

# Cockburn Ear Portal: An Ears, Nose and Throat (ENT) and Audiology referral portal for improving access to ear health services for Aboriginal children in metropolitan areas using telehealth

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**Status** RECRUITING  
**Sponsor** Telethon Kids Institute  
**Enrollment** 120 participants

## Plain Language Summary

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Aboriginal children experience far higher rates of ear infections and hearing loss compared to the general population, and long wait times to see specialists can lead to delayed treatment and lasting impacts on hearing and learning. This study, based at Cockburn in Perth, tests a telehealth ear portal designed specifically to improve access to specialist ear health services at Perth Children's Hospital for Aboriginal children living in the Perth metropolitan area.

Through the ear portal, children are assessed locally and results are sent to specialists at PCH who can provide timely recommendations. The study examines whether this approach reduces wait times and improves outcomes compared to conventional referral pathways.

Your child may be eligible if they are of Aboriginal descent, aged between 0 and 18 years, live within 60 km of Perth, and have been identified as having ear disease — including fluid in the ear for more than 3 months, recurrent ear infections, or parental concerns about hearing or speech. Children requiring urgent treatment are not included in this study and will be seen immediately through standard care.

## Key Eligibility Criteria

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### Inclusion (4)

- Aged between 0 and 18 years old.
- Are of Aboriginal descent
- Live within the greater metropolitan region of Perth (within a 60km radius)
- Have been screened and identified as having ear disease requiring referral as defined by; evidence of OM with effusion (OME) for >3 months; a history of 3 episodes of OM in the past 6 months; 4 episodes of OM in the past 12 months; or significant parental concerns regarding their child's hearing or speech development.

### Exclusion (2)

- Are a CAT 1 (urgent) referral. Treatment will be sought immediately for these children.
- The child's legal representative (parent/guardian) is unwilling or unable to provide informed consent to participate.

## Locations (1 total)

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Perth Children's Hospital - Nedlands, WA, Australia