



HEAR WI – Improving Access to Audiology Services for Seniors

William Painter | Clement Manor, Greenfield WI

External Relationships Poster



Background



- Over 50% of people 75 years and older suffer from hearing loss
- On average, seniors who suffer from hearing loss will wait around 7 years before seeking help
- The number of people who experience hearing loss is more than those with Parkinson's, Epilepsy, Alzheimer's, and Diabetes combined

Partnership

HEAR WI is an audiology service that provides audiology services throughout Wisconsin. Some of the main services they offer include hearing exams, hearing equipment adjustments, fittings for hearing aids, and education on ear health. Hearing loss is a huge problem among seniors that can greatly affect a residents' quality of life. It is common for residents suffering from hearing loss to experience a decrease in their quality of life as this can lead to a limited understanding of speech over time. Audiologist's recommend seniors to receive at least an annual ear exam to stay proactive.

Objectives

- Allow residents in all four areas of our continuum to receive monthly audiology services.
- Treat hearing loss in our residents before the disorder progresses and becomes incurable.
- Improve overall hearing capabilities in the residents who need these services as well as everyday living satisfaction among our residents.
- Partner with a trusted company who can provide quality audiology services at a fair price for the residents at Clement Manor.
- Encourage more residents to seek out audiology services

Steps

1. Reach out to local audiology organizations to understand their offerings for Senior Living.
2. Meet with Gary Kiltz, Coordinator for HEAR WI, to talk about specific services they offer.
3. Set up an information session for family, residents, and staff in all four areas of the continuum to learn about HEAR WI and the partnership with Clement Manor.
4. Provide free 15-minute hearing exams to all residents who attend the sessions to understand the importance of receiving audiology services.
5. Create a committee to plan out where to park the bus, which residents could benefit the most, how to market this service to other people in the community, etc.
6. Post flyers around campus, encourage social workers to market this service to families, and post about the partnership on social media to have interested candidates contact myself to set up appointments/learn more information.
7. Begin scheduling appointments
8. Interview residents on their hearing satisfaction before and after receiving services.

Gallery



The HEAR WI mobile audiology clinic visits Clement Manor's campus on the second Tuesday of every month. This clinic allows one person to be seen at a time by a licensed audiologist.



Independent Living resident, Jeanne Mike is seen receiving a yearly hearing exam inside of the HEAR WI mobile audiology bus.

Testimonials

Jeanne Mike (Independent Living resident)- "I have always said never say no to new opportunities and I thought that the HEAR WI bus would be a great idea. I currently have hearing aids but the HEAR WI people were able to adjust them to better fit my hearing levels. Overtime I have noticed that I have had trouble hearing the British television shows, but after my hearing aides were adjusted it has been much easier to listen. The people at HEAR WI were very knowledgeable and have improved my hearing greatly. I am so grateful I decided to get a hearing screen done!"



Bob Lochner (Assisted Living resident)- "After my visit the doctor told me that hearing aids would be the best route for me to take. One of my biggest struggles right now is hearing other people when they talk. It is always frustrating when you have to ask people to repeat themselves. I am so excited to receive my hearing aids next month."

Results

- Within 5 months the HEAR WI mobile audiology clinic was able to provide services to 18 of our residents and 12 community members on the Clement Manor campus
- From these appointments: 4 people will be receiving brand new hearing aids/equipment, 8 people had their current hearing equipment adjusted/fixed, and 11 people saw a licensed audiologist for the first time.
- Average hearing satisfaction among residents and community members went from a 5.8/10 to 8.6/10 (Data taken only from residents who received hearing aids or had an adjustment/fix to their prior equipment)
- Before this project was implemented the average number of audiology services provided on our campus was 1 per month. Now over the past 5 months we are averaging 6 appointments.

