

NEW HEARING AID, NEW WORLD OF HEARING: FIRST-FIT REACTIONS TO WIDEX ALLURE

By: Laura Winther Balling, PhD, Dana Helmink, AuD, Kathy Pineo, MCISc, Bertrand Philippon MSc, Fei Leung, BSc, & Sonie Harris, AuD

This paper reports a survey that investigated how the many well-documented benefits of Widex Allure™ are perceived in real life, focusing on the first-fit reactions of 57 experienced hearing aid wearers from several markets. The survey shows overwhelmingly positive immediate reactions: Widex Allure is rated as easy to get used to by 91% of respondents and the sound is perceived as immediately likeable, natural and clear by between 80 and 89% of respondents. The fitting experience is smooth, and the satisfaction, both general satisfaction and specifically with sound quality, is high at 81% and 86%, respectively. This positive perception is likely due to a combination of unique innovations on Allure's W1 chip with legacy features based on the Widex sound philosophy.

Key findings

- More than 90% of respondents find the Widex Allure hearing aids easy to get used to, with the sound being perceived as immediately clear and natural.
- The fitting experience for Widex Allure is overwhelmingly positive, with 95% of survey respondents indicating a smooth experience.

The Widex Allure hearing aids come with a range of well-documented innovations and unique features, including the Speech Enhancer Pro noise reduction that adjusts in a fine-grained way to both the environment and the wearer (Balling, Vormann, & Mansour, 2025; Herrlin et al., 2025), the uniquely adaptive Dynamic Feedback Controller (Balling, Vormann, Rose & Hau, 2025), industry-leading ZeroDelay processing (Weber & Branda, 2025), and superior sound quality (Balling, Vormann, Hau & Rose, 2025). With solid evidence for the benefits of the individual features, the current paper considers how all these features collectively shape the first-fit experience of hearing aid users wearing the Allure devices in real life.

An aspect that is especially relevant to the first-fit experience is the updated Widex Fitting Rationale (WFR). This builds on the same audiological principles of loudness equalization for speech at normal levels and loudness normalization for soft and loud sounds as previous generations of the rationale, but the new version has been adjusted based on analyses of thousands of fittings using the previous platforms. These analyses showed that hearing care professionals (HCPs) tended to reduce gain slightly overall, with more reduction applied for soft input sounds and for female users. The new WFR therefore reduces gain overall by 2 dB for female hearing aid users and 1 dB for males, with an additional 1 dB reduction for soft input levels for all users. These adjustments are made based on a very large real-life dataset and are in continuity with the Widex audiological tradition, but it remains interesting to investigate hearing aid wearers' first reactions to the Allure sound, the starting point of which is of course the fitting rationale.

This real-life experience of Allure was gauged through a survey of 57 experienced hearing aid wearers who used the devices in their everyday life and rated their satisfaction on a range

of parameters, focusing on their immediate experience of the new hearing aids and key aspects of the sound.

Method

Respondents

The recruitment criteria for the survey were that respondents should be interested in trying out new hearing aids and participating in research; be able to answer online surveys via a mobile device; and have bilateral hearing loss within the fitting range of the Allure M-receiver (Figure 1), with no fluctuating hearing loss or complex ear pathologies. All respondents were informed about the study, provided with a privacy notice, and signed a consent.

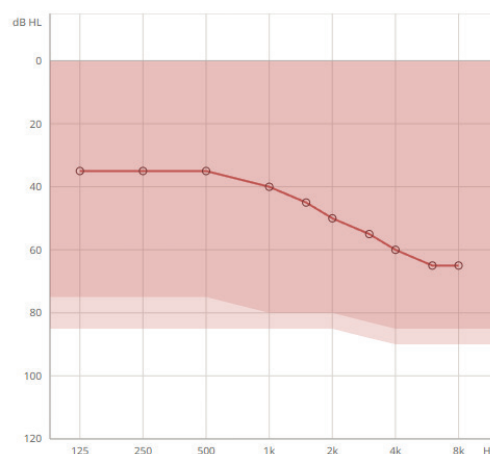


Figure 1: The darker shaded area shows maximum recommended fitting range for instant ear-tips with M-receiver. The hearing loss shown (for reference only) is a standard N3 hearing loss (Bisgaard et al., 2010).

