

# Television volume can be festive flashpoint for Christmas viewers

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Credit: University of Nottingham

For many households, crowding around the television for a family film or to watch the Queen's speech is as much of a Christmas tradition as opening presents and enjoying a turkey dinner.

But in homes where one family member has a hearing aid, settling down to watch the box can become a festive flashpoint - leading to arguments about volume and tussles over the TV remote.

In a bid to promote peace on earth – and in the living room – researchers at The University of Nottingham are recruiting hearing aid TV viewers and their partners to find their ideal listening levels for viewing harmony.

Professor Deb Hall, Director of the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Nottingham Hearing Biomedical Research Unit

(BRU), said: "One of the most common complaints in households where one person is a hearing aid user is that they listen to the TV or radio turned up far too loud.

"Family Christmas time is when this problem happens a lot as people all gather round the TV together. In the run up to the festive period, our research group is launching a new study which investigates this complaint."

The study is aiming to recruit around 50 hearing aid users and their partners to take part in a test in a special listening laboratory, where the researchers will measure comfortable TV listening levels separately for the hearing aid wearer and their partner, along with some questionnaires and a hearing test. The team has also devised an online survey for people who would like to take part but can't spare the time to come into the lab.

Hearing loss is a highly common condition that affects one in six people in the UK alone. The consequences of hearing loss are wide-ranging and often impacts on partners and family members.

## **Impact of hearing loss**

In addition to preferred listening volume, the Nottingham study will also investigate if and how television viewing habits may have changed for people with hearing loss. The hearing aid users and their partner will be asked to attend a two-hour session at the NIHR Nottingham Hearing BRU during which researchers will measure the volume at which they prefer to watch television while watching a series of short, pre-selected television clips consisting of British documentaries, film, weather broadcasts and the news.

Volunteers will be asked to watch the clips separately and to set the volume and then come together to watch more TV segments and to set

the preferred volume together.

Both participants will also be asked to complete a series of other listening tasks and questionnaires including:

- A hearing test to assess hearing
- An online survey on viewing habits
- A short questionnaire to assess listening ability in different environments and to gather information on daily television viewing
- An [online survey](#) relating to the impact of [hearing loss](#) on everyday life.

The measures of the preferred volume will be analysed by the researchers who are hoping to use the results to make recommendations on how [hearing aid](#) users can more readily reach agreement over TV volume with their partners.

People who are interested in the research but unable to get into the lab can take part in the survey online at [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/viewtv](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/viewtv)

Provided by University of Nottingham

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