



CERUMEN ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT

Certification Program

The *Health Professions and Occupations Act's* [Health and Care Professionals Regulation](#) authorizes certified audiologists and hearing instrument practitioners to insert into the external ear canal:

- (a) an instrument, device or finger, for the purpose of cerumen management
- (b) air that is under pressure, for the purpose of cerumen management
- (c) water that is under pressure, for the purpose of cerumen management

Certification program learning objectives

A Full licensee in good standing may apply to be certified to perform this restricted activity if they successfully complete the following requirements within a period of 3 years or less.

Licensees who anticipate needing longer than 3 years to complete certification program requirements may request an extension by emailing certification@chcpbc.org. Extension requests are reviewed and approved by the Licence Committee.

Supervised practice should occur after completion of observations and in order of objective number. Supervision level should decrease gradually to enable the licensee to attain autonomous practice.

Objectives	Knowledge, skills, and demonstrated competencies for certification program
Objective 1	Attains background knowledge for cerumen assessment and management
1.1	Completes successfully at least 4 hours of course work (conference, in-person, or online) on the following content: • an overview of cerumen management • prevalence of cerumen impaction • scope of cerumen practice • case history requirements • informed consent • precautions • client selection • professional referrals • infection control • anatomy and physiology of the external ears • conditions of the outer ear • cerumen production • risk assessment • otoscopy and lighting • otoscopic inspection • equipment requirements • methods of cerumen management • contraindications • post cerumen management issues • documentation and discharge criteria



Objectives	Knowledge, skills, and demonstrated competencies for certification program
1.2	Completes a minimum of one-year, basic clinical practice experience before applying for the certified practice (work as Provisional and Full licensee counts).
1.3	Knows the anatomy, physiology, and pathophysiology of the pinna, external auditory canal (EAC) and tympanic membrane (TM).
1.4	Knows about common medical or postsurgical conditions of the pinna, EAC, TM or middle ear that alter the appearance and/or function of the EAC and/or TM.
Objective 2	Demonstrates correct use of cerumen assessment methods
2.1	Obtains a relevant history concerning conditions of the outer and middle ear, or past medical/surgical procedures of the outer and/or middle ear.
2.2	Inspects visually via hand-held otoscope or head light (mirror) and speculum the pinna, EAC and TM for: • presence of obstructing material • evidence of lesions • evidence of infection • evidence of anatomical anomalies that may affect cerumen removal procedure(s)
2.3	Inspects the EAC and TM visually using an otoscope (with and without headlight/head mirror for illumination).
2.4	Assesses tympanic membrane mobility using either tympanometry or pneumatic otoscopy.
2.5	Determines whether cerumen management should be deferred and/or referred for medical clearance, based on pinna, EAC and TM inspection. For example, if determining: (a) contact with the TM is required or likely to occur (b) the occluding material is not cerumen (c) the comfort or safety of the patient may be compromised These represent common examples and are not intended to be an exhaustive list.
Objective 3	Demonstrates correct cerumen management methods
3.1	Understands all required infection control practices including but not limited to patient history pertinent to infectious diseases and ear canal lesions, CHCPBC Risk Management and Safety practice standard, clean and aseptic techniques, safe biological material disposal processes, and referral criteria.



Objectives	Knowledge, skills, and demonstrated competencies for certification program
3.2	Inspects the EAC and TM visually following cerumen management procedures.
3.3	Determines if occluding material visualized In the EAC is cerumen and if it can be removed comfortably and safely without the use of an operating microscope.
3.4	Uses correct cerumen removal instruments and methods available within clinical setting (e.g., curette and hand-held otoscopic device, curette, head mirror and hand-held speculum, curette and binocular microscope, lighted curette/cerumen loop, microsuction, use of material for softening and gentle water irrigation, or a combination of these methods).
3.5	Interprets visual inspection of the EAC and TM correctly before, during, and after cerumen removal and documents status of the EAC and TM.
3.6	Plans appropriate protocol with medical personnel to handle EAC abrasion or laceration that could result from cerumen/desquamation material removal.
Objective 4	Demonstrates independent cerumen management
4.1	Completes a minimum of 5 observations of inspections and cerumen removal performed by an authorized health professional.
4.2	Completes a minimum of 15 cerumen removals under supervision and including review of patient outcomes post-removal.
4.3	Demonstrates accurate documentation of the 15 supervised procedures and outcomes, including referrals as required.

Licensees are responsible for documenting learning interactions with patients and patient consent in accordance with the CHCPBC Ethics and Practice Standards.

References

[CHCPBC Bylaws, section 7](#)
[CHCPBC Ethics and Practice Standards](#)
[National Audiology Competency Profile](#)

Resource

[Practical Learning Log](#)