Recommendations

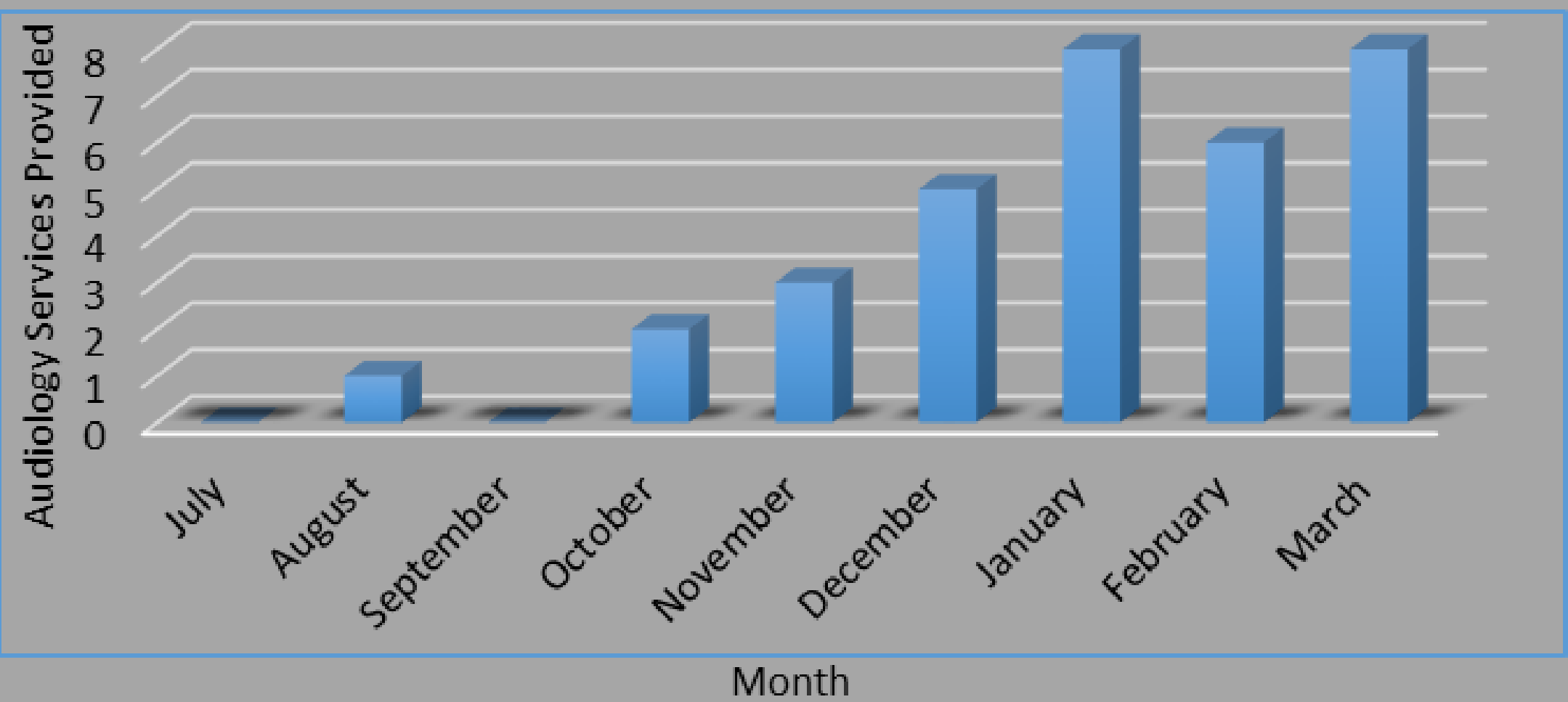
- Market the service more frequently to community members and family members of residents.
- Increase the amount of bus visits to our campus so residents are not waiting longer than a month to receive services.
- Provide reminders to residents / community members on upcoming appointments.
- Educate residents who don't believe they have hearing issues on the importance of receiving an annual hearing exam

