Building a tinnitus practice from the ground up: How to bring tinnitus care to places where it doesn’t exist

William Hal Martin, PhD
National University of Singapore
Center for Hearing, Speech & Balance
entwhm@nus.edu.sg
Exploring new realms

- Captain
- Ship
- Map
- Sextant
- Supplies
- Crew
- Funding
Exploring new realms: The Captain

The Tinnitus Specialist
Tinnitus Specialist

The role of the tinnitus specialist often exceeds the realm of traditional audiology in order to produce effective tinnitus management.
Tinnitus Specialist

- **Identify** - all factors that impact tinnitus severity
- **Educate** – the patient regarding the impact on tinnitus
- **Persuade** – the patient to pursue parallel interventions
- **Facilitate** – assist patient in identifying needed care
- **Coordinate** – serve as intermediary between clinicians
- **Follow** – monitor progress, assist with obstacles
- **Modify** – management plan as needed
The Ship – Setting up your tinnitus clinic
Exploring new realms: The Ship

Facility:
Test booth
Room for counseling and education
Medical exam room (later)

Equipment:
Audiometric test equipment
Hearing aid fitting and testing equipment
Specialized tinnitus matching system (later)
The Map – Choosing a course of tinnitus management
Exploring new realms: The Map

Progressive Tinnitus Management
Clinical Handbook for Audiologists

James A. Henry
Tara L. Zaugg
Paula J. Myers
Caroline J. Kendall

VA National Center for Rehabilitative Auditory Research
Five hierarchical levels of tinnitus management

1. Triage
2. Audiologic Evaluation
3. Group Education
4. Interdisciplinary Evaluation
5. Individualized Support

Bothersome tinnitus

Progressively more severe problems caused by tinnitus

Nonbothersome tinnitus

Google: Progressive Tinnitus Management
The Sextant –
How do I know the patient is on course?
Exploring new realms: The Sextant

Questionnaires
The Questionnaires

• Tinnitus, hearing and medical histories
• Modified Beck Depression Inventory
• Anxiety index
• Tinnitus severity index
Depression inventory

Beck, A T. Beck, R W.

Screening depressed patients in family practice. A rapid technique
Anxiety inventory

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Adults

Self-Evaluation Questionnaire
STAI Form Y-1 and Form Y-2

Developed by Charles D. Spielberger
in collaboration with R.L. Gorsuch, R. Lushene, P.R. Vagg, and G.A. Jacobs
Tinnitus Handicap Index
Google: THI tinnitus
Tinnitus Functional Index
Google: TFI OHSU
Tinnitus Handicap Questionnaire
Google: THQ Iowa
Tinnitus Reaction Questionnaire
Google: TRQ tinnitus
Tinnitus questionnaire pdf
Rated severity indicators

- Visual analogue scales
- Visual numerical scales
Exploring new realms: Supplies

Gathering tinnitus management tools
Acoustical therapy: Devices

• Amplification (hearing aids)
• Ear-level sound generators
• Combination units
• Bluetooth streamers
• Table-top sound generators
• Sound pillows
Acoustical therapy: Phone apps

Best Relaxation & Meditation Apps
Exploring new realms: The Crew

Assembling your tinnitus team
Tinnitus

- Sleep
- Blood pressure
- Anxiety disorders
- Depression
- Hearing loss
- Work stress
- Sound exposure
- Family stress
- Diet
- Conflicting medications
- Inactivity
- Communication problems
- Grief
- Litigation
- TMJ neck
- Neck

Martin, 2010
Exploring new realms: Funding

How do you get paid for your work?
Exploring new realms: Funding

- Insurance coverage?
- Devices?
- Fee for service?
  - By procedure
  - Bundled services
  - Hourly