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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



These past months, COVID pandemic has extenuated our lives, but EURO-CIU tasks have continued and we can say we have been present in several online events, reclaiming our rights and making cochlear implants' voice heard.

Advocacy work has continued firm and clear with participations in MOSAICS, CIICA, EDF, World Hearing Forum or confirming the next e-moji which will represent cochlear implant users really soon.

We are getting glimpses of a lot of virtual and onsite congresses and events and soon we will be able to have new data from and for all EURO-CIU members.

Before I wish you a happy holiday to all of you and your families, remember that next Annual General Assembly we have elections for 2 different positions: Secretary and vice-president.

I encourage all of you to present your candidatures because change comes from within and from proposals we need to commit to carry out. All of us must engage to advance and give EURO-CIU visibility and raise awareness to reach the maximum European administrations and political establishments. Take care and enjoy the well-deserved holiday!

Teresa Amat (President)

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR



(Photo: making a start on the newsletter!)

We are continuing to live through difficult times, with few events taking place and all of us getting used to meeting each other by Zoom - so we don't have as many articles from members as usual. 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.

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 6 September 2021. 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 - Election of the Board](#)



(Photo: Board and Advisors in Wrocław 2019)

This year, during the next on-line General Assembly (GA) that will take place in Autumn, two members of EURO-CIU board will be elected.

In Wrocław 2019 GA, 3 board members were elected (Robert Mandara, Henry-François Baiverlin and Teresa Amat), thus at the moment the board is composed as follows:

- Teresa Amat (Spain) President
- Robert Mandara (Finland) 1st Vice President
- Ervin Bonecz (Hungary) 2nd Vice President. Vacant because he resigned last year
- Henry-François Baiverlin (Belgium) Treasurer
- Beatrice Cusmai (Italy) Secretary.

According to the internal rules of EURO-CIU, this year there will be the election of:

- 2nd Vice President
- Secretary

Please take a moment and think – would you like to join the board and share your experience, ideas and time to fulfil our associations' aims?

The descriptions of the two roles and the application forms can be obtained by e-mailing beatrice.cusmai@aguav.it but please note that the completed application forms need to be e-mailed to Beatrice **by 31 July 2021**.

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[EURO-CIU - New Website](#)

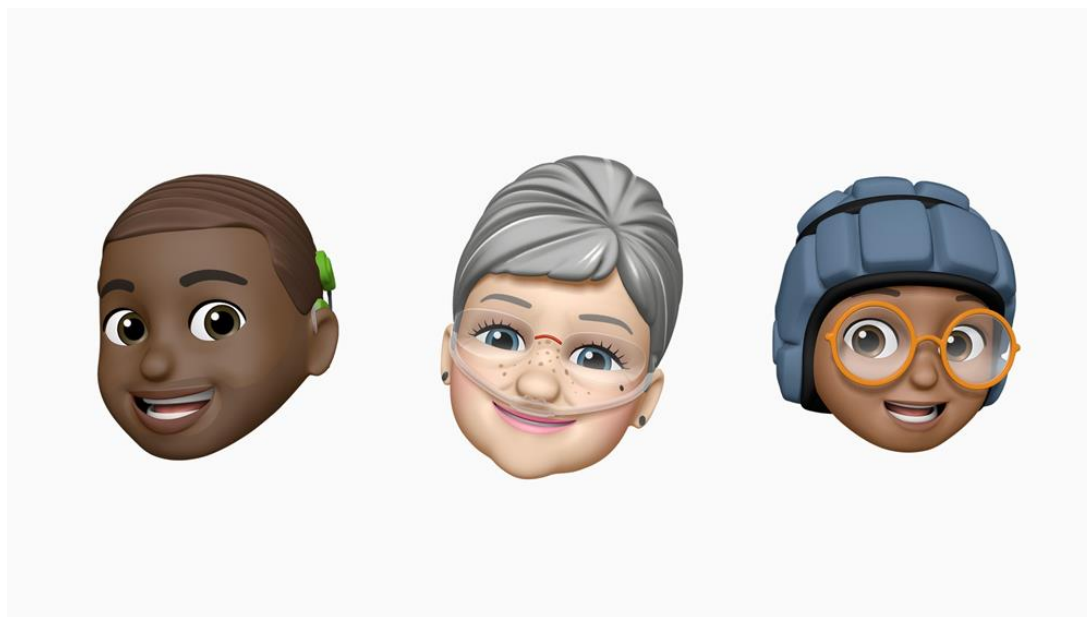


Please note that our website is now: <https://eurociu.eu/>

Many thanks to Fernando for making the changes.

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EURO-CIU achieves a Cochlear Implant Memoji with Apple



At the last EURO-CIU Workshop in Barcelona 2018, members from all over Europe asked EURO-CIU to work on social media to have more visibility. On that point, our past Vice President, Ervin Bonecz, explained the job he already had started to lobby with Apple to achieve a Cochlear Implant memoji to raise awareness to our normally “invisible” disability.

This project was a long one and even if our Vice President is no longer with our Board, we want to congratulate him for all the work done then that now, years later, has finally given its fruits.

This 20th May Apple has announced the new memojis will be on additional features coming later this year to better represent users with oxygen tubes, **cochlear implants**, and a soft helmet for headwear.

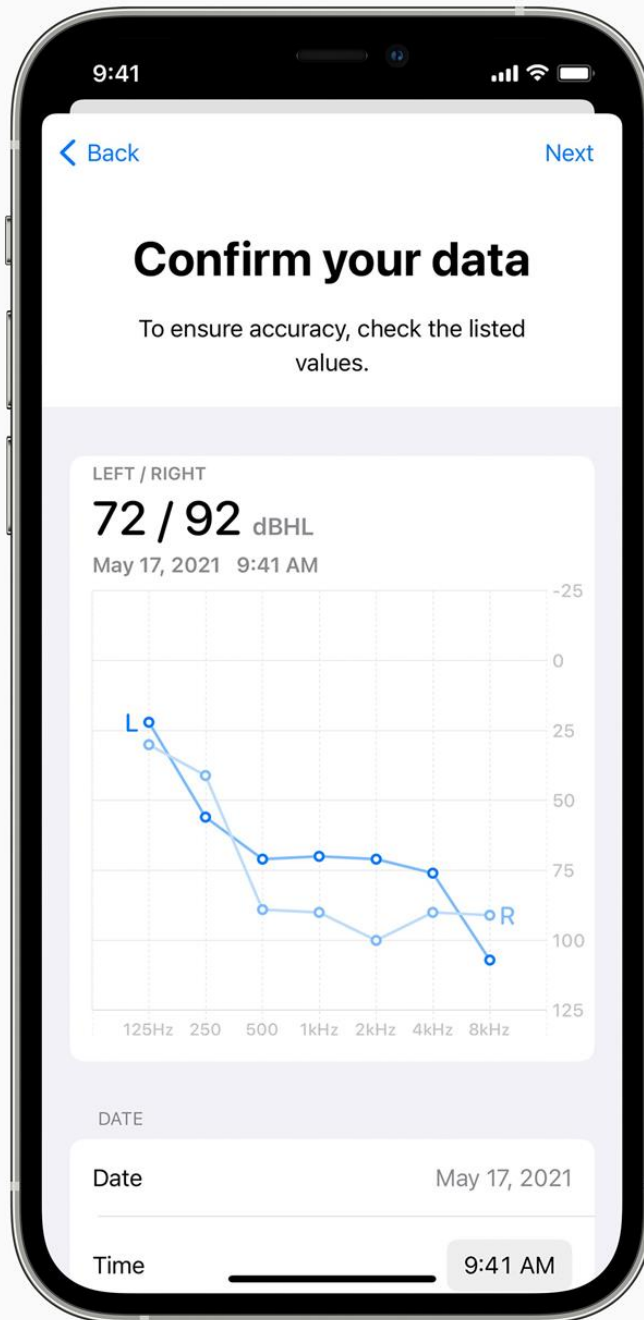
During the announcement, **Apple as well showed new powerful software updates designed for people with disabilities**. Apple is also launching a new service, called **SignTime** that enables customers to communicate with AppleCare and Retail Customer Care by using American Sign Language (ASL) in the US, British Sign Language (BSL) in the UK, or