Acknowledgements

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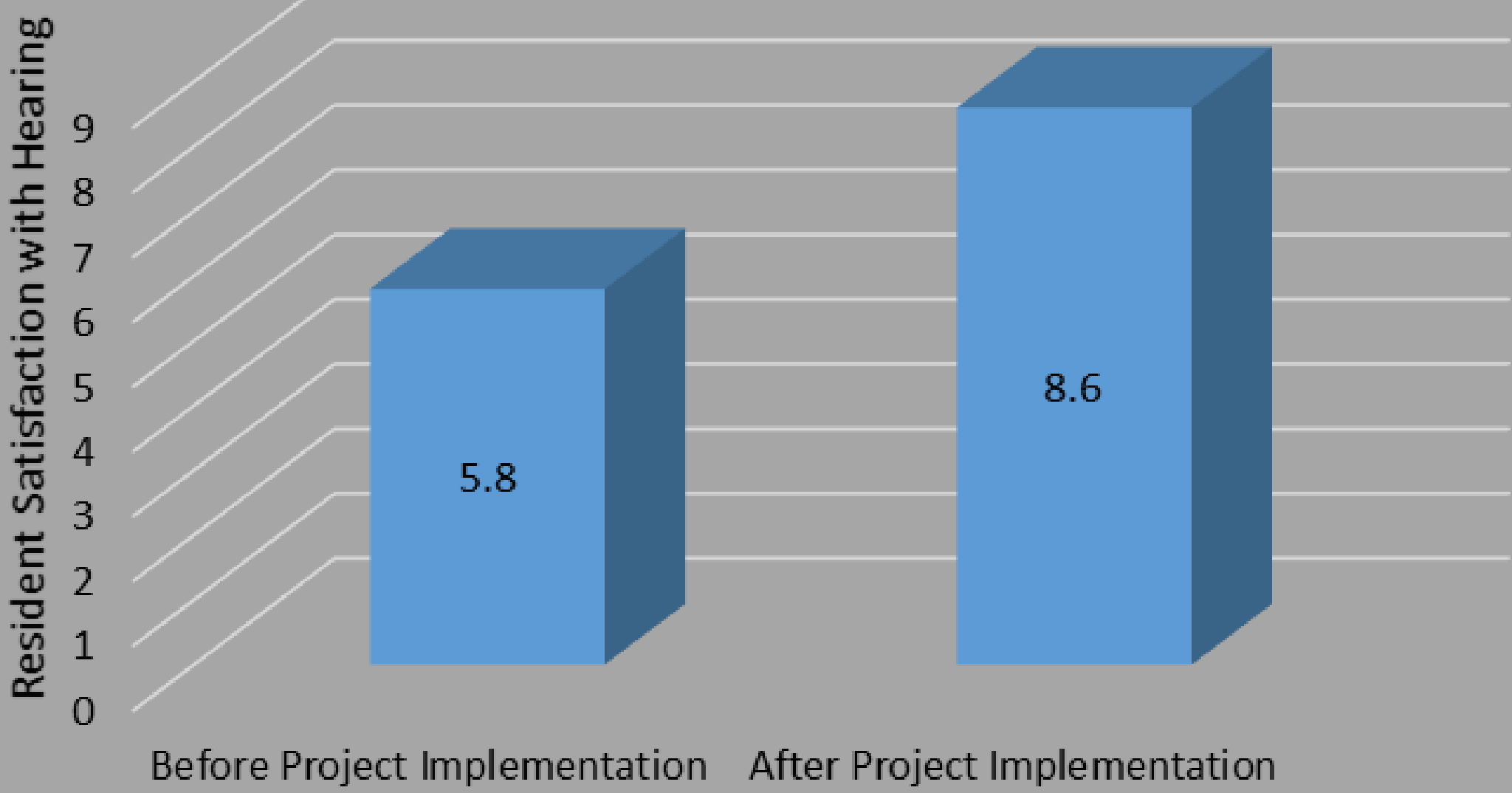
Data

Monthly Audiology Services Provided at Clement Manor



The HEAR WI project has been in place since November of 2022. Prior to the project our campus would see between 0-2 audiology visits/appointments per month. However, after the project was implemented, we have seen a steady increase in the number of appointments we offer on our campus. The max amount of people the bus can see in one day is 8 people. In 2 out of the last 5 months we have had a full schedule. The next two months are also at a full schedule of 8 people.

Hearing Satisfaction Levels



A survey was taken of all residents/community members who had either received hearing aids or had an adjustment/fix done on their hearing equipment. The average satisfaction levels among this group before receiving audiology services was a 5.8/10. After receiving services, this total increased to 8.6/10. The people who only received a hearing exam were not included in this survey, however their initial satisfaction levels were recorded.



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