Clinical implications

Widex Allure provides a hearing experience that is immediately clear, natural, and easy to get used to, leading to high user satisfaction. This suggests a high likelihood of patients choosing to keep and, crucially for their well-being, consistently use the hearing aids.

The final sample for the study consisted of 57 experienced hearing aid users from four different countries: The United States (49%), Canada (26%), France (19%), and the United Kingdom (5%). Respondents were in the age range between 28 and 84 years, with a mean of 67 years of age; most of the respondents (65%) were retired, while the rest (35%) were working. The sample consisted of 54% females and 46% males. In terms of hearing aid experience, respondents had worn hearing aids for between 1 and 25 years, with a mean of 7.6 years. Their current hearing aids were a mixture of different brands and were on average 3 years old.

Hearing aids and fitting

Respondents were fitted with Widex Allure RIC (ARRD1) hearing aids and M-receivers, using the eartip recommended in the Compass Cloud fitting software, unless the clinician judged that they would benefit more from a different eartip. The fitting followed the standard flow in Compass Cloud, including an Acoustic Calibration. If the respondent's hearing loss was within the fitting range of the PureSound program (the ultra-low delay of which is specifically designed to benefit listeners with mild-to-moderate hearing loss), this was added, as was a music program if the respondent was interested in that. Fine-tuning was only done at the initial fitting if the respondent indicated a need for adjustments; additional fine-tuning was done if requested during a follow-up call. Clinical data, including the respondents' hearing loss and the details of the fitting were not linked to survey responses in any way.

Survey design

At the fitting appointment, respondents were registered in the Greenlight Guru Clinical software, which allows surveys to be shared with research participants via email and text messages and answered in a secure and compliant way. On the day of the fitting appointment, respondents answered a questionnaire that included baseline questions about their own hearing aids. They then went home and used the Allure devices in daily life as they would their normal hearing aids (reporting an average usage time of 15 hours per day). Hearing care professionals were asked to contact respondents after two to three days to ensure that they were satisfied with the fitting, to gauge whether fine-tuning was necessary, and, if so, to schedule a fine-tuning appointment within a week of the first appointment. Nine days after the first questionnaire was filled out, respondents were sent a link to a survey about their immediate impressions of the Allure hearing aids; this was answered after an average of 10 days.

The survey design was inspired by the design of the MarkeTrak surveys (e.g., Picou, 2022), using seven-point answer scales ranging from "Very dissatisfied" to "Very satisfied" and from "Disagree strongly" to "Agree strongly". Following the practice of MarkeTrak, responses in the top three on the seven-point scales were categorised as "Satisfied" or "Agree". In addition to the satisfaction and agreement questions, the survey also asked customized questions on whether respondents had

had fine-tuning and what their experience of that was. All answer scales included "Don't know/Not applicable" options, which were generally not used much, with between zero and two NA-answers on most questions and a single question with five NA-answers. For the graphs and statistics reported below, NA-answers were generally filtered out before analysis.

The questions and instructions were originally formulated in English and used in English in the US, the UK, and Canada (no French-Canadian speakers users took part in the survey). For the French participants, all materials were translated into French by relevant experts.

The answers were analysed statistically by considering the distribution of answers on a numerical scale from 1 to 7 and comparing that to a neutral rating of 4, using Wilcoxon signed-rank tests. When the test statistic V is significant as indicated by a p -value below 0.05, this indicates that the answers to the given question are a significantly different from – for these questions systematically higher than – a neutral rating.

