

# EARLY INTERVENTION FOR CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS: IT BEGINS AT BIRTH

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# Hearing Loss

- 2 to 4 per 1000 live births in industrialised countries
- 6 per 1000 live births in sub-Saharan Africa
- Lack of early identification and intervention - reduced developmental outcomes and delays in language, communication, social-emotional, perceptual and future academic and vocational development (Yoshinaga-Itano, 2003)
- Deaf children exit high school with a functional literacy level of a fourth grade child and general knowledge levels of an 8 year old (DEAFSA, 2009)
- Deaf people are more likely to be unemployed and dependent on a state grant
- Employed deaf people earn less than hearing individuals

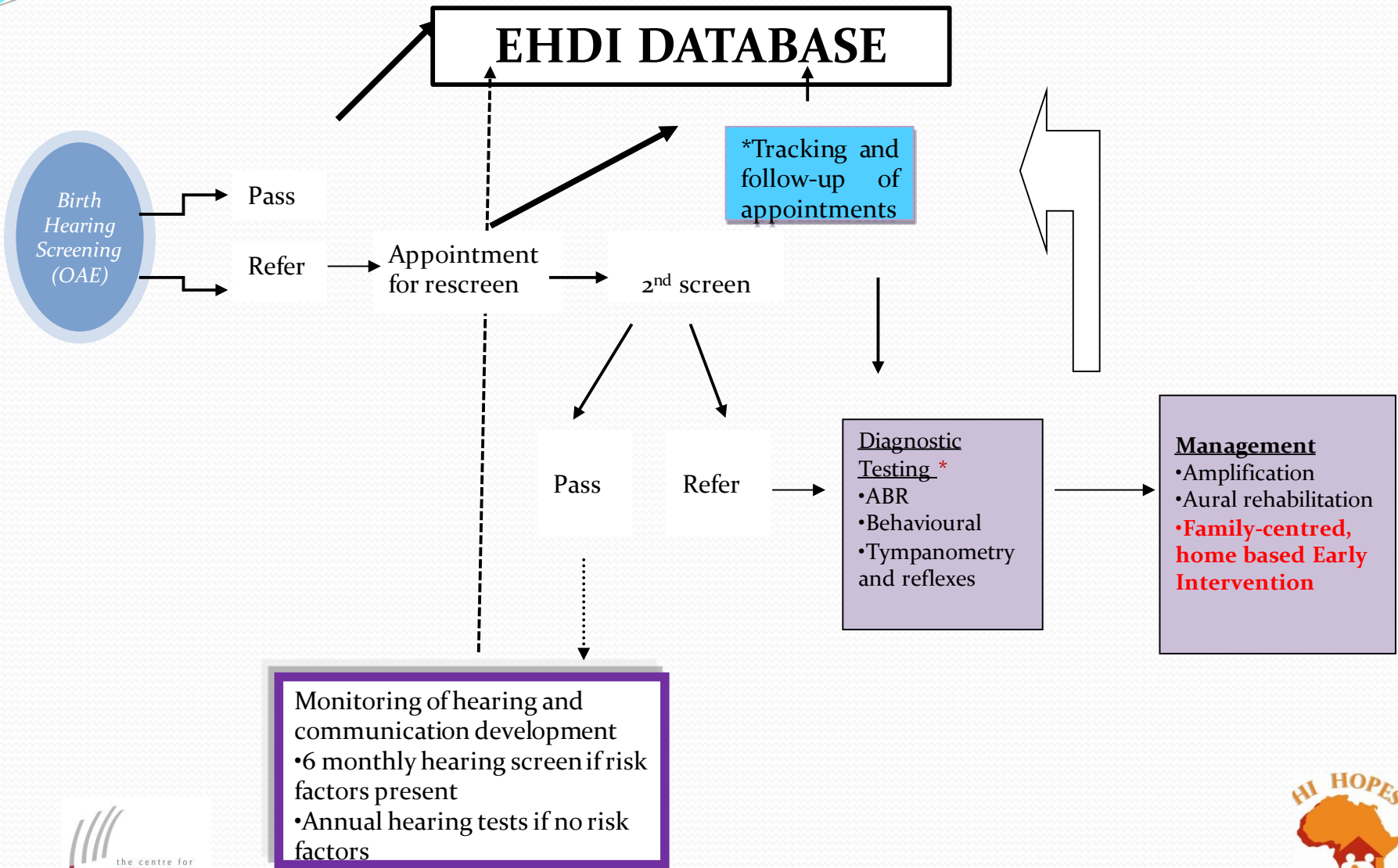
# Hearing Loss (cont.)

