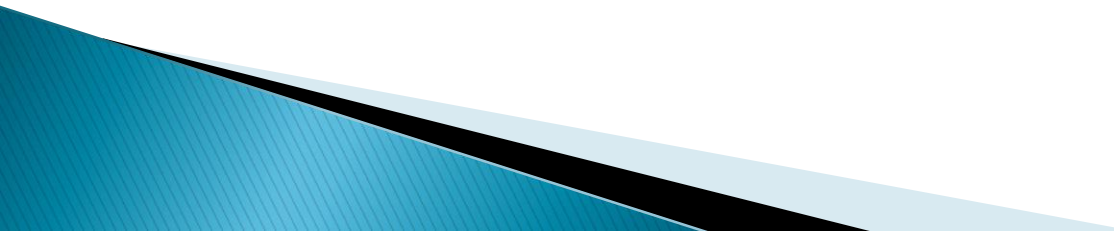


Consumer driven
improvement in
hearing care :
a new approach

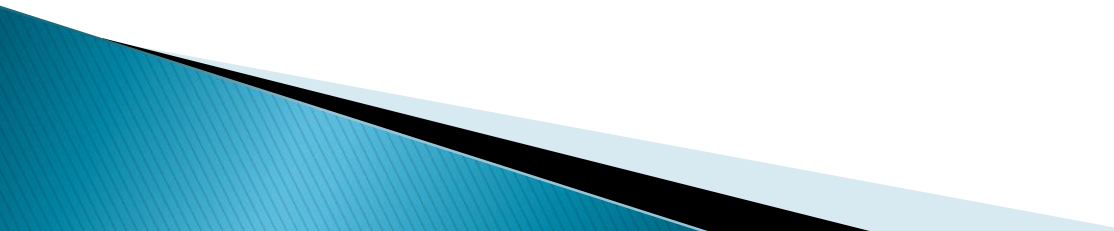
Susan Clutterbuck
EARtrak

HLAA National Conference
Washington DC
16-18 June 2011

40 YEARS AGO

- ▶ Remember those old hearing aids?
 - ▶ Clunky, poor sound quality...
 - ▶ But they did “aid” hearing
 - ▶ Used by one in four people with hearing loss.
- 

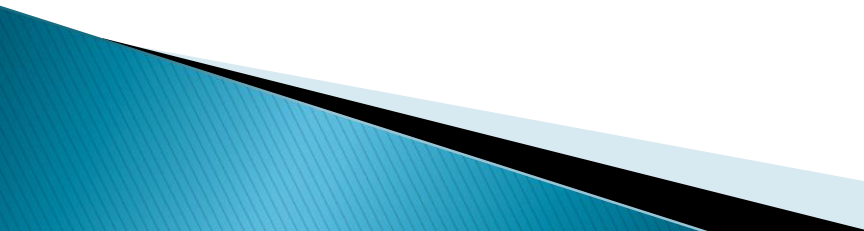
TODAY?

- ▶ Enormous improvements in technology
 - ▶ But still only one in four people with hearing loss use hearing aids
 - ▶ And three out of four people continue to live with the consequences of their hearing loss...
- 

Reasons for non-use?

- ▶ Three out of four people have no confidence in the effectiveness of hearing aids...
“Hearing aids don’t work!”
- ▶ Who do they believe?
 - Advertising?
 - The man next door?

“Consumer Reports – Hearing Aids” 2009

- ▶ 12 “mystery shoppers”
 - ▶ Purchased hearing aids from different types of dispensers
 - ▶ Wide variety of outcomes (good, bad & ugly)
 - ▶ Conclusion: Good results “a matter of chance”
- 

What is most important?

What device is fitted?

OR

Who provides the hearing care?

OR

Both?