French Sign Language (LSF) in France, right in their web browsers.

In a significant update to the MFi hearing devices program, Apple is adding support for new bi-directional hearing aids. The microphones in these new hearing aids enable those who are deaf or hard of hearing to have hands-free phone and FaceTime conversations. The next-generation models from MFi partners will be available later this year.

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[EURO-CIU - Apple is bringing support for recognizing audiograms — charts that show the results of a hearing test — to Headphone Accommodations.](#)



Users can quickly customize their audio with their latest hearing test results imported from a paper or PDF audiogram. Headphone Accommodations amplify soft sounds and adjust certain frequencies to suit a user's hearing.

We thank Apple for hearing the demands from EURO-CIU and engineering technology to respond to everyone's needs. We hope the whole industry will follow Apple's example, so that hearing loss and cochlear implants will be more visible than ever.

More information:

<https://www.apple.com/newsroom/2021/05/apple-previews-powerful-software-updates->

designed-for-people-with-disabilities/

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CIICA LIVE: Cochlear Implant International Community of Action (CIICA)



CIICA LIVE: The World Report on Hearing: What next for Cochlear Implant Advocacy?

"Cochlear implant is one of the most successful of all neural prostheses developed to date" (P100, WHO World Report on Hearing)

The first CIICA LIVE event shared the evidence of the World Report on Hearing on CI and explored how we could use this in our CI advocacy activities. 145 people from 30 countries registered and there was lively engagement in the chat room... 100 contributions indicated our community is Alive and Kicking!

Leo De Raeve, Acting Chair of CIICA, began by providing the background to the formation of CIICA, following our global consultation: CIICA now has 57 organisations globally and 270 individuals as part of its community – with the largest group being CI users and family members.

Paige Stringer, CI User and Founder of the Global Foundation for Children with Hearing Loss and who helped lead the dissemination guide for the WHO Report began by taking us through the key points of the Report which is a milestone in the development of global Ear and Hearing Care, emphasising that hearing loss is on the rise, that 1 in 5 people have disabling hearing loss – and recognising the global cost of \$980 billion per year of unaddressed hearing loss. Sue Archbold, Coordinator of CIICA, then shared the evidence in the Report particularly helpful for CI advocacy: CI are included throughout the report- and evidence is given of effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, the importance of rehabilitation, and early access following screening programmes. The Report also points out the variation in access and provision even in high-income countries.

CIICA launched two summaries of the long report – providing the evidence in accessible format for your advocacy work – available here: [Resources – CIICA \(ciicanet.org\)](#). Translations into German, Dutch, French, Italian, Turkish and Spanish are on the way!

Two inspiring Founding Members of CIICA shared their ideas for using the CI evidence in the report and summaries for CI Advocacy work: Beatrice Cusmai, of AGUAV, Italy and Secretary of EURO-CIU and Eddie Mukaaya, of the Steering Group of CIICA, and Founder of HEAR HIS VOICE, Uganda, both challenged and inspired us! Beatrice shared using the social media and the press to influence professionals and politicians with examples of how she had done this in Italy. She suggested a coordinated press release using 4/5 messages from the summaries – to be translated and sent out globally by the community with coordinated videos and coordinated images on buildings. The chat room was busy.....! Then Eddie shared with us the changes they have achieved in Uganda, marching on Kampala and gaining the waiving of taxes on hearing technologies! He shared his HARP – Hearing, Access, Rehabilitation and Policy, Research and Advocacy – and again got the community talking in the chat room, wanting to know more about how he did this.

Brian Lamb, Public Policy Advisor to CIICA summarised the chat room discussions, and Cathy Birman, Medical Director of Next Sense, Sydney gave a great summary of what we had heard and discussed and again challenging us – which CI advocacy issue are we going to address?

So, all the presentations, including discussions, with captioning are available on the website - [News – CIICA \(ciicanet.org\)](http://News-CIICA(ciicanet.org)) – do have a look if you missed us! Our CIICA LIVE events will build on each other – continuing the CI advocacy discussions – and the next choice was for Advocacy: how do we do it?

Register here – July 7th, 6am UK time. [Events – CIICA \(ciicanet.org\)](http://Events-CIICA(ciicanet.org))

The World Report on Hearing includes access to CI in its recommendations to

“Improve access to high-quality, affordable hearing technologies (hearing aids, cochlear implants and other assistive devices) and services required for their effective use.” (P246)

but there is still a huge gap in the numbers of those who could benefit and those who receive them and much we need to do to address this.

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[VOICE: Vocational training for speech and language therapists and parents on rehabilitation of children with cochlear implants.](#)



VOICE is a European **Erasmus+ project (reference number 2020-1-RO01-KA202-080059)** which focuses on vocational education and training for speech and language therapists and parents on the rehabilitation of young deaf children with cochlear implants, especially on how to stimulate the spoken language development. ONICI (the Independent Information Centre on Cochlear Implants of which Leo De Raeve is the director) is one of the 7 European partners of the project. The project proposal was also supported by EURO-CIU. The project started in January 2021 and will finish in December 2022.

