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implant users

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Message from the President



(Photo: Tobias Fischer and Leo De Raeve)

To EURO-CIU Members, Friends, and Partners,

I am honoured to write to you for the first time as EURO-CIU President with great pleasure and a deep sense of duty. I feel privileged to continue the legacy of my predecessors and to serve this vibrant, resourceful community of cochlear implant users, families, professionals, and advocates across Europe.

Our recent reunion at the 15th International Symposium in Istanbul reminded us all very

forcefully of the strength that we derive from connection. The sharing of experiences, ideas, and innovations inspired us all. I extend my warm thanks to our Turkish hosts and to all participants who made the event such an overwhelming success.

Going forward, EURO-CIU is dedicated to our purpose: to give every user of a cochlear implant in Europe lifelong support, equal access to the health care system, and complete integration into society. This includes promoting our voice at the European level for a variety of significant issues, such as the European Disability Card, accessibility in new communication technologies, and the integration of AI and telehealth into audiological care.

We also bask in ongoing and fruitful cooperation with CIICA – the Cochlear Implant International Community of Action. We support the international voice of CI users together, combine resources, battle for best practices collectively, and raise public awareness. Our cooperation is a symbol of the power of international collaboration and our shared vision for a world with a place for every person with hearing loss.

Another priority in the future is youth involvement. Not only is our future, the next generation of CI users, but they are also influencing our current present. Their voices, their demands, and their visions are important to our movement. We will continue to advocate for platforms and spaces for them to lead, network, and make their voices heard.

As we embrace new technology and travel through change, let's stay grounded in our values: dignity, equity, and community. Together – with our members, with CIICA, and with partners all over Europe and the global world – we can continue breaking down barriers and building a genuine inclusive society for everyone with CI.

Thank you for your confidence, your dynamism, and your unfaltering commitment. I welcome the anticipation of the work that we will be able to accomplish together over the months and years to come.

Warm regards,

Tobias Fischer
President, EURO-CIU

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[Message from the Editor of the EURO-CIU Newsletter](#)



Many thanks to those who have sent us articles - it's always good to hear what is

happening in our member countries. Also thanks to the cochlear implant companies for keeping us up to date; and to those who have told us about forthcoming conferences.

Please feel free to forward this Newsletter to Members of Parliament, friends, colleagues and members of your own organisations. We are keen to increase the number of people who can read about the benefits of cochlear implantation. Let's get the message across, particularly as we develop our work, about which you can read in this newsletter.

The next edition of the EURO-CIU Newsletter will be due in September, so please let me have your articles and jpg photos by Monday 1 September 2025. Just e-mail them to me at newsletter@eurociu.eu

With every good wish - and have a good summer!

Brian Archbold (Editor)

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[EURO-CIU NEWS – the World Hearing Forum](#)



We are pleased to confirm that EURO-CIU has renewed its membership of the World Hearing Forum for the years 2025 – 2027.

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[Congratulations to Dr Nikki Philpott](#)



On behalf of all of us at EURO-CIU, many congratulations to Nikki on gaining her PhD at Radboud University, Nijmegen. We have known Nikki for some time with the MOSAICS project.

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[CIICA LIVE: CI in older people: what do we know?](#)

CIICA LIVE

CI IN OLDER PEOPLE: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

THURSDAY 26TH JUNE 2025



CATHY BIRMAN



ROXANA BADIEI



MICHAL LUNTZ



JOEY CARLSON



CAROLINE
SELVARATHAM



TEDDY
McRACKAN

Growing numbers of people over 70 are now receiving CI. This CIICA LIVE event will bring together presentations from those involved in delivering CI services; those delivering services for older people and those who will share their lived experiences.

For more information and to register your place:
www.ciicanet.org/events



Thursday 26th June: 20:00 UK; 21:00 CEST; 12:00 PDT; 05:00 AEST (next day); 07:00 NZ (next day)

"It's never too late for better hearing!" says Joey Carlson, Canada

Older adults are the biggest growing group receiving CI and this CIICA LIVE event will bring together presentations from those involved in delivering CI services, those delivering services for older people and those who will share their lived experiences. With an increasing ageing population, the demand for such services is likely to grow. What is necessary to ensure lifelong services for this group? Are there challenges managing the technology?

This CIICA LIVE event online brings together leading experts globally, including the experts themselves – older CI users!

Prof Cathy Birman, Sydney, will share her experiences of this group as a surgeon and is delighted to be chairing the session. Cathy has been fascinated to see the growth in older adults coming forward for CI and she is delighted to see this focus. She will welcome:

Roxana Badiei, Policy and Advocacy Specialist, International Federation on Ageing, will be delivering her presentation on "Hearing Health and the Decade of Healthy Ageing".

Caroline Selvaratham, Audiologist and Adult Program Lead at Hearing House, NZ. Caroline has worked as an audiologist for almost 30 years with 25 of these years working in Cochlear Implants. Caroline is currently working as a clinical audiologist and the team lead for the adult cochlear implant program at The Hearing House (Auckland, NZ). She is passionate about working with older people and seeing them maintain independence and autonomy.

Joey Carlson, A new CI user at 77, tells us It's never too late for better hearing! She is excited to "get her life back" and be able to hear so well quite quickly. Joey was a school teacher prior to retiring due to her hearing loss and joins us from Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Michal Luntz, CI user & Surgeon, will be sharing patients' and doctors' thoughts on deciding on CI after 70. Michal has learned so much about the hearing journey and would like to share what she has learnt. She and her daughter have previously contributed to CIICA events, sharing the impact of hearing loss on the family.

Teddy McRackan, University of South Carolina, has also contributed previously to CIICA events about their developments in measuring Quality of Life in adults with CI. At this CIICA LIVE event he will think particularly about older adults and involving them in their own assessments.

REGISTER HERE

EURO-CIU is a founding member of CIICA

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[EDF – 112 emergency services and accessible communications](#)



The EENA (European Emergency Number Association) held its conference in April in Helsinki with 700 delegates from 42 countries around the world. EENA aims to improve

public safety and security by supporting the work of emergency services in Europe. One of its key missions is the proper implementation of the European Emergency Number 112. EDF and EENA have a long-standing cooperation and EENA supports views for more accessible communications.

The presence of EDF helps to raise awareness as companies and countries are often delayed or not aware of the importance of making 112 communications accessible to people with disabilities. It was a pleasure and a responsibility as a CI user to attend as an EDF representative and also representing EURO-CIU.

The goal of EDF is to explain the importance of accessibility for users with disabilities and how this is a requirement by EU law. The main barrier people with disabilities face in emergency communications derives from the fact that most emergency services are only reachable via a voice call. This excludes persons with different communication needs, especially deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind and speech impaired persons. Problems with hearing may occur to anyone, losing the capacity to speak or hear in an accident, shock caused by the situation or if there is a lot of noise around.

What is the emergency call 112?

112 is the emergency number in all 27 EU member states, as well as other European countries and elsewhere. People in danger can call the 112 number 24 hours a day and 7 days a week to reach the fire brigade, medical assistance and the police.

During an emergency call, it is important to listen and try to answer the emergency call centre operator's questions. The information received during the emergency call helps to target the right kind of help to the situation. After an emergency call, the caller should keep the phone within reach and the phone line free in case the authorities need additional information to investigate the situation. After receiving communication from the user, they will contact and send relevant emergency services: ambulance, firefighters or police. This is the decision of the emergency services, their work is to assess the situation and the need for various types of help.

Accessibility to all – solution is Real-Time Text

We can define accessibility as the functions and characteristics of products, services, systems, or environments allowing their use by persons with disabilities, including those using assistive technologies, on equal basis with others. Accessibility is a human right (CRPD) and a legal obligation under the Electronic Communications Code (EECC) and the European Accessibility Act (EAA).

For the disability community, Real-Time Text (RTT) and Total Conversation (TC) – in interaction with relay services – are the solutions that allow for greater accessibility and equal access for persons with disabilities. By equal access we mean having an equivalent experience as users of 112 traditional voice calls. This means:

1. Calling the 112 number – SMS are often sent to other numbers that not everyone knows.
2. Real-time Communication with emergency services. SMS does not allow this interactive communication.
3. 24 / 7 service. For example, some relay services for sign language users are only available at specific hours.
4. Across Europe. Mobile apps change from country to country or even within countries.
5. With the preferred means of communication. This includes text, video or a combination of these.
6. Built-in solution in devices. This does not require preregistration or downloading an app. In Finland the registration requirement for deaf for the emergency text messaging service will end in June 2025.
7. Mainstream solutions – not special ones – that target the accessibility of the whole

infrastructure and that can be used by anyone at any time, just voice calls to 112 allow anyone to call emergency services from any device.

