

TRAINING OF NURSES IN EAR EXAMINATION AND HEARING SCREENING IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

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Abstract. The objectives of this study were to determine the agreement between the ear examination findings of the otorhinolaryngologist (trainer) and the elementary school nurse (trainee) after training with the use of a penlight and to determine the mean sound pressure level (SPL) produced by school nurses as a standard parameter for hearing screening using a 512 tuning fork after training on tuning fork testing by the otorhinolaryngologist. Training workshops in ear examination using a penlight and hearing screening using a 512 tuning fork were conducted for school nurses. Data for assessment of ear examination skills and production of SPL were collected by questionnaire and observation of performance. Kappa statistics were used to assess agreement between trainees' and trainer's responses. Mean and standard deviation were determined for the assessment of the SPL produced. Results showed an excellent agreement between the school nurses' and otorhinolaryngologist's observations on ear examination. These included observations of the ear canal, visualization of the tympanic membrane and identification of unusual findings such as wax and discharge. The majority of nurses responded positively in terms of the ease and confidence in performance of the procedure. Regarding tuning fork testing, the nurses were able to produce significant SPL. The mean SPL produced by the nurses using a 512 tuning fork was 56.316 dB.