

Submitted on Wed, 02/09/2022 - 12:58

Name

Nicholas Morlan

Town/City

Montpelier

Topic

Other

Comment

I am nearly 50 years old and have lived with hearing loss ever since I can remember. Hearing loss has affected every aspect of my life but the hardest part has been unemployment.

As my hearing worsened, I would frequently have to accept work where good hearing wasn't required. I would have to pass up jobs that I knew I was qualified for but couldn't apply because I couldn't guarantee that I would be able to hear properly.

If people feel isolated during the pandemic, imagine how isolating it is for someone who is hard of hearing? The family Zoom meetings I couldn't attend because I couldn't hear them. The danger of having someone remove their mask because they thought I could hear them better that way.

Hearing aids need to be covered in VT Benchmark plans. Hard of hearing people frequently suffer from depression, unemployment or underemployment and are less likely to seek out social activities. We do not have a shared community and frequently our disability is seen as invisible. We are of all ages and ranges of hearing loss. We sometimes might pretend we can hear because it's too embarrassing or exhausting to constantly ask for words to be repeated.

Hearing aids do not instantly make us "hearing" people, especially those who have had lifelong hearing loss. But they are a step up to communication. I ask the Board to please consider covering hearing aids in VT Benchmark plans. Vermont is one of the only states in the United States where private health insurance does not cover hearing aids.

Please hear us! We need hearing aid insurance coverage.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Morlan

Your public comment will be shared with the Board. To promote transparency, the Board sometimes posts public comments on its website. Are you okay with the Board posting your comment? If no, your comment will be sent to the Board but not posted.

Yes