Explanations:

- **RTT (Real-time text):** It is text transmitted instantly as it is typed or created. Recipients can immediately read the message while it is being written, without waiting. This can be done between two or more end-users. RTT contains an audio stream.
- **Total conversation (TC):** Service that allows simultaneous video, voice and text service in telecommunications. Total conversation enables people in two or more locations to: (a) see each other, (b) hear each other, and (c) conduct a text interaction (real-time text) with each other, or choose to communicate with any combination of those three modes and to do so in real-time.

Implementation of RTT

Member States of the EU are obliged to implement Real-Time Text and where appropriate, Total Conversation by 28 June 2027 at the latest. In 2025, Ireland became the first country in the EU to offer native RTT. Two Member States, Malta and The Netherlands currently have an app based RTT capability, while the majority of Member States intend to be capable of receiving RTT natively by 2027.

On 18 December 2024, the European Commission published its report on the effectiveness of the implementation of the single European emergency number 112. The report outlines for Member State implementation of Native RTT.

Sari Hirvonen-Skarbö
EDF Delegate for EURO-CIU

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EFHOH Conference and AGM in Estonia



(Photos from the Conference)

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing (EFHOH) Conference and AGM was held in April 2025, Tallinn. The theme of conference was Achieving Equality for Hard of Hearing People. I attended this event as an observer, representing EURO-CIU – thank you to the Board for this responsibility.

Eesti Vaegkuuljate Liit, the EFHOH member organization, hosted excellently during the Conference and the 2025 Annual General Meeting. On 25th of April, the conference “Achieving Equality for Hard of Hearing People” gathered more than one hundred people, addressing themes such as Sustainable Work Life for Hard of Hearing People, Hearing Care as Integral Part of Sustainable Working Life, and Developments in Technology Enabling Hearing Access. Several Estonian companies presented their hearing and communication innovations.

The congress attracted over one hundred participants.

Prof. Dr. Julia Laffranque, former judge at the European Court of Human Rights, quoted Evelyn Glennie, “I’m not a deaf musician. I’m a musician who happens to be deaf”. Evelyn Glennie is a Scottish percussionist and became deaf at 8 years old.

Prof. Laffranque gave a presentation of Discrimination at the workplace, learning from an Estonian court. There were court cases about people’s disability rights, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). It also states the right of people with disabilities to work, which is on an equal basis with others. One of the court cases was questioning if prison officers are not actually prohibited from wearing a hearing aid when performing their duties, but their hearing must be tested without the use of such a device, without correction. A prison officer’s natural level of auditory acuity should therefore be sufficient, without the aid of a medical device, to ensure safety and that of colleagues.

The Annual General Meeting

Following the conference, EFHOH’s 2025 Annual General Meeting took place. The EFHOH Impact Report 2024 was presented, then outlined the Action Plan for 2025, and introduced the Strategy for 2026–2030, setting ambitious goals for the next five years. The launch of the new website was also announced.

The AGM gave a strong mandate to the EFHOH Board by re-electing: President, Lidia Best, General Secretary, Claire Landesmann, and Treasurer, Darja Pajk, for another two-year term, which gave a vote of confidence in the direction that the board is taking the organization. Lidia Best gave her thanks. She has been working hard with the board to create the main base in Brussels, where hired staff are working for EFHOH.

The AGM also delivered a strong and powerful message to manufacturers: “Hands off our Telecoil”, as well as EURO-CIU giving the same message, highlighting the need to maintain Telecoils in hearing aids and cochlear implants to ensure equal, effective, and accessible communication for hard of hearing people in all settings.

The Estonian Hearing Bus

Lidia thanked Eesti Vaegkuuljate Liit, for hosting this year’s very successful events and members for actively participating in the events, showing their strong commitment to advancing the rights of hard of hearing people across Europe. The association created a successful evening with their members presenting their national folkdances. The association’s Kuulmisbuss “Hearing Bus” was available for anyone to visit. The bus, which is driven around Estonia, gives the ability for anyone with low threshold in hearing tests to find out if it needs further research.

Sari Hirvonen-Skarbö
EDF Delegate for EURO-CIU

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[THE NETHERLANDS – OPCI – Report 20 years OPCI in Nijkerk](#)



(Collage of photos from the Symposium)

March 8, 2025

Furnishing and welcome

This symposium took place in De Schakel in Nijkerk. I walked in there around half past ten. A few volunteers had already set up the space for this day and the exhibitors had set up their stands. The registration table was also ready to receive our visitors. The public gradually came in, and was welcomed with coffee and a special OPCI pastry. In total there were about 150 visitors.

Opening

Hennie Epping, chairman of the OPCI Foundation, opened the day at eleven o'clock. With the program of the day, he took the audience along in the work of OPCI. The program was as follows: a short presentation about the history of OPCI and then three panel discussions were held: with CI wearers, our sponsors Advanced Bionics, Cochlear, MED-EL. Phonak and Bellman & Symfon and people from the research field. Attention was also paid to all the work that OPCI does 'behind the scenes'.

History of OPCI

Hennie Epping talked about **the history of OPCI (PowerPoint)** , which was founded in 2005. At that time, there were already several organisations of deaf and hard of hearing people who were working with CI. Because attention was paid to CI at various organisations, knowledge about CI became fragmented. OPCI was founded to bundle the knowledge. The collaboration with these organisations continued. What also started at that time was contact with the European CI association, EURO-CIU.

In the first period of OPCI it became clear that CI wearers had a great need for contact. We soon organised the first major contact day. Heythuysen had the scoop. For years the contact day was a concept with always many visitors.

In 2013, OPCI became a platform, but remained in contact with the organisations that were at the cradle of the platform. OPCI had activities such as information, advocacy and a lot of room for peer contact with, among other things, many small-scale living room meetings, in which CI wearers and candidate CI wearers could talk to each other. A new structure was also created with a steering group, an advocacy working group and a working group for information and peer contact.

In 2023, OPCI was confronted with a problem regarding an image on our website. OPCI was held liable and had to deal with a fine. The OPCI platform was not a legal entity, which meant that individual steering group members ran the risk of being held personally liable. For the steering group, this was reason to think about a legal form that would exempt individual steering group members from personal liability. Various forms of governance for this were examined, and OPCI ultimately opted for a foundation. This deed was signed on 22 July 2024, from that moment on OPCI was officially a foundation. Shortly before the symposium, the OPCI Foundation received ANBI status. Donations to us are now also eligible for deduction on income tax. And... in 2025 OPCI will celebrate its 20th anniversary.

Panel discussion with CI wearers

Henk van Rees, secretary of the OPCI Foundation, led the discussion with four CI wearers.

In the Netherlands, 188 living room meetings have been held. From Groningen to Limburg, from Enschede to The Hague. In the meantime, 2,100 people have visited or experienced a living room meeting and they will continue to do so. In this discussion, the four CI wearers and candidate CI wearers indicate what these meetings have meant to them. They were particularly attracted by the small scale and low threshold of the living room meetings. Henk also made the call to register if you want a living room meeting in your area, perhaps even at your home. This was met with an enthusiastic response and several participants spontaneously offered their living rooms for our meeting.

Panel discussion with sponsors

Henk van Rees led the panel discussion with our sponsors. There were speakers from Advanced Bionics, Cochlear, MED-EL, Phonak and Bellman & Symfon. These manufacturers and sponsors are very important to OPCI. It is not just about money, but especially about good information and exchange of valuable advice that OPCI receives and shares from them.

Henk notes that they are not only colleagues, but also competitors. "And that is okay...". Ultimately, we all, OPCI and the sponsors, share the same mission, the well-being of the CI wearer, the candidate CI wearer and those considering a CI.

OPCI is very active and organizes a lot, but it all costs money. The visitors paid a contribution on that day. However, the contribution that is paid per person did not cover the costs of the day. This is possible through sponsorship. OPCI is very happy with the sponsors who make these days (and also the living room meetings and the travel

expenses of the volunteers) possible.

The OPCI Foundation depends on information from manufacturers and sponsors, but also tries to give something back to them. For example, publishing news when something new comes on the market. But OPCI also announces the information meetings of the manufacturers on our website and also includes them in the newsletter.