The main objectives of the VOICE-project are to develop:

- Minimum standards for rehabilitation after paediatric CI (VOICE CI paediatric standards) based on a scientific review and on good practice;
- A handbook for therapists, teachers and parents on how to support spoken language development of young children using cochlear implants (VOICE Handbook)
- Vocational training for speech and language therapists on how to support spoken language development of young children using cochlear implants (VOICE E-Training Course)
- An E-learning environment for training of parents and support groups on the rehab of children with cochlear implants (VOICE E-TOOLKIT)
- A joint professional staff training event

It looks a very promising project of which we will inform you regularly in the EURO-CIU Newsletter. More information can be found at <http://voice-erasmus.eu/>

If you have questions on this project, don't hesitate to contact Leo De Raeve at leo.de.raeve@onici.be

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[Cochlear Implant evidence from WHO World Report on Hearing \(WRH\)](#)

COCHLEAR IMPLANT ADVOCACY:

Implications of the World Report on Hearing, 2021

“

Cochlear implant is one of the most successful of all neural prostheses
developed to date
(WRH, page 100)

Sue Archbold PhD, Hon LLD

Prof Brian Lamb OBE



“cochlear implant is one of the most successful of all neural prostheses developed to date.”

Do you want to know what the World Report on Hearing has to say about cochlear implants? The CI International Community of Action (CIICA) has produced some summaries to help you access easily the evidence you need for your advocacy work: go to [Resources – CIICA](#) (ciicanet.org) and download. There are four:

- A briefing document, a synopsis, a briefing focussed on adults and one focussed on children.

They summarise the evidence for effectiveness including cost-effectiveness, for screening to support early CI, for rehabilitation and long-term support needs and for person-centred care and user-driven technology.

They are currently being translated into German, Dutch, Swedish, Italian, French, Spanish and Turkish – on their way soon. If you would like to translate them, email info@ciicanet.org and we can help!

The World Report on Hearing (p. 152) talks about how stigma limits access to hearing care and how role models, by disclosing their hearing story, could help overcome that barrier.

Since then, at least two role models enjoyed large publicity. One is [Lou Ferrigno](#), “[The Incredible Hulk](#)” who talked to (mainly US) media about his hearing loss and hearing journey. The other is [Malala Yousafzai](#) who has fought for girls’ education for more than a decade. Now an Oxford graduate, she contributed a foreword to the WRoH, appeared on the Vogue cover - and part of her foreword is included in the adult briefing.

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[MOSAICS](#)



MOSAICS' Project is working with EURO-CIU as a partner .

The purpose of this research study is to determine how clinicians working with adult cochlear implantees think about (and are able to predict) performance in terms of post-operative outcomes. The data will be used for scientific research around cochlear implant outcome prediction, scientific journal publications and as part of a PhD thesis by Nikki Tromp.

MOSAICS is aiming for a large international response from audiologists and therapists, so please feel free to share it with whoever you think may be interested!

EURO-CIU will have the result of the surveys by the end of the year and all of us will be able to learn a lot from them. Contribute to this project with us!

To access the SurveyMonkey link, click here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PRDCTVRSNA>

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EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM - Members' Briefing



On Global Accessibility Awareness Day we organised a discussion with Facebook on the European Accessibility Act. We also held a conference highlighting importance of accessible rail travel within the European Year of Rail 2021. Did you miss any of them? No worries! We have detailed summaries of both the [Accessibility Act round-table](#) and the [Rail Conference](#)!

We continue joint efforts with UN human rights experts to stop the Council of Europe from adopting legislation for forced mental health measures. We also took part in an interesting workshop on re-integrating children into the community after de-institutionalization. We highlight the right to disability-inclusive health as well as equal right of consumers with disabilities while roaming.

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AUSTRIA – Hearing Talks #HearingMatters – Cochlea Implantat Austria



(Photos - Dominique Sturz & Ewald Thurner)

By Dominique Sturz, Usher contact CIA – Cochlea Implantat Austria, Usher Initiative Austria

About **#HearingMatters** - #HörenBewegt in German - is an initiative by MED-EL, that has invited personalities from various backgrounds – culture, science, politics, sports, and last but not least patient advocacy – to provide their insights about the importance and the impact of hearing in their lives.

It was my turn as the fourth in row to be talking with Carola Gausterer, a professional and empathic interviewer, about how the gift of hearing has impacted my daughter's and my families lives, since my daughter living with Usher Syndrome was bilaterally implanted as a very young child in the late 1990s. It has been a pleasure to share our positive experience with raising her in an audio environment – despite some extra miles such as speech therapy, support and extra lessons during high school provided by the so called “Individual Education Plan” – and getting relatively easy access, to all: mainstream kindergarten and school, friends, hobbies, sports, higher education and hopefully, in the near future after graduation, job opportunities and career.

Hear more about how we responded as a family to the additional clinical diagnosis of Retinitis pigmentosa RP and Usher Syndrome in 2005 (genetically confirmed in 2012), a rare progressive disease, that causes cell death of the inner ear and the photoreceptor cells and leads to combined vision and hearing loss and deaf blindness.

Hear more about the importance of hearing for people with Usher Syndrome losing progressively their vision, while being deaf, about how patient advocacy can change the lives of young families who recently received a devastating diagnosis for their child, and about the hope of children and young adults with Usher Syndrome, that the Usher community encourages and supports research with the aim to find innovative therapies to, at least, halt their vision loss and/or even restore part of their lost vision.

Also hear about other peoples' perspectives about how they perceive the importance and impact of hearing in their lives (Blog and interviews in German language, subtitles coming soon)

<https://www.hoerenbewegt.at/hoergespraech/04-dominique-sturz/>

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SPAIN – AICE – First Empowerment and Karting Day organized by the Federación AICE with the participation of Lydia Sempere



This very special year is the **25th Anniversary of the Federación AICE**. An activity has been launched at the national level and together with the **pilot of the Spanish Touring Car Championship, Lydia Sempere**. She is a cochlear implant user, with which we will visit different points of Spanish geography conducting empowerment workshops and go-karting races. In this activity all members can participate in the experience of sharing a racetrack with a professional driver.

On May 8, the **"First Grand Prize"** was held. 30 of our members and their families were able to enjoy themselves. The day began with a talk given by Lydia, who was born with **profound bilateral deafness, that is, with total hearing loss**. She showed us her story of overcoming, of bullying and the challenges she had to face to get to participate in the Spanish Touring Car Championship.

Her history of overcoming was not only marked by being deaf, but gender discrimination within a sport in which men predominate also became notorious throughout the

championships.

At the end of the talk, Lydia provided some driving guidelines to all attendees so that they could learn some of the tricks that help them go faster and safer on the track. She also explained how the next race would work, with a first qualifying round that would mark the starting positions of each of the drivers with an inverted grid (the best time would start last) and a race of 10 minutes. To finish, there was a podium for the winners, who wore a gift t-shirt and a medal for all participants.

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[SPAIN – AICE – Accessible Commerce Campaign](#)

Comercio Accesible a la Comunicación *Si necesitas leerme los labios...*

*Pídeme
que me
la ponga!!*

mascarilla
comunicativa

www.mascarillacomunicativa.com



☒ POR SOLIDARIDAD
OTROS FINES DE INTERÉS SOCIAL

For a local business, interaction with their customers is important. Having the resource of communicative masks in businesses so that buyers who require it can rely on lip reading, is

essential. In this way, people with hearing loss, users or not of cochlear implants, and older people can remain independent and participating in active life in their community.

