

Appendix 2: Parent Interviews

Overall, the interviews revealed that parents were positive about the CAEP testing. They discussed the: (i) value of the information offered prior to, during and after the CAEP recording, (ii) importance of the state of the infant throughout the CAEP test session, (iii) testers' use of toys to keep the infant happy during testing, and (iv) comfort and accessibility of the test environment. Most parents who discussed receiving information prior to the test session reported having some awareness of what the appointment would involve.

Yeah, I got the full information and, erm, yeah the opportunity to ask questions ... I was put at ease and none of it started until I'd asked all my questions [M3 ♂ 9mo]¹.

One mother commented that she did not know exactly what to expect before attending the test session and suggested that a more detailed explanation of the activities that comprise the CAEP test may be good for parents concerned about the hearing status of their child.

I didn't know what to expect in terms - - I knew they were going to test his hearing but I didn't know exactly how it was going to be in terms of they have the loudspeaker and it was just playing sort of, erm, blip sort of noises at him and I suppose - - to me it doesn't matter, but I suppose to a parent who was quite concerned about their child's hearing it would have been good to explain exactly what happens in the test and that the child is going to be entertained with toys but they have to stay quite quiet and everybody has to stay quite quiet [M1 ♂ 8mo].

¹ [M3 ♂ 9mo] refers to interview 3 with a mother of a 9 month old boy

Another mother suggested that an explanation of what to expect during the testing session could be useful.

I know I asked some questions while we were there about what it was the experiment was doing because - - or what the test was doing because there was nothing as it is happening that really tells you what the child can hear or can't, erm, and chatting that through with them (2.0) with the lady who - - you kind of got that you're not expecting any, erm, and I guess that's the point of it isn't it you're not expecting any err - - reaction from the baby but I would have thought that would be disheartening if you were expecting something and you didn't see something but then just to know that you're not expecting a reaction I guess puts your mind at rest on that, does that make sense? [M2 ♂ 9mo].

Two parents talked about the use of otoscopy and/or tympanometry: it was this examination of the ear that seemed most bothersome for their child.

Like a certain probe that they put into his ear just to check that everything was clear and, erm, it was that he was bothered about more than anything else [M1 ♂ 8mo].

One parent recommended that otoscopy should be completed after CAEPs had been recorded ‘[it was easier to leave otoscopy to the end] *because it would have upset him at the beginning - - yeah def - - oh no, I think if we'd have done it at the beginning he wouldn't have been, you know, as co-operative*’ [M1 ♂ 8mo].

In most cases the scalp electrodes did not appear to cause distress.

No [he did not mind the probes being applied] and she put it on his forehead because he had some cradle cap, I don't know how comfortable I'd of been if it had been on where his hair was even though they're careful [M3 ♂ 9mo].

None of the parents in this sample reported that the CAEP test session they attended was too long. One parent commented that the test was '*shorter than [she] thought it was going to be*' [M5 ♀ 4mo]. Some parents noted that their child may have become restless had the session been longer.

It was just about long enough. I think any longer and he might have got a bit fed up [M1 ♂ 8mo].

All parents were generally happy with the explanation of test results. One mother reported feeling comfortable with the explanation despite her child's CAEP test results differing from expectations.

Yeah, well it [her child's hearing] wasn't actually fine because he had a cold ... she found that his hearing wasn't amazing on one of the tests but that fit with the cold so she explained that after and that information you know has gone to his doctor but if he - - his hearing was as she'd expected given he had a cold and I felt yeah I felt comfortable [M3 ♂ 9mo].

One parent thought that more explanation would be needed if there was a problem.

I'd probably want bit more detail if I was - - if it was my child and they had a problem I'd want some more detail but then I suppose there's not really much detail to give when he is hearing - - [M1 ♂ 8mo].

The success of the testing was largely reliant upon the infant remaining awake and quiet whilst the CAEP response is being recorded. All parents advised that the infant should be fed and rested prior to attending the test session. One suggested paying attention to the clothing that the child is wearing to attend the test session.

I took him in a short sleeve shirt just in case it was too warm so again its - - think about the clothing they've got on as well [M6 ♂ 9mo NH].