Lunch break

During the lunch break, participants had the opportunity to walk along the stands and gather information from manufacturers of CIs or aids. There was ample time to have lunch together, talk and enjoy the beautiful weather outside.

What have we achieved? Presentation on cases involving OPCI.

Henk van Rees talked about various **activities of the OPCI Foundation (PowerPoint)**. Every five years there is a survey among CI wearers, which is important for the CI wearers themselves, hospitals, insurers and other parties. OPCI is also active in the consultation of CI-ON (the consultation of all CI teams in the Netherlands) and visits the CI teams and manufacturers. OPCI has also taken action on the waiting list problem. In 2017, the waiting lists increased to such an extent that it sometimes took 2 years before the implantation could actually take place. The result was that ultimately the waiting lists in all hospitals have become considerably shorter, partly due to capacity expansion. Not everything is visible of what we all do. Always with the intention of doing the good that is necessary for CI wearers, candidate CI wearers and those considering a CI.

Panel discussion: collaboration with CI teams and researchers

As a final component, *Hennie Epping* led a panel discussion with three researchers who are involved in research in the field of CI. These researchers briefly introduced themselves with what kind of research they do and in what way they have contact with OPCI. When necessary, OPCI asks people to participate in research via the website. This is to the great satisfaction of the researchers. In addition, it became clear from one of the participants, who works in a CI team as well as a researcher, that the contacts with OPCI via the CI-ON and with the separate CI teams are very valuable. OPCI has information from CI wearers that often do not reach the CI teams directly, but that are important to the CI teams.

Closure

Henk van Rees gave a word of thanks to the OPCI volunteers *and mentioned them by name: Maaïke van der Hagen, Ingrid Franssen, webmaster Oliver Piper and editor Wies Groeneveld*

Hennie Epping closed the meeting. He thanked the people of De Schakel for their accommodation and also for thinking along with OPCI to make this day a success. Hennie also thanks the interpreters, because they had not only been of service to place the text, but also in the technical support. Finally, Hennie thanks Henk van Rees. Together they organized and prepared this day.

Afterwards there was an opportunity to chat over a drink.

OPCI looks back on a very successful day and will possibly see people again in Den Bosch on October 11.

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[SPAIN – AICE – “Soundproof Laboratory” in schools](#)



'Soundproof Laboratory' is an initiative driven by the **Federation AICE** that has been promoting prevention, early detection and awareness of hearing health in the school environment since 2015. In line with the recommendations of the WHO **World Hearing Forum** and the '**Make Listening Safe**' strategy, the project promotes safe listening habits and warns about the risks of excessive noise through fun and educational activities adapted to each educational stage, from kindergarten to high school.

The workshops, led by people with cochlear implants and accompanied by Federation AICE staff (speech therapists, teachers or social integrators), combine participatory dynamics with practical content that teaches how to identify harmful sounds, apply hearing protection measures and promote the inclusion of people with hearing disabilities. These sessions have evolved from the first 'Noise Talks: Let's improve our hearing sensitivity' (from 2015 to 2018) to become dynamic 'Soundproof Lab' workshops (from 2019 to the present). To date, almost 600 workshops have been held reaching more than 10,000 students.

Over the last ten years, previous initiatives such as the 'Safe Listening Ambassadors' campaign have also been included, where participants were "invested" as knights of the order of 'Safe Listening' to go and fight against noise in their home environments.

In addition, information material is sent to schools each year and awareness is reinforced with digital campaigns on social networks, as well as printed materials to promote the responsible use of headphones. Among older pupils, sound tests are carried out with the **hearWHO app**. The data obtained is sent to the schools and subsequently transferred to reports of results that contribute to the global knowledge on children's and young people's hearing health. We celebrate 10 years of listening safe!

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[SPAIN – AICE – SAM \(Hearing Health for Older People\)](#)



SAM (Salud Auditiva para Mayores) is a programme that has been developed since 2017 (previously called 3rd Generation and 4th Generation) in municipalities with a high proportion of elderly people, with the aim of promoting hearing health and early detection of hearing loss in the over-60s. Through a preventive and community approach, SAM is implemented in collaboration with local councils, senior citizens' centres, social services and local entities.

One of its main actions is the installation of information tables in busy public spaces, such as squares, markets, civic centres or fairs. At these points, personalised advice is offered, WHO recommendations on hearing care are disseminated and paper materials are distributed for later consultation at home. Free preliminary hearing tests are also carried out using the [WHO HearWHO app](#), which can detect possible cases of hearing loss and refer them to the health system for evaluation.

With this project, the questions of the 'Safe Listening' survey were translated and virtual talks were organised during the pandemic with professionals such as Patricia Falletty and the acoustic engineer Eduardo Bergallo in conjunction with members of the Forum of Argentina and also other face-to-face talks such as with César Asensio, from the Polytechnic University of Madrid; as well as talks and information tables have been given by the [Federation AICE](#) team in public universities throughout the country.

SAM also promotes awareness campaigns on social networks and organises workshops in Active Ageing Centres on prevention, use of hearing solutions and inclusive communication.

To date, 187 information tables and 9,669 hearing tests have been carried out. With these actions, the programme seeks to improve the quality of life of older people, promote their active participation and build more accessible and hearing health-conscious environments.

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[TURKEY – Biyonik Kulaklı Çocuklar Derneği \(The Association Of Children With Bionic Ears\)](#)



(A selection of photos from some of the activities over the last few months)

Activities Carried Out (March – May 2025)

- **Family Education:** Our online family-education programmes for children aged 0–6 are ongoing.
- **Book Publication:** Our Bilecik Provincial Representative Ali Ümit Pamuk who has bilateral cochlear implant published “**One Child, One World: Growing Up with the Power of Sounds.**” The book (in Turkish) recounts the struggle of a child born deaf and the unwavering support of his family.
- **Awareness through Art:** On 3 March, World Ear and Hearing Day, our president Hatice Çankır’s cochlear-implant-user son Ata gave a violin performance at Gazi University.
- **8 March – International Women’s Day:** We released a special video featuring messages from women who use cochlear implants or support relatives who do.
- **4 April – Istanbul Gathering:** We brought together families of children using cochlear implants—and babies who are candidates for implantation—creating a space for sharing and solidarity.
- **EURO-CIU 30th-Anniversary Meeting:** President Hatice Çankır, Vice-President Oğuzhan Ceran, and our Burdur Provincial Representative Elif Çetintav met European stakeholders and contributed to impactful collaboration.
- **17 April – Award Ceremony:** Our member S. Batu Çankır represented the association at the “Business World Achievement Awards” hosted by the Ankara Chamber of Commerce.
- **Children’s Book Translation:** The “Ling Ling Bird” series, originally published in the UK by Avid Language, was translated into Turkish (Papağan Papi) by Elif Çetintav.
- **23 April – Children’s Day Video Project:** We produced a video showcasing children’s dreams for the world, career aspirations, and thoughts on leadership. Their letters were sent across the globe.
- **8 May – Briefing at Karatay University:** We delivered a hearing-health briefing to early-childhood-education teacher candidates at Karatay University.
- **11 May – Mother’s Day:** A heartfelt video was created featuring “MOTHER (ANNE)”-themed writings by our children.
- **18 May – Children’s Festival:** In partnership with the Gökyüzü Artistic Kindness Foundation, we organised a comprehensive festival including yoga, breakfast, and workshops in ceramics, robotic coding, natural perfumery, and more, plus a book-signing session—drawing enthusiastic participation.
- **Support for Brain-Stem Surgeries:** At various times we met with our benefactor Mr Cenk, who provides financial assistance for auditory brain-stem implant surgeries; funding secured by him enabled two additional operations.

Upcoming Events (June–July 2025)

- **14 June – Orienteering in Ankara:** In collaboration with the Ankara Orienteering Sports Club, an orienteering event will be held for children and young people with cochlear implants.
- **June – Family Gathering in Denizli:** We will meet families in Denizli and organise a local festival.
- **24–27 July – Summer Camp in Isparta:** Süleyman Demirel University (Isparta) will host a summer camp for children and young people with cochlear implants.

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[LEHNHARDT FOUNDATION – KYRGYZSTAN – Five ladies from Kyrgyzstan \(Anastasia N., Anastasia K., Irina, Larisa and Ainur\) have two weeks internship in St. Petersburg and Moscow](#)



Within the framework of the Lehnhardt Foundation project, financially supported by the GIZ (German Association for International Cooperation):

“Development of a sustainable support program for hearing-impaired and deaf children in Kyrgyzstan”

Five specialists from Kyrgyzstan completed an internship in St. Petersburg and Moscow from March 22 to April 6, 2025. The first stop of the internship was at “Logopedprofi”, a Children's Development and Rehabilitation Centre. During the visit to this centre, various aspects of the institution's work were shown, including the equipment of the offices, interaction with parents, explanation of homework, as well as the documentation used to track the children's progress.