Federación AICE launched the Accessible Commerce to Communication campaign with the following slogan:

**If you need to read my lips...
Ask me to put it on!**

Neighbourhood stores and market stalls receive information about hearing loss individually. Then, they are given a sign (image) that identifies them as businesses accessible to communication for people with hearing loss. And finally, they are provided with communicative masks to use in their interactions with customers who require it.

The responses from traders are being very positive. Thus, the central markets of cities such as Valencia and Zaragoza fully support this campaign, in addition to many shops spread throughout the Spanish geography, such as in various cities in Catalonia.

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[WORLD NEWS – European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association \(EHIMA\) – Lucas Fischer](#)



Starting April 1st, Lucas Fischer has joined **EHIMA** in the team of Secretary General Dr Stefan Zimmer. He is the successor to the position of Dr Max Niebling who is taking on a new professional challenge. Lucas is 29 years old and studied European Studies in Germany, France and Poland. For the past four years, he has been working in the area of civic education, first for the Saxon State Agency for Civic Education and then for Konrad Adenauer Foundation, focusing on event organizing and management. He now looks forward to supporting the efforts of **EHIMA** in further building public awareness of hearing issues.

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WORLD NEWS - AUSTRIA - EXCELLENCE dedicated to HEARING IMPLANTS

	Benefit (<i>n</i> = 19)		
	Largest	Medium	Smallest
Speech comprehension in noise	13	4	2
Directionality	10	8	1
Persistent hearing capability when 1 CI is not available (e.g. broken, damaged, lost)	3	3	13

The HEARRING Group is an independent network of world-leading experts and centres concerned with all aspects of hearing restoration and implantable hearing devices. Through being comprehensive, co-active, innovative, and educational they are committed to making progress every day. Detailed information on the HEARRING clinics, their goals, and members can be found on the HEARRING website (<https://www.hearring.com/>).

Bilateral cochlear implant provision offers a lot of benefits to both paediatric and adult cochlear implant candidates. In particular, speech understanding in noise and the ability to localize sound considerably improve with a cochlear implant in both ears. See Table above. *The Table shows the benefits of cochlear implant provision in both ears compared to cochlear implant provision in one ear based on the HEARRING survey. Reference: Rak et al. Bilateral cochlear implantation is regarded as very beneficial: results from a worldwide survey by online questionnaire (2019)*

A worldwide survey conducted among the HEARRING clinics showed that bilateral cochlear implantation has become a standard procedure in most HEARRING clinics since the early 2000s and that bilateral cochlear implantation is reimbursed in around 60% of the countries where HEARRING clinics are based.

The majority of bilateral cochlear implantations are performed in children as the experts in the field believe that bilateral implant provision is more beneficial in children: Hearing with both ears enables children to develop communication skills similar to their normal-hearing peers whereas postlingually deafened adults had normally already developed communication skills before the onset of their hearing loss. Therefore, likeliness of reimbursement of bilateral implantation is higher in children than in adults.

In order to optimize the bilateral auditory development in prelingually deafened children, the leading clinicians recommend simultaneous bilateral implantation in this patient population,

i.e. the implantation of a cochlear implant in both ears in the course of only one surgical intervention. In contrast, sequential bilateral implantation, i.e. first, cochlear implantation in one ear and then cochlear implantation in the other ear at a later stage, is commonly performed in both children and adults.

Univ. Prof. Dr. Wolf-Dieter Baumgartner, MBA

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[WORLD NEWS - FINLAND - Audio listening device - a deafblind perspective](#)



(Photo: Russ Palmer, music therapist)

Audio listening device Bose SoundWear Companion - a deafblind perspective

by Russ Palmer, music therapist

I was born severely deaf and now use two cochlear implants. As a deafblind musician/ music therapist this pandemic time has been challenging. I have found Bose SoundWear Companion [\[1\]](#) particularly useful as this allows you to connect wirelessly to devices using Bluetooth connection and it doesn't give out any audio or electrical interference. One advantage of this system is the ability to keep volume level constant if moving around the same room up to 10 meters. This helps me in listening to music, audiobooks, documentaries or films. The fact that the Bose Soundware sits on your shoulders you don't have any wires so they don't get caught anywhere. This is particularly important when playing an instrument, such as a guitar or a piano. The sound quality of the device is extremely good and gives you a nice stereophonic sound when listening to music. Furthermore, it relays the vibrations in the music and gives you a more holistic experience of music [\[2\]](#). However, one disadvantage is, if you have other people with you in the same room, this may interfere with their sound space, so it is best to be alone in the room, if the others are not interested in the same subject matter or music.

This is a rechargeable device, using a micro-USB connection. I find I can use this device for 7 hours in a day, then recharge. On the right hand side of the device you have volume controls and a play/pause button. This same play/pause button also acts as the next track selection button if pressed twice. If you get a phone , Skype or a FaceTime call it automatically switches you over to the call you just press the play/pause button to stop the audiobook and it will automatically connect the call. I find this feature very useful. For example, if I wanted to listen to an audiobook, I just switch on the audiobook reading app and the loudspeaker automatically tunes in to the tablet using the Bluetooth connection. When learning a new song or during a rehearsal Bose SoundWear allows me to use FaceTime or Skype to connect with my colleague who has the sheet music in front of them to help me with the process.

[1] website: www.bose.com

[2] website: www.russpalmer.com

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WORLD NEWS - SWEDEN - Unilateral CI to adults is now proven cost-effective in a Swedish setting

Unilateral CI to adults is now proven cost-effective in a Swedish setting. A recent publication “The cost-effectiveness of Cochlear implants in Swedish adults”⁽¹⁾ shows interesting results:

- For patients with severe to profound hearing loss, the disability is extreme.
- Only 13% of eligible patients get cochlear implants (CI) in Sweden.
- Unilateral CI to adults is cost effective.
- CI is as cost effective as other interventions such as knee replacement and more cost effective than hip replacement.
- Swedish society spends far less on CI compared to, for instance, knee replacement - only 200 CI surgeries to adults yearly vs 15,500 knee replacements.
- More resources should be allocated to cochlear implants.

Link to article: <https://rdcu.be/cimih>

Research has shown that unilateral cochlear implants (CIs) significantly improve clinical outcomes and quality of life in adults. However, only 13% of eligible Swedish adults currently have a unilateral CI.

The objective in this study was to estimate the cost-effectiveness of unilateral CIs compared to a hearing aid for Swedish adults with severe to profound hearing loss.