Results

Because Compass Cloud is a new fitting software, the survey asked respondents about their experience of the fitting process in the clinic. The responses to this question were overwhelmingly positive, with 54 out of 57 respondents agreeing that the fitting process in the clinic was smooth, as illustrated in Figure 2. A result that is this clear is of course also statistically significant ($V = 1593$, $p < 0.0001$). The positive responses to this question are likely a combination of a pleasant and professional experience provided by the participating clinicians with an easy and efficient new fitting software. One third of respondents had their hearing aids fine-tuned, with all except one indicating that the adjustments improved their experience.

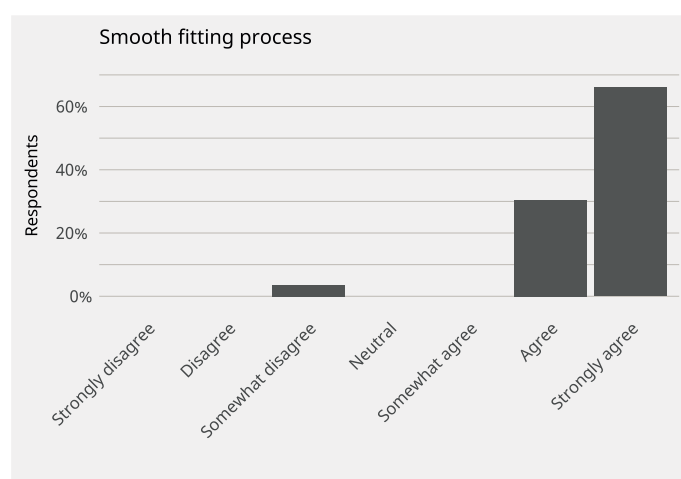


Figure 2: Respondents' agreement with the statement "The fitting process in the clinic was smooth". Fifty-four respondents (95%) agreed or agree strongly with this statement, while only two respondents (3.5%) disagreed somewhat, and one indicated "NA/Don't know".

Turning to the immediate experience of the Allure sound, this was investigated by asking respondents' agreement with three statements:

- A broad statement on the immediate reaction: "I immediately liked the sound of the Widex Allure hearing aids."
- A statement focusing on the Widex commitment to a natural hearing experience: "I immediately found the sound of the Widex Allure hearing aids to be natural."
- A statement focusing on a core characteristic of the Allure hearing aids, their clarity: "I immediately found the sound of the Widex Allure hearing aids to be clear."

The responses to these questions were overwhelmingly positive as shown in Figure 3, with 83% agreeing that they immediately liked the sound, 80% that they found it natural, and 89% that they found it clear (all p 's < 0.0001). Given that these are immediate reactions to new hearing aids, which typically require some time for habituation and adjustment, the positive responses are particularly convincing. Even for naturalness, which is likely to be shaped by the sound quality the wearer is used to from their previous hearing aid, the most frequent answer is "Agree". For the two other statements, the most frequent answer is "Strongly agree".

In addition to the immediate reactions to the sound, the survey also asked about respondents' experience of getting used to the hearing aids. The results are shown in Figure 3, and are overwhelmingly positive, with 91% agreeing that the sound was easy to get used to and no one disagreeing more than "somewhat". These high ratings of the acclimatization with Allure provide additional support for the positive impressions of the sound discussed earlier.