MarkeTrak VIII : The impact of the hearing care professional

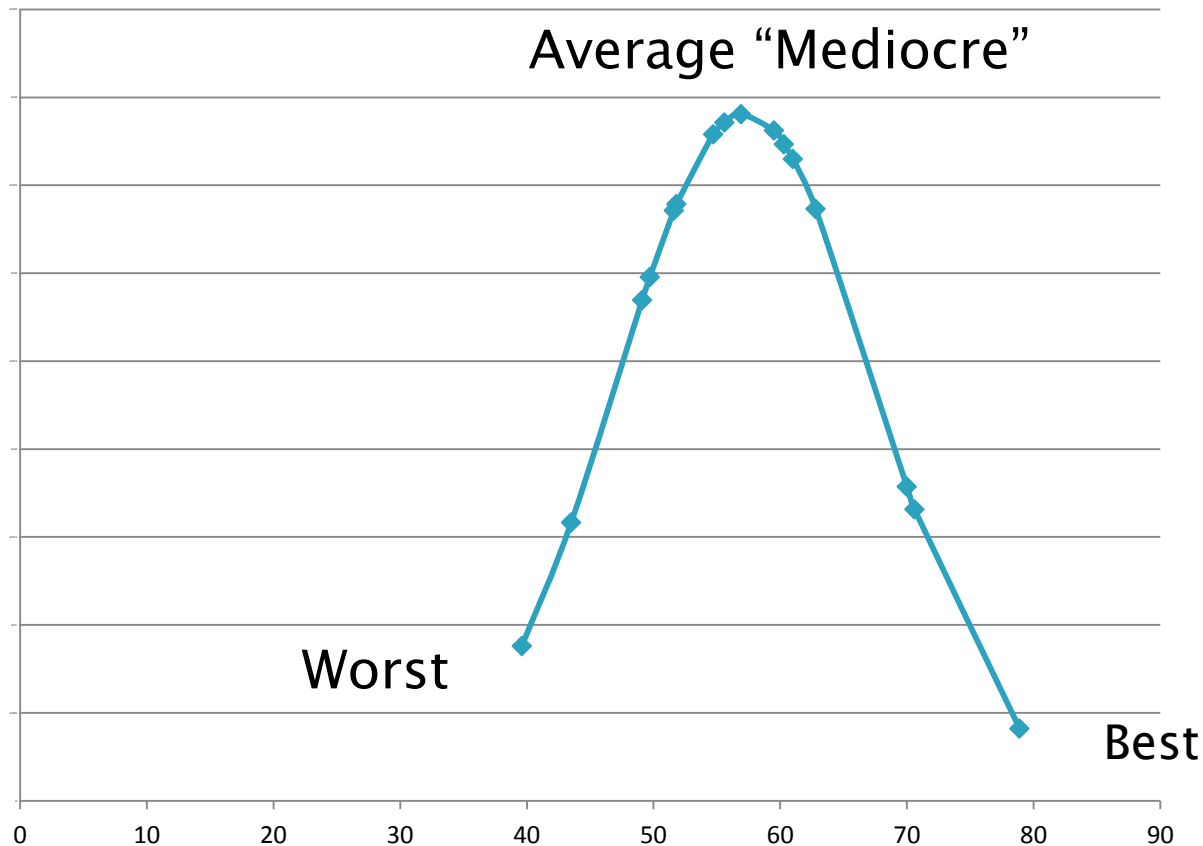
“Data from this study suggest that quality control at the point of dispensing has not kept pace with the industry’s rapid technological improvements.”

Kochkin *et al*, The Hearing Review, April 2010

**Some clinics are getting
better results than others...**



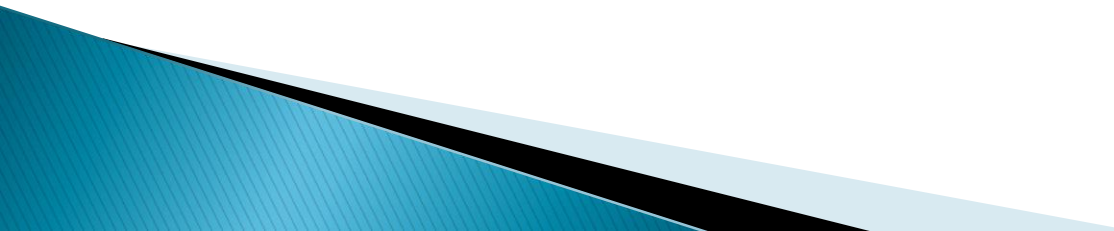
Variation in clinic performance



% Listening situations satisfied, by clinic ◆

◆ = performance for each clinic

What is effective hearing care?

- ▶ Patient gets hearing aids?
 - ▶ Dispenser follows “gold standard” procedures?
 - ▶ Patient loves their dispenser?
- 

“The successful provision of hearing health care ultimately comes down to each individual patient’s satisfaction with his or her hearing aid outcome.”