Method: A Markov model with a lifetime horizon was developed to estimate the benefits and costs of unilateral CIs from a Swedish health system perspective. To estimate resource use and costs a patient treatment pathway was developed through consultation with experts at the CI clinics at the [Sahlgrenska University Hospital](#) and the [Karolinska University Hospital](#). Unit costs were derived from the expert input, the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions. Health outcomes were reported in terms of Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALYs).

Results: Unilateral CIs for Swedish adults with severe to profound hearing loss are cost-effective when compared to a hearing aid (SEK 140,474 per QALY gained).

Discussion: The ICER within this study indicates that unilateral CIs are potentially more cost-effective compared to some common medical interventions for adults in Sweden. For

example, the cost per QALY gained for a unilateral CI is lower than that for knee replacement surgery (SEK 150,454 per QALY gained) and unilateral hip replacement surgery (SEK 337,083 per QALY gained). However, there are far less resources spent on CI vs for instance knee replacement. In Sweden there are only approximately 200 CI surgeries yearly to adults vs 15,500 knee replacements⁽²⁾.

Conclusions: An increase in the prevalence of Swedish adults with severe to profound hearing loss is expected with an ageing population. Unilateral CIs are an efficacious and cost-effective option to improve hearing and quality of life in Swedish adults with severe to profound hearing loss. Earlier implantation of unilateral CIs improves the cost-effectiveness among people eligible for CIs.

- ⁽¹⁾. Gumbie et al. The cost-effectiveness of Cochlear implants in Swedish adults BMC Health Services Research (2021) 21:319

- ⁽²⁾. Svenska knäprotesregistret www.myknee.se

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WORLD NEWS - SOUTH AFRICA & UK - Celebrating South African AVT Qualifications



(Photo: Jenni Bester and Barbara Kellett)

Jenni Bester and Barbara Kellett battled against the odds of funding challenges, access to mentoring as well as delays and cancellations due to Covid-19 to become the first LSLS CERT AVTS (Listening and Spoken Language Specialist, Certified Auditory Verbal Therapist) to qualify in South Africa.

Celebrating their qualification Jenni and Barbara said: *“This is really the beginning of South Africa moving forward in this area. It has taken a long while to fund but we are delighted to be the first to qualify in the country. We have a few colleagues coming up for certification which will bring the total to five new AVTs in South Africa. As a core group our vision to support both professionals and families can then begin to gather new momentum.”*

“Training with AVUK was hard work but so rewarding. The weekly group meetings and podcasts really gave us good grounding in theoretical aspects of AV with great practical and functional application. Having access to mentors was an exceptional experience that followed up on the course work in practical ways. We both loved the ethos of using language to make and keep friends for the children we worked with.”

The two remaining professionals who started their journey alongside Barbara and Jenni hope to sit the exam at the end of 2021. There are currently 62 professionals from 16 different countries on [AVUK's Foundation and Advanced courses](#).

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[WORLD NEWS – UK – BATOD](#)



BATOD was established in 1976. This year BATOD will be recognising the work of the Association over the last 45 years. The latest BATOD magazine edition featured two articles that captured the historical aspects of BATOD <https://www.batod.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Presidents-of-BATOD.pdf> and <https://www.batod.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BATOD-is-45-but-what-went-on-before-1976-Moore.pdf>. Readers may recognise BATOD's past BATOD President, Sue Archbold, who is now a Consultant on research, public policy and practice in deafness and hearing care, cochlear implantation and deaf education as well as the Co-ordinator, of the new formed CIICA.

In 2020 BATOD, like many organisations, embraced online meetings and training delivery. In April 2021 launched their first CPD webinar series which consists of eight events over eleven months with a host of deaf and hearing speakers presenting on a wide range of deaf education topics. <https://www.batod.org.uk/about-us/batod-cpd-webinar-series-april-2021-march-2022/>. Dr Helen Willis gave an insightful presentation on 'The cyborg and the subconscious: promoting physical and mental health in CI recipient'.

The partnership working between BATOD and the Scottish Sensory Centre has led to a new Journal club for UK-based professionals <https://www.batod.org.uk/new-journal-club-deaf-children-and-young-people/>.

Watch this space for details of more activity and events throughout 2021.

Teresa Quail

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WORLD NEWS - UK - AVUK - Continuing to support families and professionals online



(Photo: Noel leading a webinar)

Virtual events, online platforms like Zoom and digital engagement have become the saviour of the last year and like so many other organisations and professionals worldwide, Auditory Verbal UK (AVUK) moved its services to 100% online from just one in 10 sessions previously to continue to support deaf babies and children and their families as well as professional working with them.

The virtual offering provided by AVUK has seen huge engagement and positive feedback from families and professionals alike and even with the UK beginning to emerge from lockdown, online events remain popular. The benefits include reaching a larger audience by allowing more people to take part and reducing the need for travel, saving both time and money.

Meet an AVT events have been attended by families with deaf children around the world and whole of the UK.

Our professionals' events have attracted a diverse audience with An Introduction to Telepractice proving especially popular.

Quote from a Teacher of the Deaf

“Supporting families with pre-school children was probably the trickiest aspect of lockdown. Not physically being in the same room and playing together meant we had to be very directive with parents in how they could promote their child’s spoken/signed language development. This is where I turned to AVUK (Auditory Verbal UK), which

offered webinars on how to do 'telepractice.'

Next up are a number of short workshops including [Sensory Play to maximise listening and speaking](#) – which looks at using messy play as part of therapy on July 9th, Supporting deaf children's listening and spoken language in mainstream education on September 30th and "What's so funny?" developing verbal humour with deaf children on November 11th.

Keep up to date with all upcoming AVUK events [here](#).

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[WORLD NEWS - UK - AVUK - Deaf Awareness Week](#)

What's Your 100 for Deaf Awareness Week

Celebrating Deaf Awareness Week in the UK in May focussed on continuing to dispel the myth that deaf children cannot learn to speak as well as their hearing peers.

AVUK asked current and graduate children to speak 100 words on their chosen subject. The results included poems, bedtime stories, an explanation of wormholes and a history of football.

[Watch here](#)

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[WORLD NEWS - USA - ACI ALLIANCE](#)



AMERICAN COCHLEAR IMPLANT ALLIANCE

[CI2021 Cochlear Implants in Adults and Children: It's a Wrap!](#)

As our virtual conference, CI2021 Cochlear Implant in Adults and Children, comes to a close, we will be posting some of the most viewed pdfs and videos to our website. It was a very successful CI conference with over 1400 attendees and that some of the content will be posted free on the website later this summer such as the Niparko Lecture (Degeneration and Regeneration of the Inner Ear). One of our most viewed sessions was the Consumer/Parent Workshop (How Recent Scientific Discoveries are Advancing Cochlear Implant Benefits), that was well attended by participants from around the world. Be on the lookout for the material - <https://www.acialliance.org/page/CI2021>.

