>

<https://agsjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jgs.16109>

[https://academic.oup.com/innovateage/article/4/Supplement\\_1/105/6036784?utm\\_source=hearingtracker.com](https://academic.oup.com/innovateage/article/4/Supplement_1/105/6036784?utm_source=hearingtracker.com)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4826391/>

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/VT%20State%20Health%20Assessment%202018%20Full%20Report.pdf>

[https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HL\\_2021\\_3Morris.pdf?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=getresponse&utm\\_content=New+issue+of+Hearing+Life+Magazine&utm\\_campaign=Hearing+Loss+Association+of+America](https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/HL_2021_3Morris.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=getresponse&utm_content=New+issue+of+Hearing+Life+Magazine&utm_campaign=Hearing+Loss+Association+of+America)

<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/MarkeTrak-VII%3A-Obstacles-to-adult-non%E2%80%90user-adoption-Kochkin/5a156c8db24101ba6b3f8ee92ab2e39ace68ec39>

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11332518/>

[https://betterhearing.org/HIA/assets/File/public/marketrak/MarkeTrak-VIII\\_The-Efficacy-of-Hearing-Aids-in-Achieving-Compensation-Equity-in-the-Workplace.pdf](https://betterhearing.org/HIA/assets/File/public/marketrak/MarkeTrak-VIII_The-Efficacy-of-Hearing-Aids-in-Achieving-Compensation-Equity-in-the-Workplace.pdf)