Jerry Northern, PhD



Today's demonstration

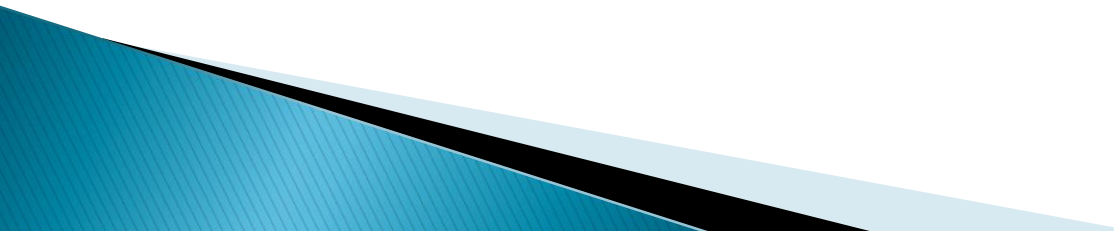
EARtrak

“Customer Satisfaction Survey”

to measure the effectiveness of hearing care



Let's pretend –

- ▶ All of us in this room have communication problems caused by hearing loss.
 - ▶ We've all been fitted with hearing aids by ABC Hearing Clinic.
 - ▶ ABC has sent us an EARtrak “Customer Satisfaction Survey”
- 

What do you have to do?

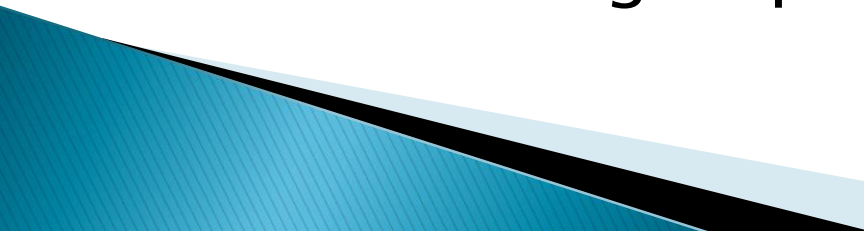
Complete 2 parts:

1. The single sheet (to collect some information about you and the devices)
2. The “Customer Satisfaction Survey”


(If you don't have hearing aids? Think of someone you know who does, and fill out the survey as if you were in their shoes).

Sue's Rule: Concentrate! No talking!

What happens next?

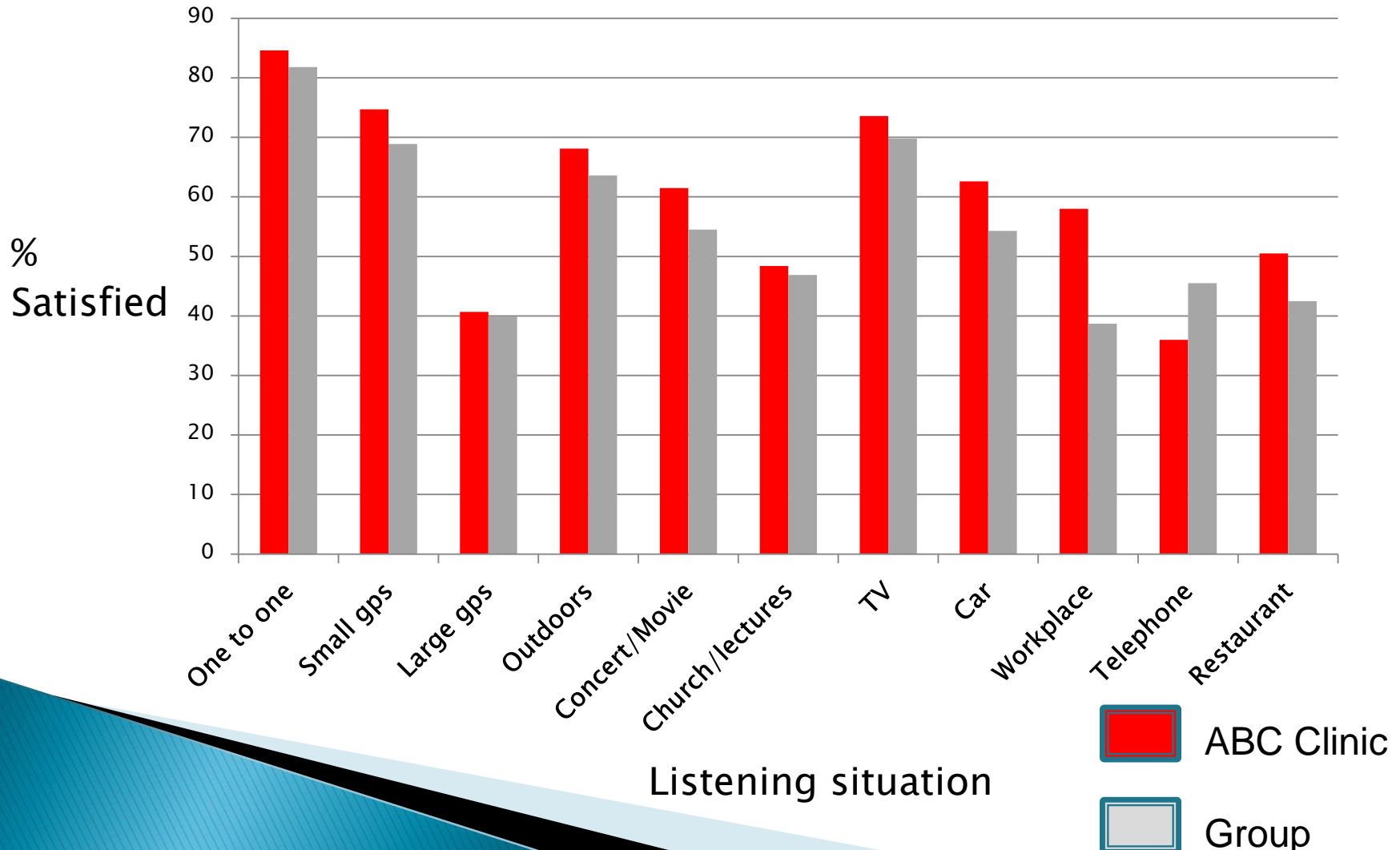
- ▶ You mail your surveys to EARtrak/HLAA.
 - ▶ EARtrak enters your opinions about the effectiveness of your hearing aids and the hearing services of ABC Hearing Clinic in the database.
 - ▶ EARtrak generates a report for ABC Hearing Clinic, comparing their performance against a benchmark group.
- 