[Cochlear Implants, Awareness and Disability: An All Americas Perspective](#)

CI Recipients, Advocates and Professionals Discuss their CI Experiences

Watch the discussion between five adults each associated with cochlear implants in different ways as they discuss their most significant benefits, challenges, and lessons learned throughout their journeys. <https://www.acialliance.org/page/AllAmericasPerspective>

Participants in these videos include:

Vinton Cerf PhD

"Father of the Internet" and Vice President and Chief Internet Evangelist, Google

Sigrid Cerf

CI recipient, Technology Advocate

Luciano Moreira MD

Otolaryngologist and CI Surgeon, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Paula Pfeifer

Executive Director, Cronicas da Surdez, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Donna Sorkin MA

[Sound of Metal](#)

A new film, *Sound of Metal*, premiered in early December 2020. Our Chair, Dr. Oliver Adunka, had the following comments on the film, *"I continue to be disappointed by the media's portrayal of cochlear implantation. While the struggles of hearing loss and the associated communication deficits along with the social isolation of hearing impairment are well portrayed in the film Sound of Metal, there were inaccuracies associated with cochlear implantation. Donna Sorkin, our Executive Director, wrote editorial on the topic which we published and she continues to be interviewed by publications on the film's portrayal of hearing loss generally and on CI specifically"*. Read more reviews and articles on the film here: <https://www.acialliance.org/page/SoundofMetal>

I encourage you to take a read and continue our quest to educate the public on the importance of hearing and the ability of cochlear implants to restore the sense of hearing.

[International Hearing Society \(IHS\)](#)

We are excited to announce our partnership with the International Hearing Society (IHS), a membership association representing hearing healthcare professionals worldwide. IHS members are hearing aid dispensers engaged in the practice of testing hearing and selecting, fitting, and dispensing hearing instruments as well as counseling patients.

The partnership was an outcome of ongoing efforts by Immediate Past Chair and Audiologist Meredith Holcomb, who has been working with IHS chapters and individual hearing aid specialists providing educational presentations on when to refer patients for a cochlear implant evaluation. Dr. Holcomb has found great interest by this group of hearing care professionals in learning more about CI and how they can better serve their patients.

The staff of ACI Alliance contacted IHS headquarters leadership and began a conversation as to how we could work together to advance our joint interest in improving support of adults who may benefit from cochlear implants. The process we followed, and offerings we are providing are:

- IHS communicated with its members on the new program with ACI Alliance
- IHS members were offered the opportunity to have a one-year complimentary membership in ACI Alliance

IHS members are welcome to join ACI Alliance for a one-time discount. If you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity, please contact Jessica Houk; jhouk@acialliance.org. <https://www.acialliance.org/page/IHS>

Read our article in *The Hearing Journal*: June 2021 - Volume 74 - Issue 6 - p6.

Is Your Hearing Aid Patient a CI Candidate? Holcomb, Meredith AuD; Odato, Laura MPP

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[RELATED CONGRESS - Webinar - The Relationship Between Hearing Loss and Depression, Cognition and Dementia](#)



This webinar will be held on the 26 July (in Europe) and 27 July (in Australia) July webinar. **Our Vice President, Robert Mandara will be a panellist** with a world class line up of speakers, as follows:

Chair: Gerard O'Donoghue,

Professor of Otology and Neurotology and Consultant Neuro-Otologist at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust

Craig Buchman,

Lindburg Professor and Head, Department of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis

Frank Lin,

Director, Cochlear Center for Hearing and Public Health, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health | Professor of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery

Robert Mandara,

1st Vice President, European Association of Cochlear Implant Users (EURO-CIU) | Bilateral cochlear implant user

Dakota Bysouth-Young,

Specialist Audiologist, Hearing Implants Australia

Isabelle Mosnier,

ENT surgeon – Deputy head of ENT department, La Pitié Salpêtrière Hospital, Paris, France

To register, [click here](#)

Addressing hearing loss is associated with improvements in overall wellbeing including mental health by enabling people to communicate more easily with others. This can reduce the social isolation and quality of life problems associated with hearing loss. Addressing untreated hearing loss appears to be associated with improved cognition and a reduced risk of dementia. Further research is needed, and being carried out on the impact of cochlear implants in addressing cognitive impairment and mitigating the risk of dementia. **(1)**

This webinar will feature presentations from a diverse multi-disciplinary panel of experts. The panel will present real world examples from their own perspective and experience as well as discussing the recommendations from the Consensus Paper in relation to hearing loss and depression, cognition and dementia. Check out the panel for this webinar below and [register to attend here](#). Or you can [learn more about the topics covered and future events in the series here](#).

(1) Craig A. Buchman, et al., *Unilateral Cochlear Implants for Severe, Profound, or Moderate Sloping to Profound Bilateral Sensorineural Hearing Loss. A Systematic Review and Consensus Statements*. *JAMA Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg*. doi:10.1001/jamaoto.2020.0998 Published online August 27, 2020.

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[RELATED CONGRESS - European Symposium on Paediatric Cochlear Implantation \(ESPCI, 2021\)](#)



15TH EUROPEAN SYMPOSIUM ON PEDIATRIC COCHLEAR IMPLANTATION

ESPCI 2021

Online

27-30 October, 2021.

ESPCI 2021 was planned for Budapest in October several years ago – however, times have changed, and the Symposium will now be entirely online. What a pity not to visit Budapest, but Prof Jozsef Kiss of the University of Szeged, Hungary, and his professional organiser, Dóra Horváth, now have plenty of experience in making online meetings exciting and accessible to more people than ever. So, we invite you to the 15th European Symposium on Paediatric Cochlear Implantation (ESPCI 2021), to be held online (Budapest, Hungary), 27 – 30 October 2021.

ESPCI began in Nottingham in 1992 and is the only international CI conference which is dedicated to children and their families and has as part of its mandate the involvement of families and the young people themselves. You have until the end of June to submit an abstract so do think about it!

For further information please visit the official website (<https://espci2021.org/>) of the event, where you have the opportunity to register for the event.

We would like to encourage you to submit your abstract (<https://espci2021.org/abstracts/>) in order to be able to create a diverse scientific program. The abstract submission deadline is June 30th, 2021.

We look forward to welcoming you on ESPCI!

Prof. Dr. habil. Jozsef Géza Kiss, President of ESPCI 2021
Dóra Horváth, Professional Organiser,
Sue Archbold, General Secretary of ESPCI

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RELATED CONGRESS - USA - International Conference on the Management of the Tinnitus and Hyperacusis Patient



(Photo: Dr Rich Tyler)

Cochlear Implants a focus of the Annual Tinnitus conference

The 28th Annual Tinnitus & Hyperacusis Conference will be held August 12-13 in Iowa.

This conference is intended for otologists, audiologists, psychologists, hearing aid specialists and nurses who provide clinical management services for patients with tinnitus. The conference will also provide information to patients who have tinnitus, their family and friends, but it will NOT include individual diagnosis and treatment. The purpose of this conference is to provide a review of current evaluation and management strategies for the treatment of tinnitus. Upon completion of the program, the participant will be able to discuss the management of tinnitus and the tinnitus patient.

