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Noise and hearing loss in developing countries

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ABSTRACT

Environmental noise is soaring in developing countries due to an ever increasing level of transportation and growing numbers of people living in so called mega-cities of the world, which are primarily in developing countries. Occupational noise appears to be reducing in the developed world due to improved manufacturing processes and greater automation but continuing use of old machinery and systems in the developing countries, the situation has not improved. The global annual incidence of noise induced hearing loss (NIHL) is estimated to be 2 new cases per 1,000 older workers. It has been suggested that the burden of NIHL is 0.3m in developed nations whilst it is 3.8m in the developing world. Furthermore, the provision of hearing conservation programmes, hearing aids and social support networks are lacking in the developing countries. This paper will examine the current available literature to provide an overview of the situation around the globe.