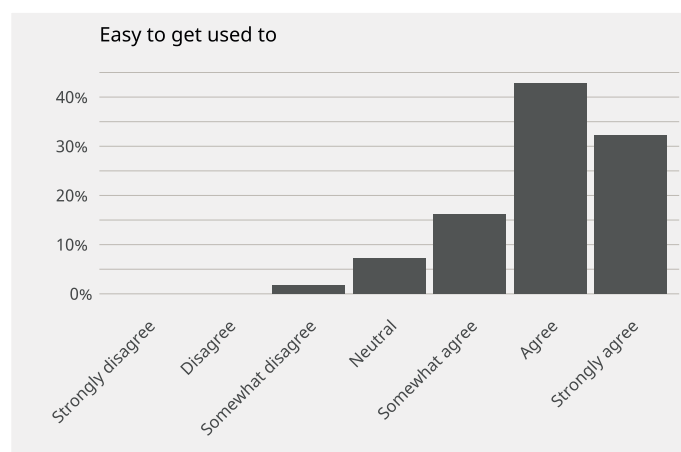
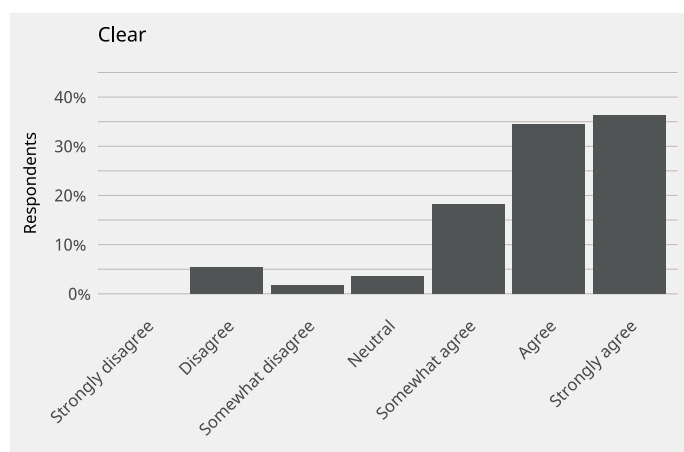
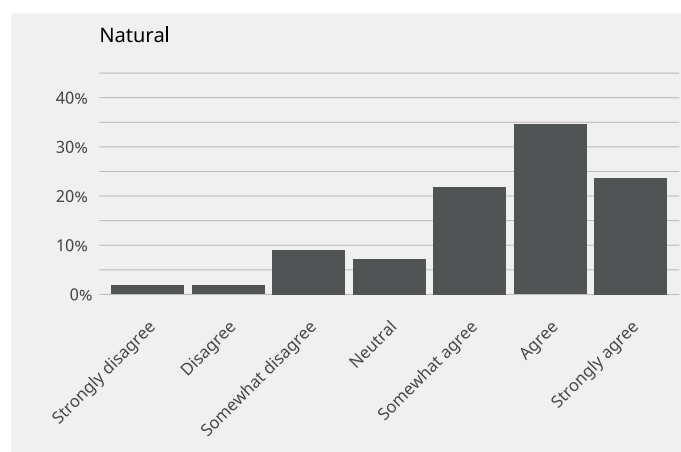
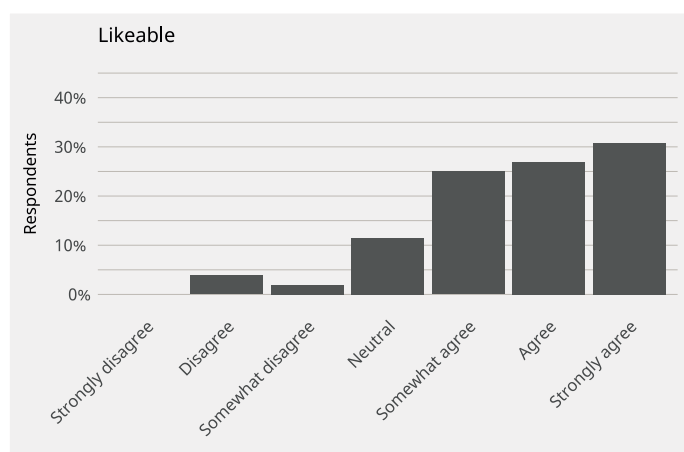


Figure 3: Respondents' degree of agreement with the statements "I immediately liked the sound of the Widex Allure hearing aids.", "I immediately found the sound of the Widex Allure hearing aids to be natural.", "I immediately found the sound of the Widex Allure hearing aids to be clear.", and "The sound of the Widex Allure hearing aids is easy to get used to."