What happens next?

- ▶ ABC Hearing Clinic receives their report, comparing their performance against the benchmark group.
 - ▶ ABC Hearing Clinic can see what they are doing well.
 - ▶ ABC Hearing Clinic can now identify if they have any problems – and fix them.
- 

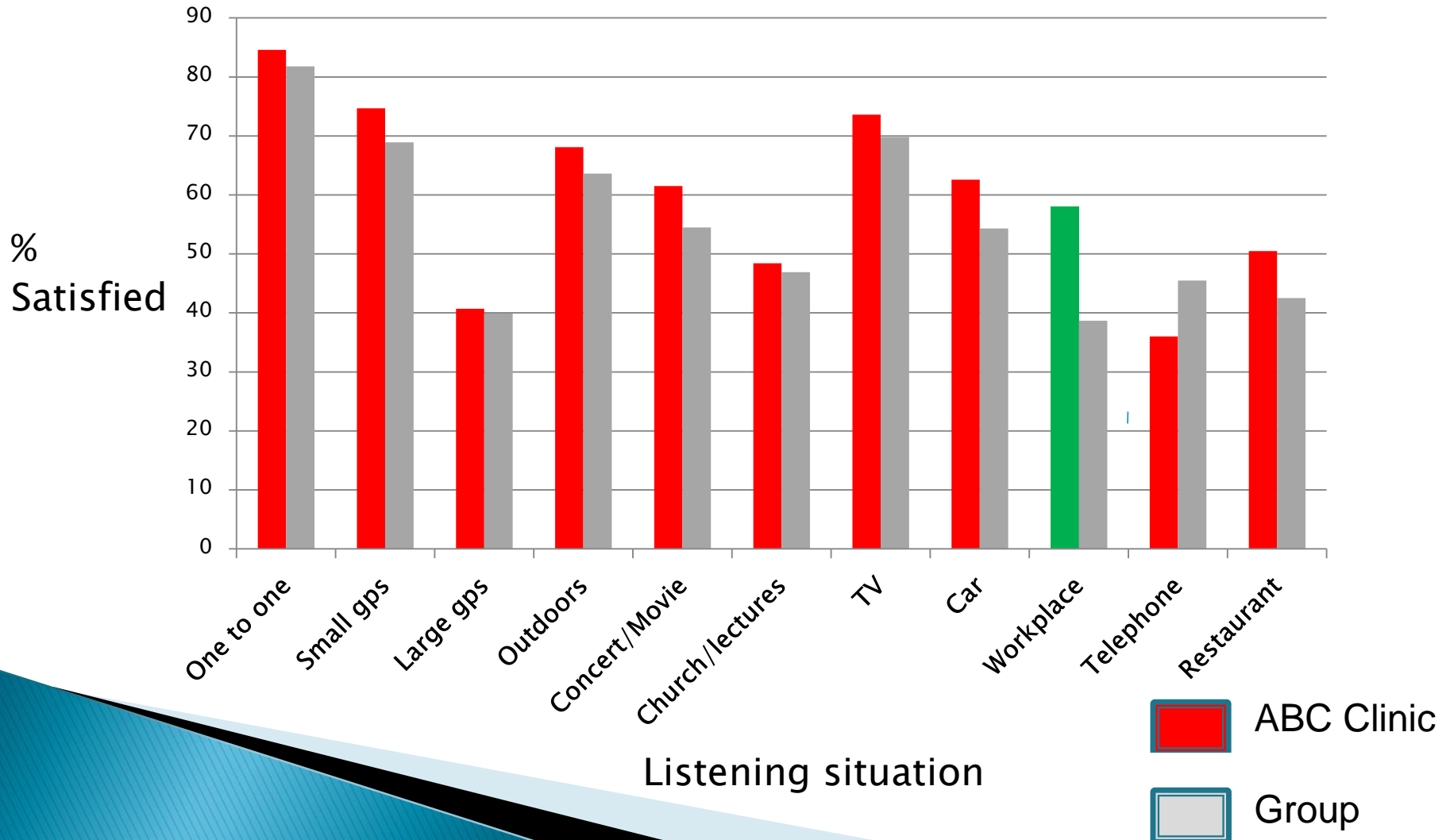
ABC Hearing Clinic – Report