We also had the opportunity to participate in the St. Petersburg International Educational Forum. We presented our report and listened to the reports of our colleagues from Russia.

A wonderful opportunity for us was a meeting with the music teacher Olga Evgenievna Rankova. At the meeting with this music teacher, the possibilities of integrating musical elements into the classes of a teacher for the deaf were discussed. She told us about the history of the formation of ARDIS and emphasized that music can become an important tool for comprehensive work with children.

We were able to observe classes at the Deaf Centre at the city of St. Petersburg for five days. During our visit, we were introduced to various types of classes that are held for children with hearing impairments. We observed both group and individual classes with the participation of teachers of the deaf, speech therapists, teachers who specialize in special education and a music teacher. Getting to know this Children's Deaf Centre in St. Petersburg was especially important, since Kyrgyzstan does not have a similar centre yet. We visited a group for parents of children with hearing impairments on March 27. At this meeting the organization and activities of parent groups, created to support families with children with hearing impairments, were discussed. The group holds various activities: music and developmental classes, free games, joint tea parties, lectures and conversations for parents, as well as festive events. The meeting was informative and inspiring, especially due to the opportunity to feel like a member of the group.

As part of our introduction to the activities of the "Tosha & Co" centre, we were able to observe classes by various specialists: speech therapists, teachers of the deaf, a neuropsychologist, a teacher who specializes in special education, a sensory therapist, a play therapist, and music teachers.

During a week-long internship in Fryazino (close to Moscow) we participated in several lectures on the development of hearing and speech in children with CIs, sensory integration, and technical rehabilitation tools.

We were also honoured to participate in a master class by Emilia Ivanovna Leongard. The master class offered comprehensive theoretical knowledge and practical tasks that allowed the participants to deepen their skills in working with children with hearing impairments. All the methods presented at the master class can be effectively applied in the daily practice of teachers of the deaf to develop auditory perception and speech understanding in children. At the end of the event, Emilia Ivanovna Leongard signed books for each participant, which was a pleasant end to a busy day. We are grateful to all the internship organizers for the opportunity provided. It was a valuable experience that gave not only a practical understanding of the organization of an interdisciplinary approach to helping children with hearing impairments, but also a reason for personal reflection.

Anastasia Naimanova

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[LEHNHARDT FOUNDATION – RUSSIA – New Publication: Trailblazing early intervention method, by renowned Russian Teacher of the Deaf, Emilia Leongard](#)



We are delighted to announce the **publication** of the English version of “Supporting Speech Development of Children with Hearing Loss within the Family: The Leongard Method for teaching deaf children to speak using auditory-visual strategies”, written by the pioneering Russian Teacher of the Deaf, Emilia Ivanovna Leongard. This essential work outlines Emilia’s innovative approach to helping deaf children develop speech and integrate into society – all within the context of family life.

Developed separately but in parallel with other evolving new approaches in the West, and in the face of significant initial opposition, the **Leongard Method** has revolutionised the way deaf children are taught to speak in Russia, challenging outdated systems that once excluded them from full participation in family and society. From the start, Emilia recognised what is now widely accepted by practitioners working with deaf children around the world: that proactive parental support is the single most important factor in teaching deaf children to speak, and enabling them to become full members of a hearing society.

First developed in the 1960s, Emilia’s methodology for supporting deaf children has not really changed over the decades but modern hearing aids, and especially cochlear implants, have made the process easier and quicker, particularly with the advent of newborn screening, enabling much earlier intervention.

Dr. Monika Lehnhardt-Gorjany, co-founder of the **Lehnhardt Foundation**, was instrumental in bringing this book to life:

“We were inspired to embark on this project by [Emilia’s] impressive **performance with Susann Schmid Giovannini in our PORA! webinar** more than a year ago. We are convinced that [her] method of teaching children with moderate to profound hearing loss to speak will gain wider recognition through this translation. We will do everything we can to make sure parents and professionals around the world know that [her] book is now available in English and easily accessible.”

With only a few days to spare, the very first copy of Emilia’s book was taken on a long journey, carefully hand-carried from Germany, via Istanbul, and finally to St. Petersburg. Its arrival was perfectly timed for a very special occasion: the premiere of a documentary film about Emilia’s life and work, held in April to mark her 92nd birthday. During the event, it was observed that this is the first book by a Russian Teacher of the Deaf that has been translated into English.

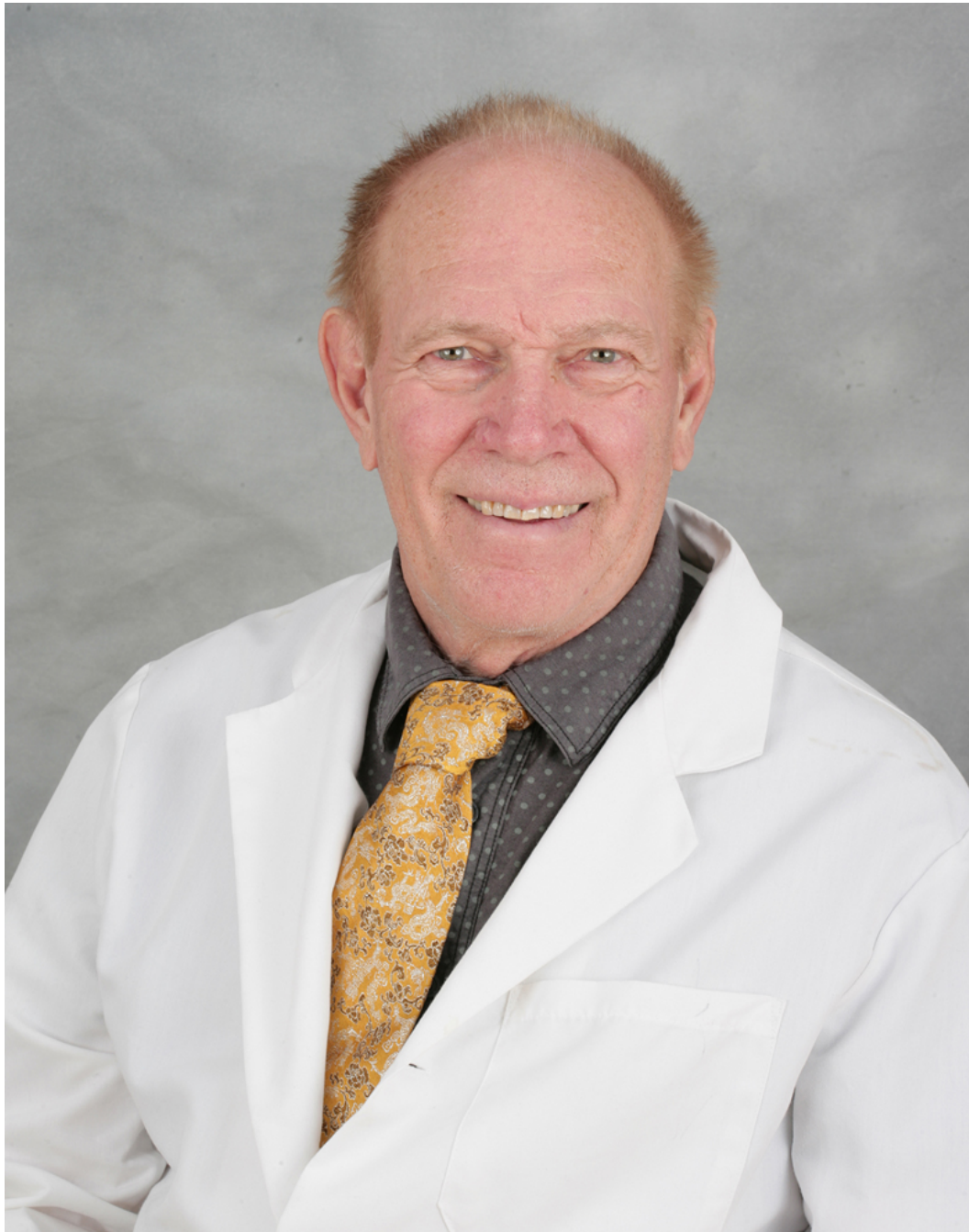
“Supporting Speech Development of Children with Hearing Loss within the Family” was published through an initiative of, and with financial support from, the Lehnhardt Foundation, with collaboration from individuals across Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Germany and the UK. As Emilia Leongard has demonstrated throughout her remarkable career, with dedication, determination, patience and love, amazing results really are possible. We hope that you – parents, students, professionals - will enjoy and gain valuable insights

from her book.

