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The Use of Large Group Assistive Listening Devices With and Without Hearing Aids in an Adult Classroom Setting

During a hearing loss management workshop, 10 listeners with normal hearing sensitivity and 18 listeners with sensorineural hearing loss compared four group assistive listening devices (ALDs) — FM, induction loop, infrared, and soundfield amplification — to no system.

Listeners with hearing loss were tested using the ALDs alone and using the ALDs inductively coupled to personal in-the-ear (ITE) hearing aids. Significant improvements in word recognition ability with the FM, induction loop, and infrared systems were noted in listeners with normal hearing and with all ALD systems in listeners with hearing loss, as compared to performance with no system. Listeners with hearing loss performed better and preferred using the FM, induction loop, and infrared systems and headsets, but preferred the soundfield amplification system with their hearing aids. Both groups of listeners preferred the FM system over other systems in terms of performance, comfort and ease of use.