This year there will be a special presentation on CIs for tinnitus. Patients are getting CIs

because of their tinnitus, and the presentation will include fitting and counseling strategies.

For further details, [click here](#).

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[RELATED CONGRESS - IFOS - join us one year from now in Vancouver!](#)



IFOS 2022 VANCOUVER

June 18-22, 2022

ENT WORLD CONGRESS

The unprecedented events of 2020 and 2021 have challenged all of us, including the committee organizing originally IFOS 2021 Vancouver and now [IFOS 2022 Vancouver](#). With those times slowly behind us, it will soon be time to reconnect with friends at the [IFOS 2022](#) World Congress in Vancouver June 18-22, 2022!

The local organizing committee, the IFOS Board, and [The Canadian Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery](#) have been assessing the ongoing global pandemic and its potential impact on you as attendees, your families, and your communities. Although parts of the world remain challenged, we are seeing light at the end of the tunnel. By next year, we expect to be able to hold an in-person meeting in Vancouver. This will be a great opportunity to reconnect with colleagues and friends while experiencing firsthand all of the

incredible facilities, hotels, and the beauty that Vancouver has to offer as a sustainable destination.

Follow us on [Twitter](#) to keep up with the latest updates, industry news, and announcements! Encourage your colleagues and trainees to join the conversation at [@IFOSVancouver](#) + [#IFOS2022](#) to help build buzz around the congress.

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ADVANCED BIONICS - Ultimate Ease of Use with the AB Remote app



You should be able to wake up, put on your sound processor and get right into your day, knowing that you'll be hearing your best without having to make adjustments to your processor. Our AB Remote app makes this easy and discreet by providing you convenient management of all your hearing devices on one smartphone:

- Easy to use and navigate for your Naída™ CI M sound processor and Phonak Naida™ Link M hearing aid.
- Adjust volume and control compatible devices together or independently. Universal Compatibility with any Bluetooth® enabled smartphone.
- Easy pairing process select programs and check sound processor battery status all within the app.

The AB Remote app is available on App Store and Google Play Store.

Find out more on AdvancedBionics.com/NaidaCI

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ADVANCED BIONICS - Regenerating Hearing? Yep, AB's Working on It.



AIM™ - Active Insertion Monitoring

Since its founding, Advanced Bionics has been guided by a passion for improving hearing through innovation in medical technology. To this day, this passion drives us to look beyond cochlear implant devices, and invest in scientific research, to foster better understanding of the human ear, and to help usher in a time when hearing loss can be repaired as easily as a scraped knee.

Patrick Boyle, AB's Senior Director, External Cooperation is one of our scientists actively working with researchers in academia towards this end. We caught up with him to learn a little more about some of his interesting current work: *"For the first time ever, we're able to observe and record the inner workings of the cochlea, our hearing organ, frequently enough to learn how it behaves and changes on a daily basis. [...] In 2019, AB developed the AIM system, the world's first commercially available cochlear monitoring and objective measurement system, for use during and after CI surgery. It's a tool that uses the CI electrodes to measure the tiny electrophysiological impulses generated by the cochlea in response to sound. Clinically, the AIM system provides valuable information to the surgeon performing CI implantation, and also to the audiologists working with the patient afterwards. But for our research purposes, it is also the perfect tool to monitor a person's cochlear status easily and frequently."*

Read the [entire story](#) on our blog, then explore it to find the powerful stories CI experts, CI recipients, or parents of children with CIs are sharing with us about their hearing journey and other helpful articles on hearing loss and cochlear implant technology.

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[COCHLEAR - Family Celebration to mark World Hearing Day](#)

Cochlear Family Celebration

World Hearing Day



Cochlear®



PROGRAMME
PROGRAMMA
PROGRAMM

AUDITORIUM

EXHIBIT HALL
SALA ESPOSITIVA
AUSSTELLUNGSHALLE

LOUNGE



All in the Family - hundreds of recipients unite to celebrate

How a virtual event connected hundreds of Cochlear Family members

The power of the Cochlear community came alive recently as more than 600 recipients in Europe joined together for “Cochlear Family Celebration” to mark World Hearing Day in March and our 40th anniversary.

Unlike previous Cochlear Family events, this year’s celebration was entirely virtual and drew a record number of participants from the UK, Ireland, Germany and Italy, who logged on to learn about the latest Cochlear technology and connect with other recipients.

A highlight of the event was a virtual lounge which allowed for a more interactive experience. A chat room was set up exclusively for recipients to ask questions and share experiences while an online booth provided direct access to Cochlear staff to answer questions and direct people to more information.

“It is wonderful to see this type of event,” one recipient posted in the live chat and echoed by others.

Live chat rooms

Several hundred recipients actively participated in the chat rooms, highlighting the value of being a part of Cochlear Family, a community where shared experiences and support from others is so readily available, especially at time of limited travel or group gatherings.

This kind of informal chat with people who understand what you’re talking about is what makes the community feel like family.

Cochlear CEO and President Dig Howitt reiterated this in his opening address and warm welcome to event attendees: “Cochlear Family is your family.”

While recipients posted about practical topics such as battery life and streaming, it was also an opportunity to surface hot topics and emerging challenges such as how to communicate with people wearing face masks.

“Face masks definitely make it more difficult to understand,” one recipient posted. “For school, I’d recommend handing the Mini Mic to the teacher so that you have a direct connection. And if the environment is quiet enough, it also helps me to simply set the sound processors to a louder setting.”

With lockdown preventing many recipients from attending clinics, a session on rehab was offered to share tips and help recipients actively engage in listening or conversation practice. Topics ranged from activities in daily life to using the Cochlear smart app technology to monitor listening environments and track progress.

Recipients were also keen to share their experiences with the latest Cochlear technology and learn from others about how to get the most out of their new device.

“I have just received an upgrade to my Nucleus® 7 just this week and it has been awesome,” one recipient posted. “One of my favourite things about the Nucleus 7 is the wireless streaming. I absolutely love it! Is anyone using the streaming?”

Innovation updates

Innovation and the latest technology were also key themes of the four sessions presented by Cochlear staff in the virtual auditorium including a deep dive into the new Cochlear™ Nucleus® Kanso® 2 Sound Processor.

“At Cochlear, we’ve worked hard to ensure that the Kanso® 2 Sound Processor delivers advanced hearing performance, industry leading connectivity and a built-in rechargeable battery without increasing the size,” said Nicola Robertson, an audiologist and product manager from the UK. “It is the smallest and lightest rechargeable off-the-ear sound processor.”

Richard Brook, Cochlear President EMEA & Latin America, took the opportunity to highlight the fact Cochlear’s commitment to innovation continued to benefit people with hearing loss: *“The fact that Cochlear is celebrating 40 years in 2021 is testament to a remarkable commitment to innovation.”*

“By continuing to improve and adapt to new technologies we now have early implant recipients who have access to the latest sound processor technology. The next 40 years will be an amazing journey too.”