Dr. Monika Lehnhardt-Gorjany – Der Lehnhardt Stiftung

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[RELATED CONGRESS – Management of the Tinnitus & Hyperacusis Patient – 14 & 15 August 2025 \(In-person & remotely\) for professionals and patients](#)



(Photo: Dr Rich Tyler)

This course will be in-person and virtual.

The option to attend virtually is on the [registration page](#). The price is the same to attend in-person or virtually. An email with a link to attend virtually will be sent the week of the conference.

Sponsors

- The University of Iowa Department of Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery
- The University of Iowa Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

Intended Audience and Purpose

This is the 32nd Annual International Conference on the MANAGEMENT OF THE TINNITUS AND HYPERACUSIS PATIENT. Invited presenters are from around the world, and focus on understanding the mechanisms, and understanding the problems of hearing, sleep, concentration, and thoughts/emotions. Updates on in-person and remote counseling are reviewed from different perspectives. Companies explain and demonstrate their latest approaches for wearables. New approaches and research needs are discussed.

The conference is important because it brings together researchers, clinicians and people suffering. They each learn from the others perspective. Researchers better understand the needs. Clinicians are exposed to other novel helping approaches. People suffering learn about others experiencing similar issues and view the variety of approaches and how different clinicians and researchers with different backgrounds interact in an attempt to move the field forward.

[Click here to see the list of speakers.](#)

Registration Fees:

Physician: \$595

Other healthcare professionals: \$395

Tinnitus patients and students: \$99

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[RELATED CONGRESS – CI ADVOCACY IN ACTION 2025, Brussels, 16 & 17 October 2025](#)



Brussels 2024, saw the first global CI Advocacy in Action Conference with 100 delegates from 27 countries coming together for two days of interaction between parents, young people and adults with CI, professionals, industry and advocacy experts sharing their successes and challenges. As Helen Cullington, AIS, Southampton, said: This conference felt different.

Typical comments were:

I feel inspired and energized: Loved every moment – everything – dynamic, perfect

The most accessible conference I have ever been to... nothing about us without us became a reality at this conference.

As a result of the conference, active collaborations between parents, young people with CI,

and professionals have developed with on-line Conversations and many activities. Advocacy training resources have been developed and shared [A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CI ADVOCACY & TRAINING VIDEOS – CIICA](#) and the Young People with CI have prepared their Agenda for Change, launched on CI International Day. [Young Adults with CI – CIICA](#). A highlight was their session... *these young people are the future – we need to listen to them.*

This year CI Advocacy in Action 2025 will again be in Brussels, will be global, active, participatory and lead to action and collaboration. The focus will be on advocating for sustainable, lifelong CI services which are much needed. Children being implanted today could expect up to 100 years of CI use..... adults expect to have lifelong services too.

With funding and resource challenges globally how do we ensure that those who could benefit from CI can gain access, and those who have CI have the lifelong sustainable services required? How do we influence the key stakeholders? Could services be delivered differently? How can service providers and users and families work together to ensure the services are effective and efficient?

These and other issues will be addressed in a lively and vibrant two days, in this unique inclusive conference learning from each other and building collaboration across the globe. Rob Beenders, Minister of Consumer Affairs, Social Fraud & Equal Opportunities in Belgium, Zala Tomasic, MEP daughter of Darja Pajk, Shelly Chadha and Carolina Der of WHO, Astrid Van Wieringen, President of the International Society of Audiology, together with Founding Members of CIICA from across the globe will welcome you and stimulate discussion.

Come and join us to add your voice to the network and make the changes needed.

Where Science and Experience Meet! (Astrid Van Wieringen)

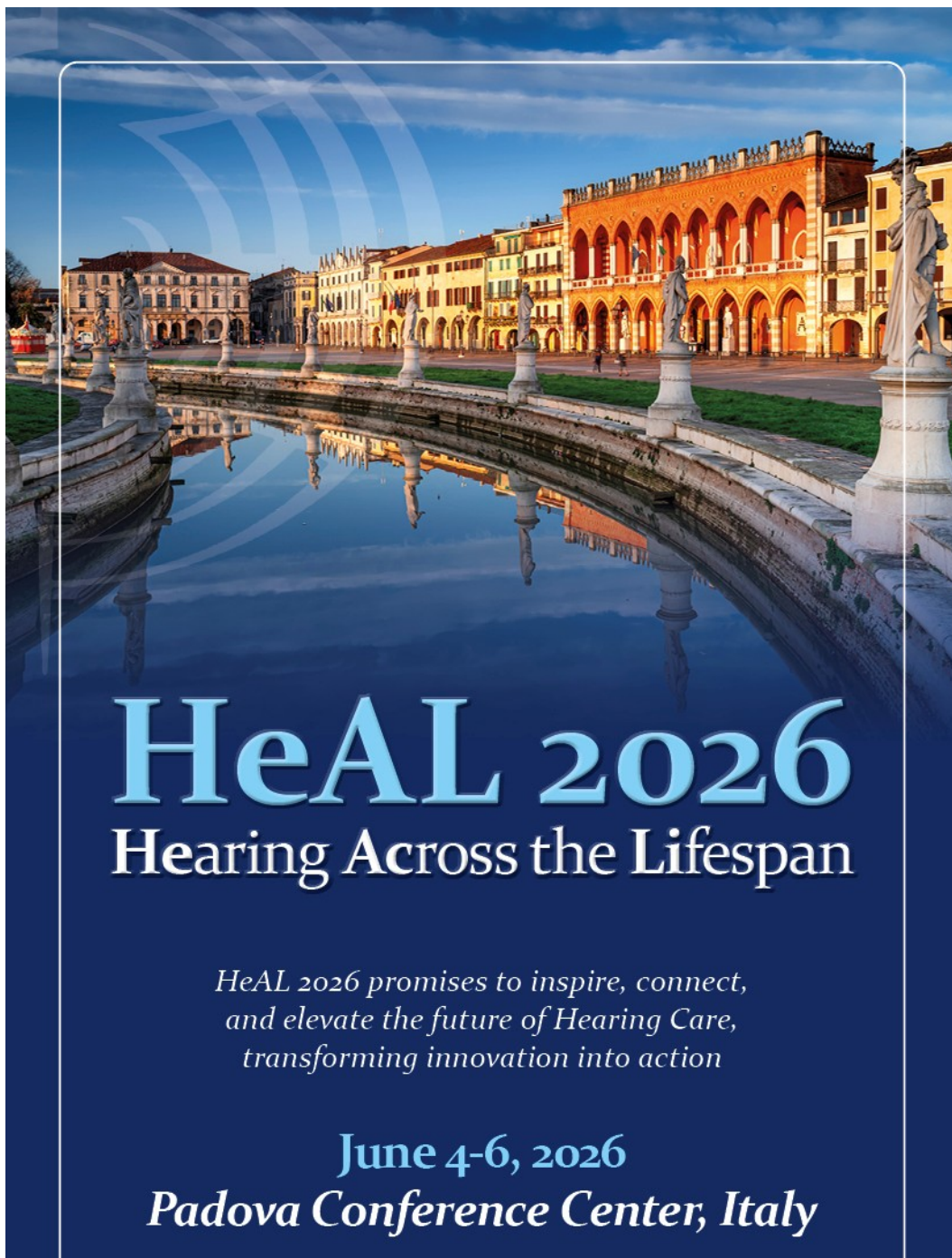
Go to [CI ADVOCACY IN ACTION 2025: 16TH & 17TH OCTOBER 2025 – CIICA](#) and register now!

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT EXTENDED UNTIL 31 JULY: AND NOTE DISCOUNT FOR CI USERS!

[EURO-CIU is a founding member of CIICA](#)

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[RELATED CONGRESS – HeAL 2026 – Hearing Across the Lifespan – 4 to 6 June 2026](#)



HeAL 2026 – Where Innovation in Hearing Care Meets Inspiration

Get ready for **HeAL 2026**, the Biennial International Conference on Hearing Across the Lifespan—an unparalleled event bringing together global leaders, researchers, and practitioners in hearing care.