- Cumulative effect on financial expenditure - extra resources for specialised education and increased dependence on state grants due to reduced employability.
- Children with unidentified or late identified hearing loss will pose a difficulty in reaching the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education
- A lack of direct recognition of children with hearing loss (and other disabilities) and the importance of early identification of hearing loss.
- Vulnerability and dependence of children on adult care, and their basic right to access appropriate healthcare services

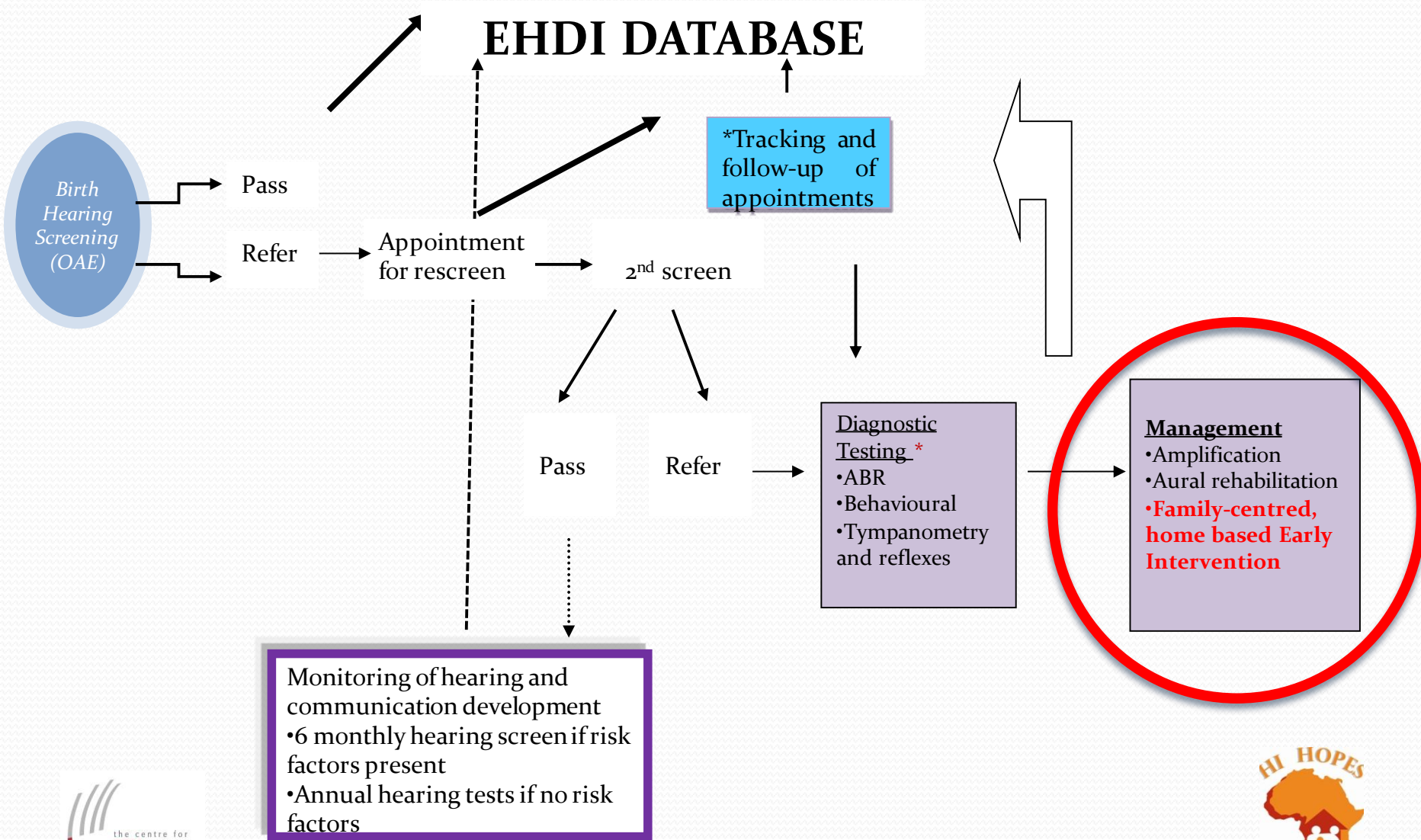
# Children's Rights

- Children's rights to access appropriate healthcare includes
  - ❑ caregivers being able to recognise their healthcare needs,
  - ❑ getting them to appropriate healthcare providers for assessments (Brock, 2001)
  - ❑ ensuring that they receive appropriate treatment and intervention.

# EHDI Pathway



# EHDI Pathway



**Monitoring of hearing and communication development**

- 6 monthly hearing screen if risk factors present
- Annual hearing tests if no risk factors

**Diagnostic Testing\***

- ABR
- Behavioural
- Tympanometry and reflexes

**Management**

- Amplification
- Aural rehabilitation
- Family-centred, home based Early Intervention



# Challenges

- ⦿ **No policy** for early hearing screening
- ⦿ No universal newborn hearing screening – **late age of identification** =reduced effectiveness of early intervention
- ⦿ Lack of understanding of **financial impact** of unidentified hearing loss / burden of disease
- ⦿ **Lack of a national database**
- ⦿ 90% of all children with hearing loss have **no access to early identification and early intervention services**

# HI HOPES

- **September 2006**

**HI HOPES is born and starts supporting the first family**

**H** - **Home**  
**I** - **Intervention**  
**H** - **Hearing and language**  
**O** - **Opportunities**  
**P** - **Parent**  
**E** - **Education**  
**S** - **Services**





# What is HI HOPES?

- ◎ Partnering with families