Finally, we were interested in gauging the respondents' satisfaction with the hearing aids overall and with the sound quality. The ratings on these two satisfaction questions are shown in Figure 4. Like the previous questions, the responses here are significantly positive, with 81% indicating that they are overall satisfied and 86% being satisfied with the sound quality (p 's < 0.0001). This is again remarkable because these are relatively early ratings of the hearing devices, where the wearers have had some time to try them out in different situations, but at the same time, have not necessarily fully habituated to them.

Perspectives

Pinpointing the specific reasons for the high satisfaction in a real-life study like the present is always difficult, but some likely reasons stand out: One is the clear and natural quality of the Allure sound, which is driven partly by specific features like the Speech Enhancer Pro noise reduction and the TruAcoustics 2.0 algorithms, which adjust the gain in the hearing aids to the acoustics of the wearer's ear canal, but also by more fundamental signal processing choices like the time-domain filter bank, low processing delay, and high sampling rate which are core to the Widex sound philosophy. This is confirmed by the high immediate ratings of clarity and naturalness. Another key contributor is likely the new Widex fitting rationale (WFR), which has been updated based on in-clinic fine-tuning data from a large sample of real users with the aim of providing a better first fit. The aim is reflected in the extraordinary number of respondents – 91% - who agree that the Allure hearing aids are easy to get used to.

The clinical implications of these results are clear: Widex Allure provides a hearing experience that is immediately clear, natural, and easy to get used to, leading to high user satisfaction. Generalizing beyond the test, this suggests a high likelihood of patients choosing to keep and, crucially for their well-being, consistently use the hearing aids, thereby opening up a new world of hearing.

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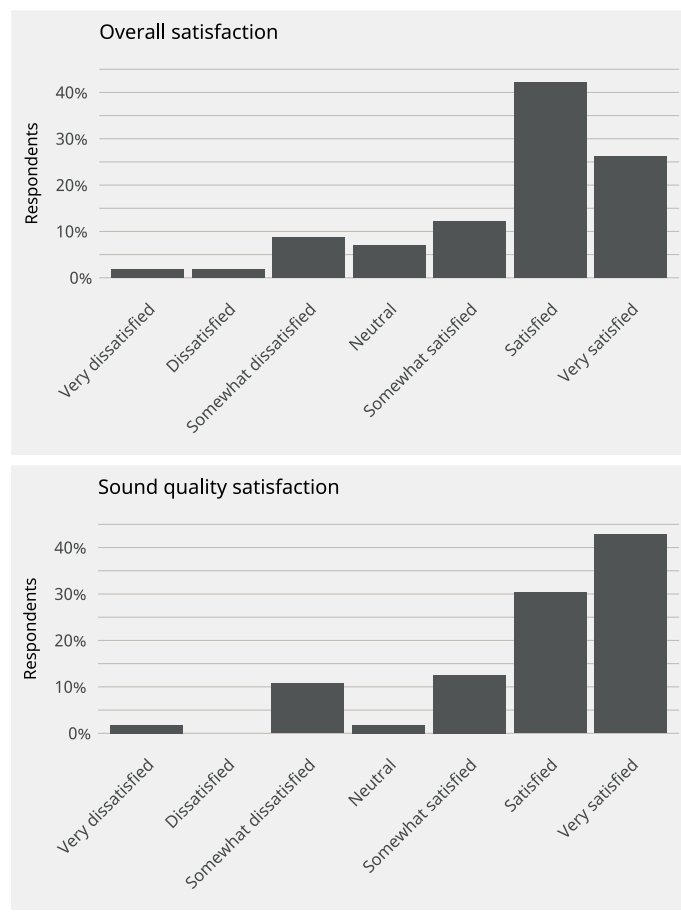


Figure 4: Respondents' satisfaction with the Allure hearing aids overall (upper panel) and specifically with their sound quality (lower panel).

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all respondents for taking the time to evaluate the hearing aids and to the hearing care professionals who fitted them and administered the survey.

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