Another advised that parents should remain calm and remember that the test session will be fun for their child.

I know it's really difficult if you were going for a test for something that you could find out that you child has a problem, erm, but if you can stay calm then the baby will stay calm and remember that it's also about them having a bit of fun too [M1 ♂ 8mo].

The role of the toys used by the researchers during the test session was noted by most parents.

Yeah, erm, I mean the, err, I don't know the research assistant, I don't know the other lady anyway, erm, was very good sort of keeping [infant's name] attention with sort of books and toys and things and obviously during the test ones that didn't make noises

and things, erm, but that definitely really - - she worked very hard keeping her sort of focused, erm, yeah and I think that worked well [M4 ♀ 4mo].

One mother of an older child commented that the range of toys used was helpful.

Erm, well it was, erm, the nurse assistant who was trying to keep him quiet. He was just sat on my knee. The first one was fine but by the second one he was a bit - - I don't know because he was nearer the later weeks in terms of the age range she just said that they were finding that older children it was harder to - - you know 10 minutes of anything and then he's bored and wants to be on the next thing so but it wasn't uncomfortable it was fine they had loads of you know toys and they kept on you know swapping different things [M3 ♂ 9mo].

Another parent who recalled being worried that her child would get too excited by the toys thought that testing babies in a younger age range would be easier as a result of their reduced mobility.

Well from my own health experience I probably would think it would have been easier when he was younger because he was less mobile [M1 ♂ 8mo].

Some parents observed that the test environment '*was quite clinical so - - I suppose if you were going to make it really child friendly then maybe do it in some kind of like nursery setting* [M1 ♂ 8mo NH]' but others did not share this view '*..didn't find it too clinical, I mean, obviously it's in the hospital building so you expected it'd be fairly - - but no it was*

comfortable.. [M2 ♂ 9mo]'. Some parents found the test room too hot. One mother highlighted the lack of private breastfeeding facilities.

I don't know I mean like I think it all went really well like I was happy with the environment and the people that were doing it and then like the toys and everything that was good (1.0) I mean the only thing that I maybe would say - - because I was breastfeeding and other people that was in there - - there wasn't like necessarily - - I don't know if there was a place I could have gone to be more private [M5 ♀ 4mo].

Another parent, who felt she had a positive experience overall, found car parking a problem.

The only erm thing that I found difficult was to find the car park - - so I was a little bit late and I was quite harassed by that - - erm but yeah, no it was absolutely I've given - - I've taken some leaflets and given them to other mums so obviously I'm happy to have done it and my friend was happy to of you know told me about it so erm yeah, no I thought it was a positive experience [M3 ♂ 9mo].

One parent suggested that a more mobile environment may help.

I guess the only thing is - - I mean I don't know how you're going to use it longer term but it would be the sort of thing you'd need to be able to do on sort of a more erm moveable scenario you know so rather than people having to come somewhere could you do it somewhere where the babies are more at ease or you know make a more portable test [M7 ♂ 7mo].

Most parents expressed that their experience of the CAEP test session was ‘*one of the best*’ [M1 ♂ 8mo NH] and ‘*more pleasant*’ [M4 ♀ 4mo] when compared to other appointments they had attended with their child. One parent felt that CAEP testing session was ‘*similar to other appointments*’ [M3 ♂ 9mo] that she had attended and none of the parents in this sample felt that their experience of the CAEP testing session was inferior to their previous experiences of child healthcare. One parent noted the advantages of having more than one healthcare professional present during the testing.

I think with the doctor there's only one person so like with the GP it's just the GP so he's got to do the examination and the entertainment all at the same time so it's hard for me to entertain him and not get in the way of the doctor whereas obviously with this because there was help you know there was the person that was able to take all the readings and do sort of the important job and two helpers that were just there to entertain him it was ideal [M1 ♂ 8mo].

Another parent praised the manner of the researchers conducting the study.

‘...there was a lot of emphasis on entertaining the baby and that you feel comfortable which I guess a lot of doctors just don't necessarily have the, you know they might have a good manner but don't have the time to devote to that. Yeah it compares favourably I guess from doctors and things [M2 ♂ 9mo].