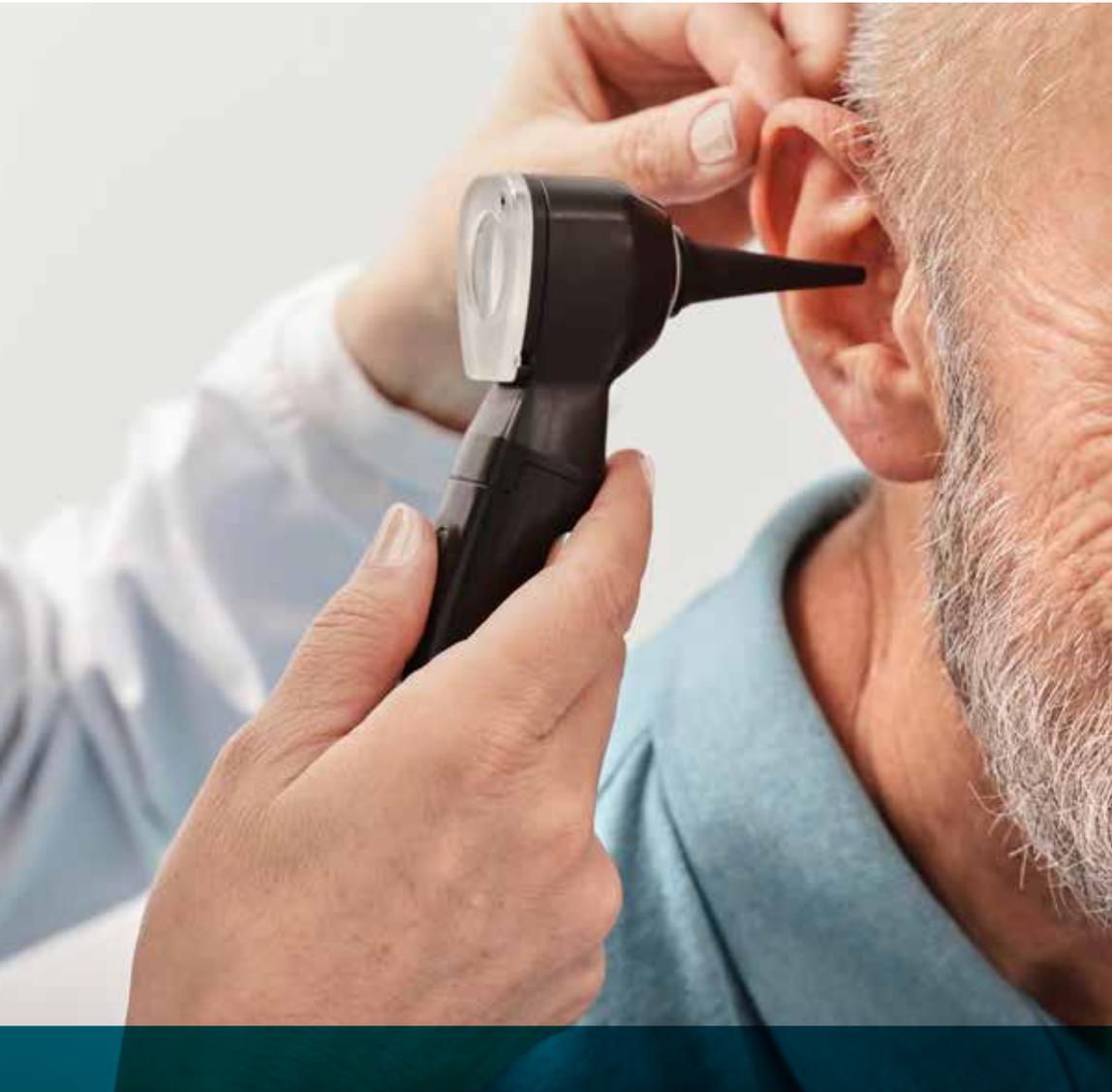


IntegrityForward
Hearing Solutions
VIA WILLOW VALLEY



Hearing and Audiology Services



THE WILLOW VALLEY DIFFERENCE

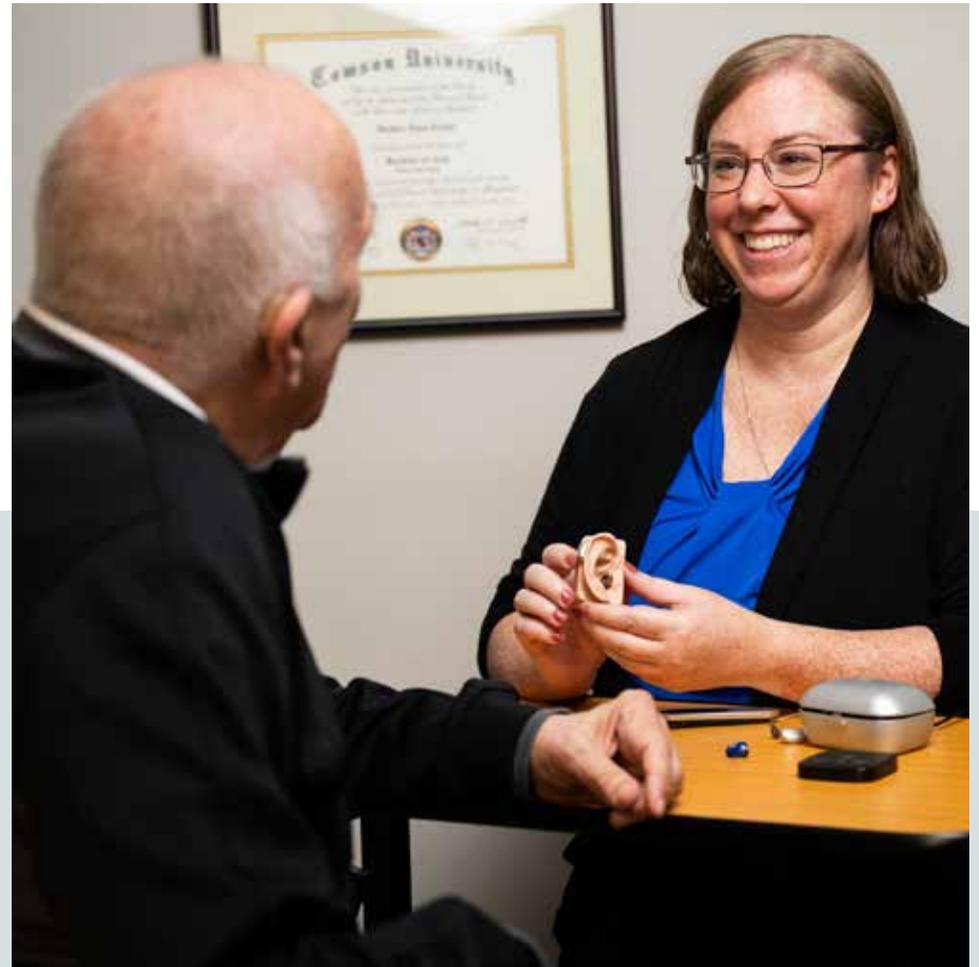
IntegrityForward Hearing Solutions was established to promote health and well-being to Willow Valley Communities Residents and nonresidents alike. Education is key part of our consultative process, so that patients are able to learn their options to make the best decision for themselves. We are happy to take over the care and maintenance of hearing aids obtained elsewhere, including over-the-counter devices, those purchased from other practices, and those obtained through the Veteran's Administration. Hearing aid purchases are facilitated through third-party/ insurance discount programs or directly to patients at reduced pricing, including a value options plan. We aim to establish a long-term partnership with patients, enabling us to provide support and guidance as their communication needs evolve over time.

ABOUT HEARING LOSS

Hearing loss is diminished acuity to sounds that would normally be heard. Depending on the cause, a loss can be sudden or gradual, temporary or permanent, and mild to profound. Reasons for hearing loss vary, and can include aging, noise exposure, wax impaction, or health conditions that affect the middle ear.

Actual hearing or interpretation of sound occurs in the brain, but proper function of the ears is necessary for sound to be transformed from acoustic waves into nerve impulses. As the ears become impaired, the brain receives less information, forcing us to compensate by relying on visual cues and context of conversations along with the sounds still heard. However, the extra effort is tiring, causing a separation from our surroundings, and ultimately a health and quality of life concern.

Hearing loss is silent and painless, but the effects are real. Research shows an association between untreated hearing loss and cognitive impairments. Treating hearing loss may slow or even reverse cognitive decline. Read on to see how our practice may assist you in your better hearing journey.



