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Over-the-Counter (OTC) Hearing Aids Media Statement

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The American Academy of Audiology has proactively provided recommendations and has been actively involved in the development of proposed regulations by the FDA for over-the-counter hearing aid sales in the U.S., as authorized by legislation passed in 2017. The Academy was actively engaged in helping to shape authorizing legislation and has shared recommendations for the forthcoming regulations.

According to the [U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services' NIH/NIDCD](#), approx. 28.8 million U.S. adults could benefit from hearing aids. The Academy is hopeful that many of these consumers suffering from hearing loss will seek the assistance of an audiologist and when deemed to be appropriate, will either try over-the-counter hearing aids and/or consider devices that are recommended, prescribed, and verified by an audiologist.

It is important to understand that hearing loss is more complex than a lack of volume; thus, management of hearing loss is best after a comprehensive hearing assessment conducted by an audiologist. Audiologists are highly educated to determine the cause of hearing loss, refer for medical intervention when necessary, and implement an effective management plan, which often is more than simply increasing the volume through a device.

Audiologists will continue to be a critical component in the management of hearing loss. When the proposed regulations are published, the Academy will move quickly to respond with feedback and guidance to help ensure the final regulation maximizes patient safety and satisfaction.

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