For over 20 years, the HeAL Conferences have set the gold standard for advancing hearing health, spotlighting breakthroughs in diagnostics, rehabilitation, and patient empowerment. With participation from 40+ countries and over 300 presentations, HeAL fosters collaboration in an inclusive, dynamic environment.

While the picturesque shores of Lake Como have been a hallmark of HeAL, the 2026 edition introduces a captivating and enchanting new destination: Padova, a city rich in history and culture, just a stone's throw from the iconic wonders of Venice.

In addition to the Scientific Program, which promises to be even more engaging and stimulating than in previous years, we are preparing a rich Social Program that will allow us to fully appreciate and experience the extraordinary wonders of this magnificent area of Veneto.

More details about **HeAL 2026** will be shared soon.

The deadline for abstract submission is February 1, 2026.

Detailed submission guidelines will be available on this [website soon](#).

HeAL 2026 promises to inspire, connect, and elevate the future of hearing care.

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[WORLD NEWS – World Hearing Day 2025 – Time to report your activities!](#)



As in previous years, we kindly request all those involved in World Hearing Day 2025 to submit a brief report highlighting your activities. We request you to share your event/ activity, with or without prior registration.

Deadline: 15 June 2025

How to submit: Follow the instructions on the [World Hearing Day website](#) to report your activities.

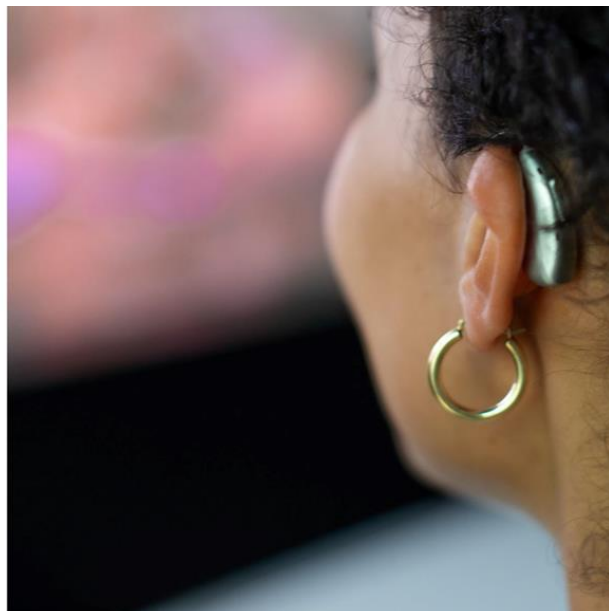
Thank you.

Kind regards,

WHO Ear and Hearing Care Programme

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[WORLD NEWS – EHIMA – “Loud and Clear: Why Hearing Care is Key to Tackling Demographic Change in Europe”](#)



On 8 April 2025, the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA), in collaboration with Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Dr. András Kulja, hosted the event **“Loud and Clear: Why Hearing Care is Key to Tackling Demographic Change in Europe”** at the European Parliament in Brussels. The event brought together policymakers, industry leaders, and experts to explore how hearing care can strengthen healthy ageing, social inclusion, and economic resilience in the face of Europe’s demographic shifts. From personal testimonies to policy calls, the discussion made clear: hearing health is not just a medical issue – it’s a strategic imperative.

As Europe faces the long-term implications of demographic change – including a declining working-age population and increasing pressure on healthcare systems – the event examined how hearing care can contribute to healthy ageing, greater independence, and sustained economic participation.

EHIMA convened the event to highlight the often-underestimated impact of hearing loss on public health, social inclusion, and workforce engagement.

The event provided an opportunity to share evidence, explore innovative solutions, and discuss ways to integrate hearing health more effectively into national and European frameworks.

Hearing loss, while common, remains insufficiently addressed in policy discussions despite its tangible consequences for autonomy, well-being, and productivity. Tackling it is not only a public health priority but also relevant to Europe’s long-term social and economic resilience.

The Report can be downloaded by going to the [Documents page of the EHIMA website](#), and then clicking on the relevant Policy Document.

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[WORLD NEWS – UK – AUDITORY VERBAL UK \(AVUK\) – Challenging expectations of what deaf children and young people can achieve during Deaf Awareness Week in the UK](#)



(Photo: Mia and Gabriella)

New research published for Deaf Awareness Week in the UK (5th – 11th May) by charity Auditory Verbal UK shows only a third of adults in the country believe it is possible for a child born profoundly deaf today to learn to speak as well as a child without hearing loss.

AVUK was joined by a number of deaf children and their families to challenge these beliefs and prove that with early and effective support deaf children can learn to speak and the possibilities are endless.

Sisters Mia (10) and Gabriella (4) Basma Safieddine, from London, were diagnosed as profoundly deaf as babies and wear cochlear implants. Their Mum **Rayan** is also profoundly deaf and chose to be implanted soon after her eldest daughter had her operation. Mia and Gabriella learnt to listen and talk with Auditory Verbal therapy which supports young deaf children to learn how to make sense of the sound they receive through their cochlear implants, and develop their spoken language.

Mia said: *"I love all sports especially football, netball, tennis as well as music and*

adventures and I can do all the same things as my hearing friends. I want to show people that me and my sister and all deaf children can do anything we want to – being deaf does not stop us.”

And her Mum Rayan added: *“To read these figures that so few people believe deaf children can speak as well as their hearing friends is disappointing and attitudes must change. My parents were incredibly supportive of me growing up and worked so hard to enable me to have as many opportunities as possible but I knew that I wanted more for my own daughters.*

“After Mia’s hearing loss was confirmed following her newborn hearing screening, we decided cochlear implants were the right choice for her and after much thought I also decided to have implants myself. Our journeys though have been very different as hearing technology like cochlear implants do not work on their own which is where Auditory Verbal therapy came in and transformed Mia’s and then Gabriella’s lives.”

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[WORLD NEWS – UK – AUDITORY VERBAL UK \(AVUK\) – Deaf role model, model and dancer responds to deaf children on BBC TV and social media](#)



[\(Photo: Oscar and Tasha\)](#)

Deaf role model and proud cochlear implant user Tasha Ghouri shared her personal experiences and advice to a number of deaf children and young people both on BBC TV in the UK and on social media.

In his [video question](#) to the dancer and author, five-year-old Oscar Fitzgerald, who was implanted at nine-months-old, told her he had “magic ears” like her but didn’t like it when he had to take them off for charging. He asked: *“What do you find hard about wearing magic ears?”*

Tasha shared her personal experience and talked about how power naps help her to manage her hearing fatigue. She said: *“I know how scary it is to take out your cochlear implants. But there is beauty in silence, really try to enjoy that silence. Maybe you don’t hear your parents snoring! It can be a good thing.”*

And she added: *“Oscar, remember your magic ears are absolutely beautiful.”*

Find out more about AVUK’s latest research and how to support the charity’s efforts to challenge perceptions and ensure deaf children have the same opportunities as their hearing peers [here](#).

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WORLD NEWS – USA – ACI Alliance updates



(Photo: Rehab Connect ci2025)

ACI Alliance Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

During CI2025 Boston, we introduced four Special Interest Groups (SIGs) during the lunch sessions: **Members with Hearing Loss**, **Adult Rehabilitation**, **Student Mentorship**, and **Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**. Each group was well attended and fostered meaningful engagement, contributing significantly to the overall success of the conference.

Due to the strong participation and positive feedback, we are excited to continue these Special Interest Groups at **CI2026 in Chicago**. Be sure to follow our page for updates and learn how you can get involved in these dynamic communities. [CI2026 Chicago - American Cochlear Implant Alliance](#). Save the date – Abstracts for CI2026 Chicago will open in July. The meeting will take place from May 6-9, 2026, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago.

Support EHDI and Medicaid

Over the 20+ years that EHDI has been existence, this bi-partisan effort to identify children with hearing loss at birth and provide them with early access to technology and intervention services has been successful in screening 98% of newborns within one month of life. This important accomplishment is now endangered by cuts being made in this critical program.

ACI Alliance has been meeting with key Congressional offices to discuss the impact of cuts on Medicaid and EHDI. You can support our efforts to save these programs by participating in our Action Alerts. We have had a tremendous result of 5,000 alerts sent thus far, please let us reach our goal of 6,500 messages. Take Action here: [Current Action Alerts - American Cochlear Implant Alliance](#).