- ◎ Weekly home-based visits (+/- 1 hour)
- ◎ Information & empowerment (informed choice)
- ◎ Unbiased
- ◎ Active involvement in decision-making process
- ◎ Close collaboration with team  
(multidisciplinary approach )

# HI HOPES



# The Team of Early Interventionists

## PARENT ADVISOR

- Understands & Assesses Child Needs
- Understands Family and Family Concerns/Strengths
- Offers the Family Information, Support, and Encouragement

## DEAF MENTOR

- Interacts with child
- Interacts with parents
- Teaches about Deaf Culture/  
be a role model

# Advantages Of Home Visits

- ✓ Home visits make it possible to reach isolated families
- ✓ Makes early intervention accessible to all
- ✓ Ideal for learning firsthand about the conditions the family faces day after day
- ✓ Family doesn't have to dress up, get organized, drive to get to the appointment (especially if no transportation)
- ✓ Learn about family structure, roles, and interrelationships
- ✓ Work within family routines



# ASSESSMENT OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

- SKI HI Language Development Scale (LDS)
  - Chronological vs Language Age
  - Expressive Lang
  - Receptive Lang
- Quarterly
- Normed for deaf infants
- Either modality

# Holistic and Equitable Outcomes: Children and Family Outcomes



- ◎ Relationships with members of the family
  - Parents
  - Siblings
  - Extended family
- ◎ Communication
- ◎ Language Development
- ◎ Overall development

# Holistic and Equitable Outcomes: Community Outcomes

- Awareness
- Informed
- Inclusive
- Undiscriminatory
- Democratisation



# Holistic and Equitable Outcomes: Other Outcomes

- Create awareness of urgency for Early Intervention
- Professionalise Early Intervention
- Establish National Benchmarks for E.I.
- Longitudinal Research (5 years/ n=606)
- National Statistics
- Etc



# THANK YOU



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