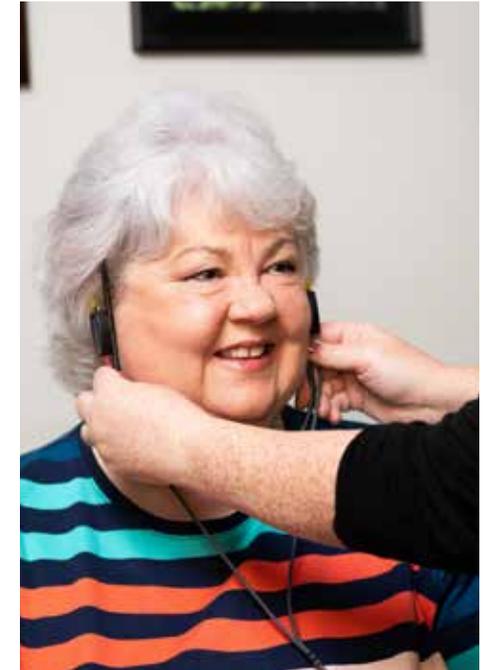
OUR SERVICES

EVALUATION SERVICES:

- Complimentary hearing screenings
- Comprehensive audiological evaluations (puretone and speech audiometry)
- Tympanometry
- Otoacoustic emissions (part of objective testing services)
- Auditory Brainstem Threshold testing (part of objective testing services)

TREATMENT SERVICES:

- Visual inspection and clearing of the ear canals
- Hearing aid consultations and demonstrations
- Hearing aid purchases using best pricing (discount programs, value options)
- Reprogramming of existing hearing aids
- Service on all types of hearing aids, including over-the-counter devices and those provided by the VA
- Counseling and education about best communication strategies
- Recommendation of accessories that can maximize the benefit of hearing aids
- On-site services in the supportive living communities of Willow Valley



HEARING SERVICES TAILORED TO COGNITIVE CHALLENGES

As a way to support the Memory Center at Willow Valley, objective testing will become available late 2026 for qualified patients in order to help obtain the most comprehensive description of a patient's hearing. Objective measures are tests that do not require participation by the patient. These tests include:

- **Tympanometry:** objective measure of middle ear function
- **Otoacoustic emissions:** objective measure of inner ear function
- **Threshold Auditory Brainstem Response:** objective measure of the degree of hearing loss

Objective test results provide supplemental information to a comprehensive hearing evaluation that aids in the interpretation of a patient's overall hearing ability. In addition, tailored recommendations for hearing support are provided, as well as education specifically for staff and family members to ensure consistent care.



INSURANCE HELP FOR HEARING AID PURCHASES

In order to provide patients with the best pricing for hearing aids, staff audiologists are local providers for many third party/insurance discount programs. When patients consider a purchase here, their insurance is researched to determine whether any benefits are available. Often times benefits are in the form of access to lower pricing through a third-party plan. Our audiologists are able to facilitate the enrollment, purchasing, and follow up protocols utilizing these plans, which can lead to substantial savings for patients. Examples of these plans include:

- TruHearing – Highmark Blueshield Medicare supplements and advantage plans like Freedom Blue and Community Blue, Federal Employee Plan, Aetna Medicare Supplement plans, United Auto Workers benefits
- Amplifon – UPMC Advantage plans
- Ear Professionals Network – UnitedHealthcare Advantage plans, AARP Medicare Supplements, EPIC plans
- Nations Hearing – Aetna Medicare Advantage plans
- Start Hearing – Cigna Plans
- YHN – Geisinger/Birdsong Plans

For those who do not have access to these plans, hearing aids can be directly purchased from the practice. Pricing mimics many of the discount plans for premier (latest) hearing aid models. Value options (the next-to-latest models) are available for those who are sensitive to cost.



ON-SITE SERVICES IN SUPPORTIVE LIVING

IntegrityForward Hearing Solutions supports the Residents residing in Willow Valley's skilled and personal care communities with basic, routine, and requested audiology services conveniently on-site.

Routine services are completed periodically on schedules that best fit individual patients' needs. Additional services may be requested through the nursing staff or by calling the audiology office directly.

On-site services include cerumen management, hearing aid service (all makes and models, even if obtained elsewhere), hearing evaluations (skilled care), and hearing aid selection/fitting.

Audiologists not only communicate with patients but also interact with staff members and powers of attorney, ensuring comprehensive support and involvement. Staff members are also advised on routine hearing aid care and daily support for hearing aid use as well as ways to best communicate with patients given their hearing abilities.

STAFF AUDIOLOGISTS



Dr. Heather Eck

Dr. Heather Eck has over 25 years of experience. She has worked at Willow Valley since 2011 and was instrumental in the development of the audiology program. She believes that the best satisfaction and results can be obtained with education, a focus on realistic expectations, as well as the customized use of the latest technology and fitting techniques. Her background in working for a private practice hearing aid center as well as for otolaryngologists has equipped her for education and patient-centered service.



Dr. Kerry Herrmann

Dr. Herrmann brings a wealth of experience and knowledge of over 20 years in the audiology field working primarily for otolaryngologists. She has a strong background in diagnostic testing and hearing aid fittings, maintenance, and repairs, as well as practice management. She enjoys working closely with patients and their families to identify their individual hearing needs, deliver exceptional hearing healthcare, and provide a better quality of life through improved communication.

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