June is National CMV Awareness Month

Cytomegalovirus (CMV) affects approximately 1 per every 200 births in the United States and is the most common cause of non-hereditary hearing loss. Infants are infected due to exposure of the mother who often is unaware they had CMV due to the mild, cold-like symptoms in adults. CMV is responsible for hearing loss in 1 in 5 children who have no other known risk factor or cause. Read more here: [CMV and Hearing Loss | CMV and Cochlear Implants | ACI Alliance](#).

Ask the Audiologist | Blog

Our latest blog question is **What does follow-up therapy typically entail for a child under one year of age?** Find out what audiologists say about therapy after a CI for children. If you have a question, please submit here: [Ask the Audiologist | Blog - American Cochlear Implant Alliance](#).

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WORLD NEWS – Children’s CI-books published in multiple languages for ESPCI and beyond



Preparations for ESPCI are in full swing here at [AVID Language](#) (publishers of books for families with, and without, hearing loss). These past few months, we have been working alongside colleagues from Germany, France, the Netherlands and many other countries to bring our books to readers and listeners in those countries, in their own languages. Many of these collaborations are the result of new contacts made with likeminded folk at CIICA 2024. While we will be bringing books in nine different languages to ESPCI, we will have many more languages available by the time we’re back in Brussels in October for CIICA 2025.

A recent reading of the English and Persian versions of our best-selling book, “Ling Ling Bird Hears with his Magic Ears” demonstrated the power of representative children’s books starring deaf characters, especially when read in the listeners’ mother tongue: *“I read both the English and Persian versions of your book during the sessions. I can honestly say it was the most engaging and meaningful book I’ve ever read aloud to parents and children. The children were captivated by the story, and the parents responded with curiosity and warmth. The book naturally opened up important conversations about listening, hearing, and communication.... Your book helped us connect across languages, ages, and abilities. It created joy and learning for everyone in the room. Thank you so much for creating something so special – it made a real difference.”*

For countries served by Amazon, access to our books is easy for parents and professionals alike. In other lower income countries, where resources for deaf children are also extremely scarce, finding distribution mechanisms is even more important, and we are actively seeking international partners to work with on this.

Please come and see us if you are attending ESPCI – we will have a display table with our books in German, Dutch, French, Turkish, Russian, Spanish, Danish, Hindi and English, plus a poster presentation discussing how to achieve authentic CI-representation in children’s books. In a personal capacity, as a co-presenter and panellist, I will also be sharing my experience of being a CI-parent in a couple of sessions. I hope to see you there!

My thanks to The Lehnhardt Foundation, CIICA and the many talented colleagues who have worked with me to make these new books a reality.

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ADVANCED BIONICS – Take Control of Your Hearing Journey



Advanced Bionics is excited to introduce the AB ListenFit app. With more than 5,000 downloads in the first two months of its launch, more people than ever are experiencing the ease of tracking their hearing performance at home or on the move – and now you can too!

Track Your Hearing Progress Anytime, Anywhere

AB ListenFit offers a range of self-assessments, including the Phoneme Test and Matrix Sentence Test, allowing users to evaluate their ability to hear and understand in various everyday situations. Set goals, receive instant results, and track your hearing progress over time. It's easy to stay motivated to continue training your hearing and stay involved in your hearing care!

A simple, exciting way to stay involved in your hearing care.

Checking your hearing progress from wherever you are: Choose from a list of quick and simple tests. Check how well you're hearing different sounds and numbers or discover your ability to understand sentences in noise.

Stay Confident: AB ListenFit allows you to track your personal goals over time, making it easy to stay motivated to continue training your hearing. With results that you can see, you are in control of your hearing journey.

Easy to Use: AB ListenFit requires no login and is available in many languages. Get helpful information and support through links in the app.

Download AB ListenFit Today

Begin your journey towards better hearing today! Download now on the App Store or Google Play.

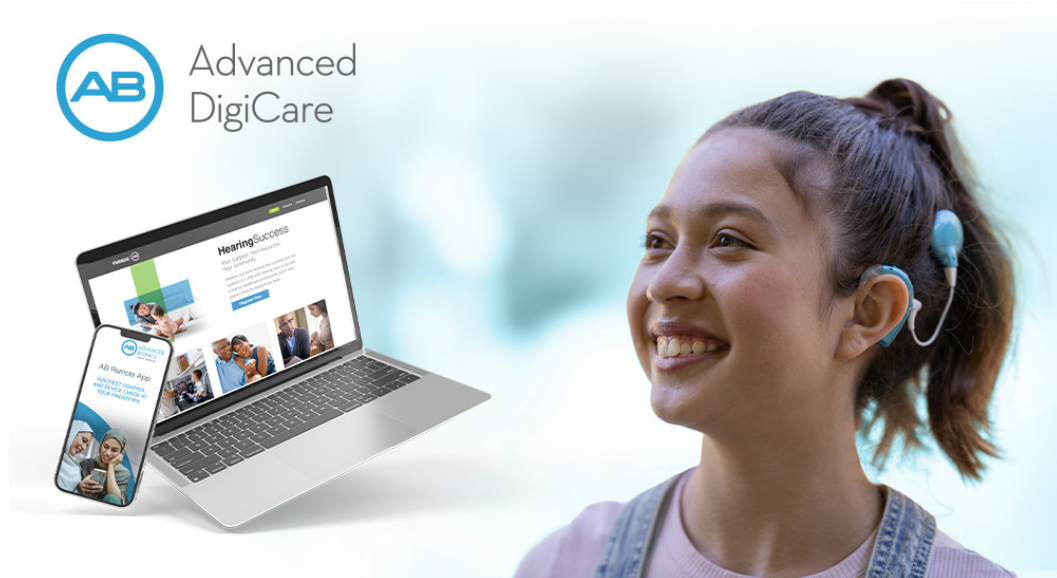
AB ListenFit is compatible with Marvel CI and/or Phonak Link M Hearing Aid.

AB ListenFit is designed for adults and children aged 13 and older, and for younger children with caregiver assistance. This app is to be used as an educational resource for tracking your hearing journey. It is not

intended to substitute professional medical advice or be interpreted to contain treatment recommendations. Contact your healthcare provider if you have any medical concerns about managing your cochlear implant(s).

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ADVANCED BIONICS – Find knowledge and support with AB's Advanced DigiCare resources



At Advanced Bionics, we care about your hearing health for life. That's why we have developed AB Advanced DigiCare – a collection of digital tools and resources to help you and your family along every step of the hearing journey.

Smart digital connections

AB's Advanced DigiCare is designed to help you stay connected and feel supported in managing your or your child's hearing loss. You can check your hearing progress with your cochlear implant, talk to others in a private community forum, or connect with your audiologist to program your hearing technology remotely.

Some of the Advanced DigiCare solutions include:

Improve – Tools to practice your hearing:

- **HearingSuccess:** a free online tool for anyone using hearing aids or cochlear implants to get support and have better conversations
- **BabyBeats™:** an early intervention resource filled with motivating and fun musical activities for babies and toddlers with hearing loss

Check – Tools to track your progress:

- **AB Remote Support app:** a remote fitting tool that allows audiologists to offer complete, billable, remote CI programming
- and the new **AB ListenFit app:** a mobile app designed to empower, educate, and assist users in tracking their hearing progress

Take Charge – Tools to manage your hearing journey:

- **MyHearingGuide app** – this app will show you how hearing loss does not need to be a barrier to connections, confidence and participation.
- **AB Remote app** – designed to provide user control over volume and program changes as well as provide access to help information.

To learn more about AB ListenFit and the collection of Advanced DigiCare solutions from

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COCHLEAR – How to use your sound processor longer for better outcomes



Do you use your sound processor from early morning to late evening, clocking in more than 12 hours a day? If not, learning to extend your daily usage could improve your hearing.

Why daily usage matters

Research shows that adults who use their sound processors for less than ten hours a day experience a 2-7% improvement in speech recognition for each additional hour of use. ⁽¹⁾ However, it's not just about the quantity of hours; the type of sound also matters.

Real-world experience

A recent survey ⁽²⁾ of 1,238 Nucleus® Cochlear Implant (CI) recipients revealed that patient-reported daily usage often exceeds data logging results. About 18% of respondents wished they could wear their sound processors in more situations but felt uncomfortable due to concerns like moisture, sleeping, physical work, loud environments, or wearing headgear.