Listening situations: Patient Satisfaction



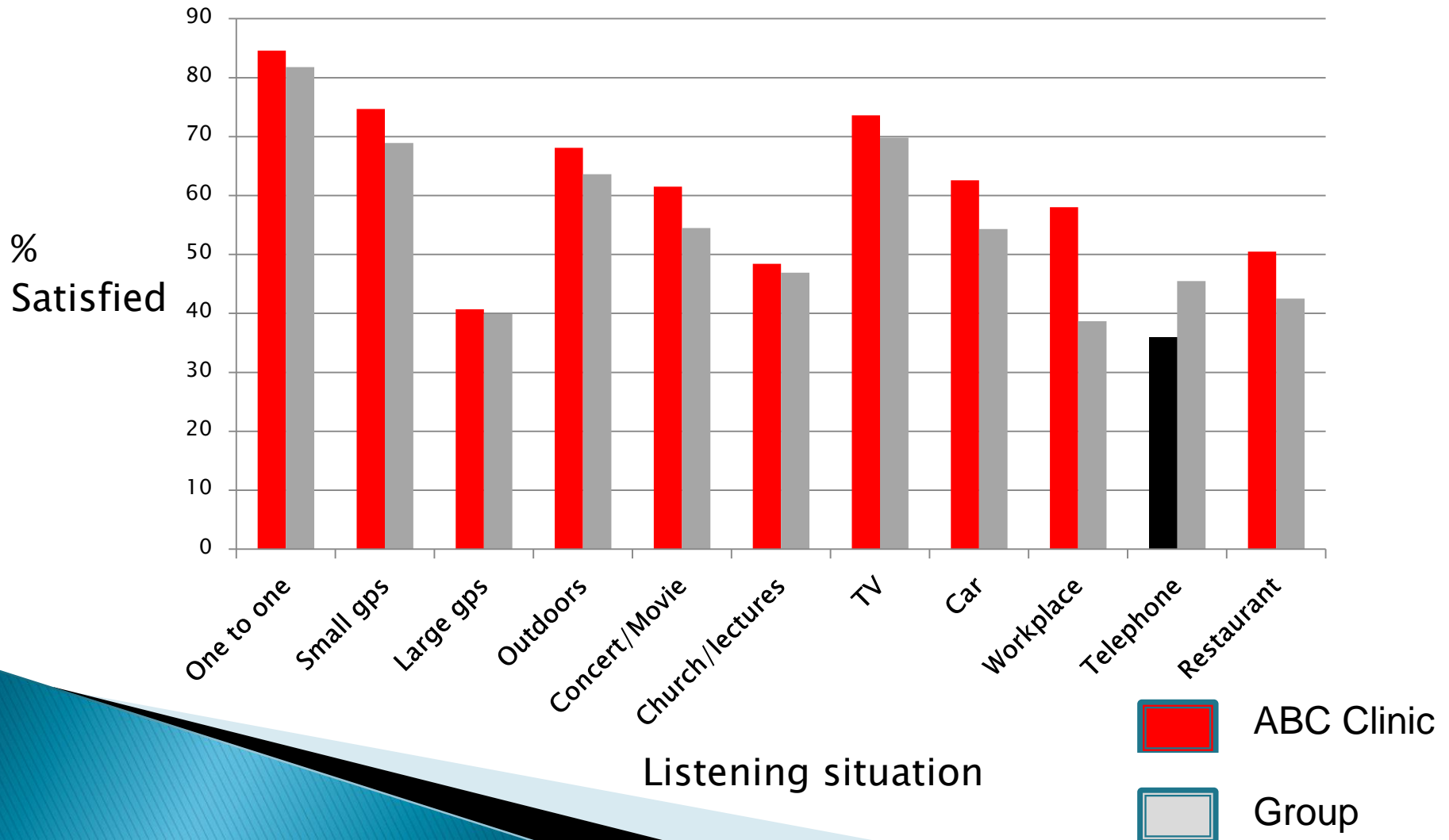
ABC Hearing Clinic – Report

Listening situations: Patient Satisfaction



ABC Hearing Clinic – Report

Listening situations: Patient Satisfaction



What happens next?

- ▶ EARtrak gives ABC Hearing Clinic a “performance rating” – up to 5 stars.
- ▶ How does EARtrak do that?



