

Audiology education in Sweden

Sweden is currently experiencing two transitions in the field of audiology education, training and work. The first is related to the harmonization of the Bologna process for all university education in Sweden. The second is related to a change in dispensing hearing aids: from purely hospital based to a mixture of hospital and private based. The former have altered the educational programs in audiology at the four universities in Sweden hosting the Bachelor in Audiology education and the latter have altered and slightly broaden the labour market for people with a degree in Audiology in Sweden.

Historically, an audiologist (or medical audiologist) in Sweden is a medical doctor with specialization in audiology, a technical audiologist is an engineer with additional training in audiology and an audiology assistant (Swedish: audionom) is vocationally educated in a special audiology university program (today Bachelor degree) and licensed by the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare to practice audiology. The primary work for the audiology assistant is audiological measurements and hearing aid fittings.

Today, Bachelor programs in audiology are available at four universities: Lund University, Göteborg University, Örebro University, and Karolinska Institutet (Stockholm). At present, only one program for higher education in audiology exist, the joint Audiology and Speech and Language Therapy masters program at Lund University.

It is possible to achieve a PhD in Audiology at most medical schools in Sweden. Recently, a national Research School in Cognitive Hearing Science was initiated at Linköping University that aims at producing doctors in audiology from a multitude of backgrounds and within several topics.

Stefan Stenfelt, Technical Audiology, Linköping University