Practical tips for wearing your sound processor 12 hours or more

- **Monitor your usage:** Log your hearing hours or review your data logging with your clinician, for example, through a Remote Check. Use the Hearing Tracker in your Cochlear™ Nucleus® Smart App to monitor the Time in Speech.
- **Address discomfort:** Consult your clinician about the optimal use of retention aids, protective accessories, and noise reduction technologies.
- **Check your upgrade eligibility:** Smaller or off-the-ear next-generation sound processors have been rated more comfortable. ^{(3), (4)}

For tips on using retention or protective accessories, the Nucleus Smart App, or sound processing technologies like ForwardFocus, visit our [ongoing care and support web page](#) at Cochlear.com.

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- (3) Mauger SJ, Jones M, Nel E, Del Dot J. Clinical outcomes with the Kanso™ off-the-ear cochlear implant sound processor. International Journal of Audiology. 2017 Apr 3;56(4):267-76.
- (4) Warren CD, Nel E, Boyd PJ. Controlled comparative clinical trial of hearing benefit outcomes for users of the Cochlear™ Nucleus® 7 Sound Processor with mobile connectivity. Cochlear Implants International. 2019 May 4;20(3):116-26.

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Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always follow the instructions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information.

ForwardFocus is a clinician-enabled feature that can be user-controlled or automated.

Cochlear, Hear now. And always, Nucleus, Kanso, Baha, Osia, the elliptical logo, and marks bearing an ® or ™ symbol, are either trademarks or registered trademarks of the Cochlear group of companies (unless otherwise noted).

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COCHLEAR – Could your next home delivery be your new upgrade sound processor?



Currently, upgrading a sound processor involves one or several trips to the clinic. Many recipients find it challenging to fit these visits into their schedules or to cope with the effort and cost associated with travelling.

Five clinics from across the UK and the Netherlands reported their experience with a different approach. They asked eligible patients to choose between an in-clinic upgrade or an innovative Upgrade to Recipient (U2R) concept. (1)

Most upgrade candidates chose the U2R option. They received a parcel with their pre-

programmed upgrade sound processor and instructions, also via e-mail. For many patients, unpacking, downloading the app, watching the instructional video, and setting up the upgrade sound processor typically took 30 minutes to one hour.

Participating clinics reported mostly positive patient experiences, also because patients were encouraged to directly interact with their clinician if they had questions. Depending on clinic, between 5% and 50% of upgrade recipients did so, mainly for reassurance, to resolve sound quality or equipment issues e.g. identified through Remote Check, or to troubleshoot smartphone connectivity.

Main benefits of U2R for patients:

- **Reduced travel time and costs:** Less need to travel to the clinic, saving on expenses and time off work.
- **Convenience:** Upgrades can be done from the comfort of home, providing greater flexibility and ease.
- **Enhanced in-clinic care:** With fewer patients needing in-clinic visits, clinicians may focus on those who do require face-to-face appointments.

If this U2R option would become available to you in the future, how would you prefer to upgrade your sound processor? [Click > here <](#) .

If you have questions about upgrading, click [> Cochlear.com <](#) to visit our “ongoing care and support” web page or contact your Cochlear representative.

References

(1) Bradley J, Huinck WJ, Fuller A, O'Driscoll M, Whitehouse L, Soulby A, Greenham P. Clinical Time Savings and Experiences Using a Business-to-Customer Model for Cochlear Implant Sound Processor Upgrades. INQUIRY: Journal of Healthcare Provision and Public Health. 2025 Apr;62:00469580251332569.

Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always follow the instructions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information.

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[MED-EL – Presidential Honours for Creativity and Inclusion](#)



(Photo: Davide Zilli with President of Italy, Sergio Mattarella)

Davide Zilli, a 13-year-old cochlear implant user from Italy, was honoured with the prestigious title “Alfiere della Repubblica” (Standard Bearer of the Republic) for his service of inclusion by the President of Italy, Sergio Mattarella.

Since 2010, the Presidency of the Republic has awarded the “Alfiere della Repubblica” Honour Certificate to young people under 18 who serve as role models of good citizenship through their behaviour or attitudes. This year’s theme was “New Paths for Solidarity.”

Davide Zilli received the prestigious Italian title for winning MED-EL’s 2024 IDEASforEARS contest that encourages children aged 6 to 12 to develop ideas that improve the lives of people with hearing loss. His invention demonstrates Davide’s commitment to improving the lives of people with hearing loss, turning his personal experience into an opportunity to help others.

In May 2025, Davide was officially handed over the title “Alfiere della Repubblica” at the presidential palace Quirinale in Rome. President Mattarella congratulated him personally for his invention, calling him and the other awardees “witnesses to positive commitment and solidarity, expressions of generosity, friendship, social passion, and civic engagement.”

Receiving this title was incredibly moving and motivating for Davide and his parents. “I felt so honoured when the president shook hands with me and congratulated me on my commitment to people with hearing loss and cochlear implants,” the CI user from Brescia stated.

Watch the official ceremony video here (Davide to be seen from 26:45 min.) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwgO1hwlafo>

Learn more about MED-EL’s IDEASforEARS contest: Winners - [IDEASforEARS](#)

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[MED-EL – Launches the Hearpeers Community, a social network for hearing implant users](#)



Looking for a private online network to find and give support throughout the hearing implant journey? Check out the Hearpeers Community, a social media network designed by MED-EL for hearing implant candidates and users.

Hearpeers is MED-EL's international community for people united by the hearing implant journey. At Hearpeers, people with hearing loss can find support no matter what stage they are in – from decision-making to daily life with an implant.

The Hearpeers Community was designed to unite people who want to find and give support along their journeys – because no one understands the challenges of life with a hearing implant better than the people who have been through the process.

As trained volunteers, Hearpeers Mentors are at the heart of the project. They share authentic experiences from their hearing implant journey, give support and tips, and answer non-medical questions about life with a hearing implant.

Hearpeers Mentors are present on the platform and happy to chat one-on-one, in addition to MED-EL admins. Community users can search for and connect with others nearby and worldwide, create and join groups based on interests and more, and make meaningful connections based on interests, location, and shared experiences.

Life may feel isolating for many people with hearing loss, but speaking with people with similar experiences can help. [Join the Community now](#) to discover MED-EL's new support network.

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[MED-EL – Introducing BeHeard by MED-EL: An Innovative Counselling](#)



MED-EL UK & Ireland is excited to announce BeHeard by MED-EL, a complimentary counselling service dedicated to supporting those on their journey to hearing.

As a leading hearing implant manufacturer providing a comprehensive range of hearing solutions for every type of hearing loss, MED-EL understands that the journey to hearing extends beyond the implant itself. BeHeard by MED-EL reinforces our commitment to improving the lives of those we serve – before, during, and after implantation.

This new service further supports MED-EL's patient-centred approach, offering unique services and technologies designed to achieve the best possible hearing outcomes.

These include candidate support through the Hearpeers volunteer programme, pre-operative assessment tools like OTOPLAN, precision tools for surgery, post-operative tools such as Anatomy-Based Fitting, and a wide range of rehabilitation resources, including the ReDi app. With BeHeard by MED-EL, we take this dedication even further by offering vital emotional and psychological support to eligible candidates, helping them continue their journey to hearing with confidence.

The counselling service is designed to provide comprehensive support to adults and families with the help of an accredited therapist. This includes:

- An initial online assessment to determine individual needs.
- Group or one-to-one counselling sessions.
- Online tools and resources that explore various themes to support their wellbeing.

With the help of an accredited therapist, those enrolled in the service will receive personalised support designed to alleviate concerns such as depression, anxiety, shame, grief, parenting challenges, and relationship stresses – all of which may be amplified by the experience of hearing loss.

Key Features of BeHeard by MED-EL:

- **Get Support Tailored to You:** Our comprehensive online application ensures we understand your unique needs and challenges, so that you receive personalised support, whether that's through group counselling or one-to-one sessions.
- **Access to Expert Tools and Resources:** Explore a range of trusted online resources that address key mental health themes, helping you develop self-awareness, manage emotions, and create a resilient mindset on your journey to hearing.
- **Life-Long Support:** MED-EL recipients are never alone. Users can request counselling whenever they need it, no matter if it's before, during, or after implantation.

"I'm really proud to be leading this new initiative," said Stuart McNaughton, MED-EL's Community Enhancement Manager and Accredited Therapist. "As someone with nearly fifty years of lived experience with hearing loss, I wish a service like this had existed when I was going through my journey to hearing."

BeHeard by MED-EL is now available throughout the UK & Ireland, offering free support to adults and families navigating their journey to hearing. To learn more about the BeHeard by MED-EL, [click here](#).

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EURO-CIU is a founding member of the **World Hearing Forum from the World Health Organization**



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