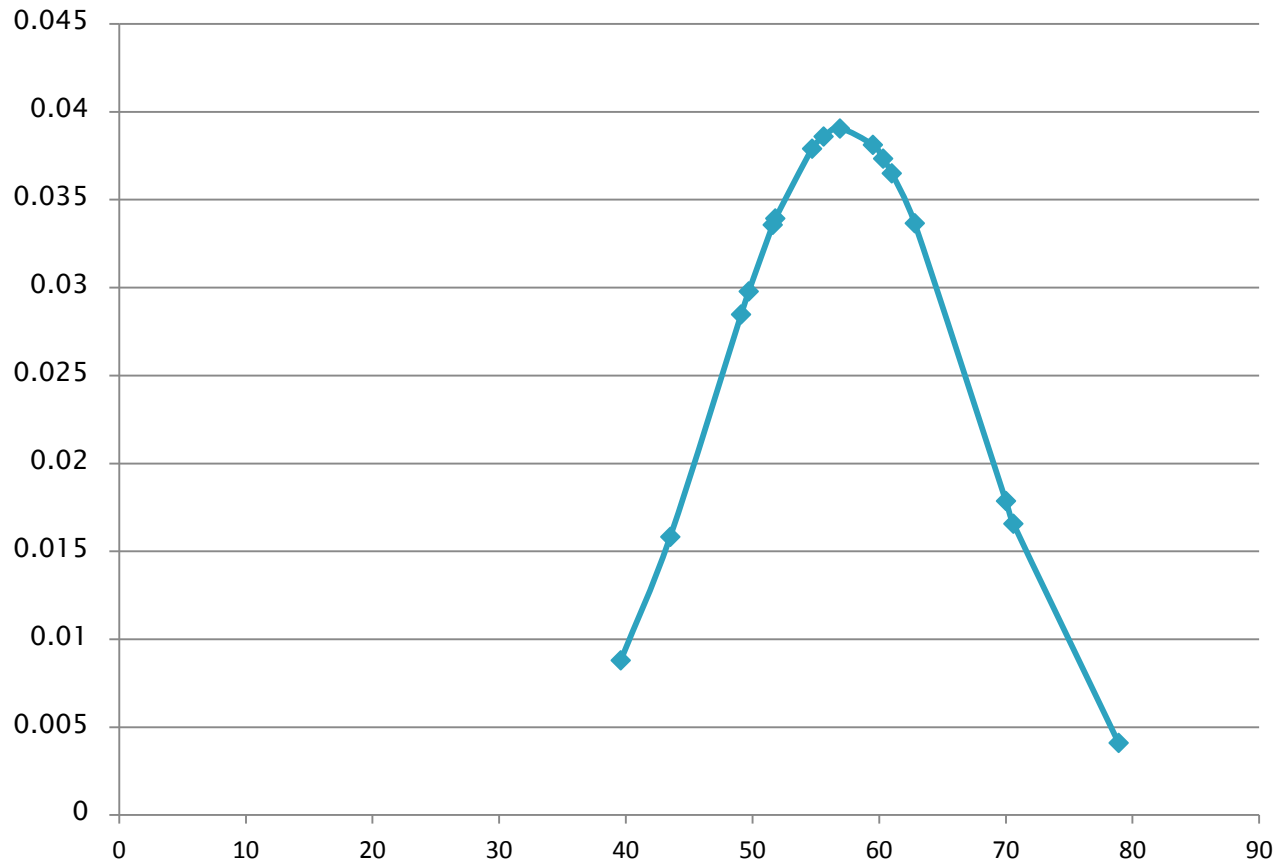
Quality accreditation ratings

- ★ Independent audit of service quality
- ★ Continuing commitment to **quality improvement**
- ★ Patient satisfaction with **hearing improvement**
- ★ Patient satisfaction with **device performance**
- ★ Patient satisfaction with **service delivery**

One star awarded for each category

Where is ABC Hearing Clinic on the performance curve?

(Who knows?
Unless they measure
their performance
by surveying their patients)



% Listening situations satisfied, by clinic

Consumers have definite opinions.

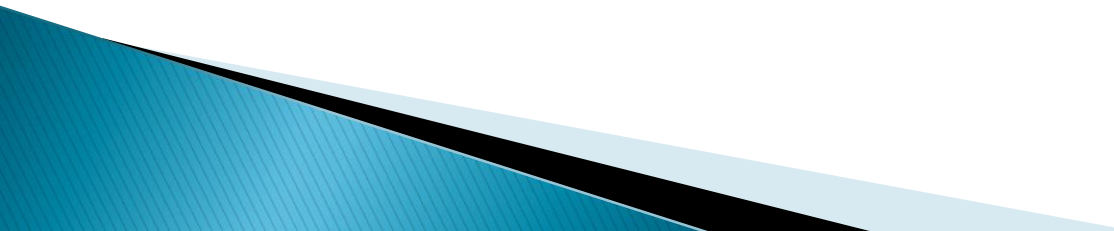
Is anyone asking them?

Less than 20% clinics see the need to measure performance

("We're too busy... our patients don't complain... our patients love us...")

Result? Four out of five clinics have no idea about the effectiveness of their services

Consumers have definite opinions. But only one in five is asked...


- ▶ **Question.** What can we do if clinics don't ask their patients about their outcomes? How can the patient "voice" be heard?
