**THE EMPLOYMENT EFFECT OF COCHLEAR IMPLANTATION IN SEVERELY – TO – PROFOUND DEAF ADULTS.**

**Aim**

Evaluation of aspects of employment pre- and post- cochlear implantation (CI) using an ethically approved mixed method questionnaire.

**Methods**

Following ethical approval, 202 adults implanted between 18 – 65 years were identified from the Yorkshire Auditory Implant Services database. Semi-structured questionnaires were posted to each individual. Outcomes included employment status, income, precarity of employment, job satisfaction and discrimination. Quantitative and qualitative data was statistically analysed rank test

**Results**

An initial response rate was 37% (75). CI was associated with reduced employment rate (3 prior to surgery v 9 after (*p=0.03)),* Most believed they continued to work at their level of competency (*p=0.16)*, reduced employer-discrimination (*p=0.31),* and increased job satisfaction (*p=0.0001).* The median values indicated on Likert scales showed improvements in confidence (+4); interpersonal relationships (+3.5); motivation (+3); independence (+4); receiving recognition (+2) and safety (+4) in the workplace.

52% of CI users used the telephone at work yet only 66% of these people reported only able to talk to familiar colleagues. However, pre-lingual loss (N=24) would have recognised implications of use of the telephone needs to recognised.

**Conclusions**

CI did not lead to more individuals gaining employment or improved income. CI was associated with improved confidence; better wellbeing and perceived less likelihood of discrimination in the workplace. Whilst employers communicate and make accommodation for CI users there were also unmet needs for workplace telephone training, which could be incorporated into rehabilitative occupational health programmes. Reduction in employment rates was largely due to non-audiological reasons.

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