 - ▶ **Answer.** By-pass the clinic! Give consumers another way to report their experiences of hearing care.
- 

Make your experiences count!

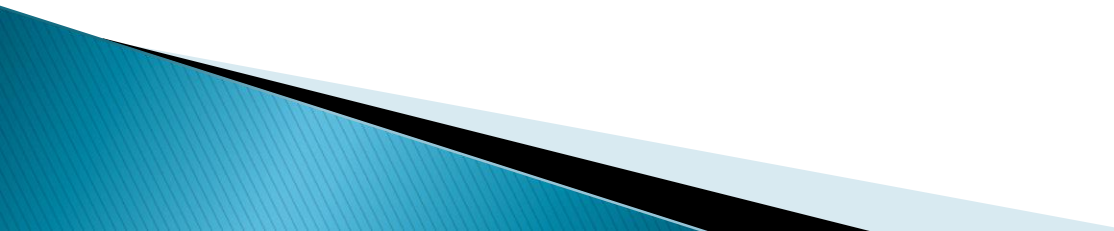
Complete the Customer Satisfaction Survey

- on-line (www.eartrak.com) (HLAA website soon!)
- pen & paper version on request

The future?

- ▶ Consumers seeking hearing care will be able to access EARtrak independent performance ratings when choosing a service 
- ▶ Clinics will work harder to gain/maintain high star ratings to attract/retain patients
- ▶ Consumers will receive more effective hearing services

The future?

- ▶ Manufacturers will see enhanced dispensing performance from their devices
 - ▶ Consumer organisations will have access to a large information database when lobbying for improvements in hearing care
 - ▶ Improved community confidence in the effectiveness of hearing devices improves uptake of hearing care.
- 

Improved outcomes = everybody wins.





Thank you.

Questions?

outcomes@eartrak.com