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[COCHLEAR - Inspired by you for 40 years](#)

Inspired by you
for 40 years

Hear now.
And always



We have devoted this year to you and the amazing things you've done

For over 40 years, Cochlear has been inspired by the bravery, resilience and achievements of people who hear with a Cochlear implant. When we asked Cochlear Family members to use social media and share their experiences to inspire others, we were moved by the stories we heard.

A picture paints a thousand words

These 'then and now' photos tell stories of lives that have inspired us and many others.

Mona had difficulties hearing since childhood and got her first hearing aid as a teenager. In 1977, at the age of 40, she became the world's first bone conduction implant recipient, inspired by the desire to hear her daughter's voice.

In 1982, Graham was the world's first person to receive a commercial cochlear implant. After being unable to hear for 17 years, he valued the sense of connection he gained with his family, especially his daughters. Now, almost 40 years since getting his implant, Graham still appreciates the importance of hearing to feel connected to life and life's opportunities.

Sue was one of the world's first deaf people to make a phone call back in 1984. She 're-enacted' the experience as one of the first people to stream a call directly to her ears using her cochlear implant and iPhone in 2017.

In 1987, Holly was one of the first children ever to receive a cochlear implant. Because of her determination and success, thousands of parents have been inspired to choose an implanted hearing solution for their own children. That's something Holly can proudly smile about.

Debbie was determined to get the most from life and chose a cochlear implant to treat her hearing loss. Jeff, her husband of more than 30 years, was so inspired by Debbie's experience that he made the same decision.

Sharing success creates success

These people, like you, consider themselves ordinary. We see people living extraordinary lives. Every day your strength, determination and resilience inspire us to take another step to improve the lives of all people with hearing loss.

When you share your experience with the world, you inspire others to take the next step on their own hearing journey.

Do something extraordinary today! Share your experience on social media. Tell others what inspired you and what you have achieved with your Cochlear implant. Use the hashtags [#CochlearImplant](#) [#BoneConductionImplant](#) [#HearingImplant](#) to help us find your posts and share them.

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MED-EL - MED-EL wins two internationally recognized Design Awards



reddot winner 2021



Two leading international design awards honor the outstanding design of MED-EL's RONDO 3 audio processor: the iF Design Award and the Red Dot Design Award. MED-EL is pleased to receive the Red Dot Design Award in the category Product Design and the iF Design Award in the category Medicine/Health. It is MED-EL's core vision to improve the quality of life for people with hearing loss worldwide with their hearing implants. To this end, MED-EL takes a close look at its users and their very special needs. This drives product designers to develop products that combine functionality and technological innovation with aesthetic design, comfort and individual wearing options.

Red Dot and iF Design Award for RONDO 3

Markus Dilger, the designer responsible for the RONDO 3, explains: *"Our main goal was to create an honest, robust, and simple-to-use product with aesthetic quality. Making it both*

robust and aesthetic was the most challenging task. At the same time, we kept our users in mind regarding the size and weight of the device. The changeable covers with the new pattern serve as a filter and hide the technically required microphone openings.” The result: an extremely slim and lightweight one-button design that makes the RONDO 3 simple and intuitive to use. The single-unit processor comes without cables and is worn off the ear, which makes it particularly comfortable for spectacle wearers.

That way, RONDO 3 can either blend in or stand out – users can match the covers according to their mood to stand out from the crowd and show their individual style: Funny monsters, pirates, or animals for kids, stylish patterns for fashionistas, or unobtrusive hair-patterned covers for the classic type. With more than 30 sleek and stylish changeable covers to choose from, RONDO 3 can easily change an entire look.

Combining innovative technology with outstanding design

Form follows function. This well-known guiding design principle was also applied to the RONDO 3, as the technology behind the design is crucial. For MED-EL, sophisticated and pioneering designs always go hand in hand with technical innovations. RONDO 3 stands for superior hearing performance with the latest front-end processing technology, including two microphones, enhanced noise reduction, and Adaptive Intelligence. It is designed without cables and can be charged wirelessly for a full day of hearing. RONDO 3 is also completely connected to stream high-quality audio from many external audio sources.

“MED-EL aspires to offer groundbreaking and industry-leading products with its innovative design and development approach. The company was the first manufacturer to come up with the idea of a single-unit processor for cochlear implants. For the first time, control unit, battery, and coil were combined into one single unit, making it much more comfortable to wear,” states Anil Ayvaz, Product Manager of RONDO 3 audio processors. *“RONDO 3 makes hearing and connecting with what you love so simple,”* he adds.

Listening to music, a stimulating conversation, or the voice of a loved one – with the right technology, these moments of personal joy are possible again for people with hearing loss and have an invaluable influence on quality of life.

[Learn more here.](#)

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[MED-EL - Use Audiobooks and Podcasts to develop your listening skills](#)



Listening to audiobooks and podcasts can be a great way to work on your listening skills with your hearing implant. Not sure where to start? We are happy to share with you some tips for using audiobooks and podcasts to advance your listening skills.

Audiobooks

1. Use an audiobook AND the hardcopy version together. If you are new to listening with your audio processor, start by listening to the audiobook and use the same book in hardcopy to read along with. This is referred to as 'reading tracking' and is more commonly completed with a communication partner reading aloud, while you read along with the same text. As your listening skills develop, you may no longer need to read along with the written material, or you may just use the written material to check when you are unsure of what you heard.
2. Speaking Rate. You can adjust the speaking rate of the audiobook by varying amounts depending on the app you are using. Slow down the speaking rate to begin with, then as you gain more listening practice and become more familiar with the speaker, start to return the speaking rate to the original setting.
3. Familiar books. Listening to familiar or favorite books will make it easier for you to follow along as you are already familiar with the storyline and characters.
4. Library. Contact your local library to find out whether audiobooks (and the corresponding hardcopy books) are available to loan.

Podcasts

1. Find one that's interesting for you. Podcasts are available for free download online and through various smartphone apps. With a broad range of topics from the latest news, to sports, gardening and pop culture, you are sure to find a podcast to keep you engaged and interested.
2. Keep it simple. Try to find and listen to podcasts with only one or two speakers. This will make it easier to follow along with what is being said.
3. Transcripts. Some podcasts offer written transcripts. It is helpful, especially in the early days following cochlear implant activation to listen while reading along with the transcript.

Looking for other tips, some listening inspiration and more ideas for listening practice at home?

Visit the [MED-EL Blog](#) and take a look at the [new Adult Rehabilitation Kits \(ARKs\)](#). Designed to offer structured and visually appealing listening practice, the ARKs incorporate auditory training, auditory and cognitive processing, and lifestyle activities for cochlear implant rehabilitation.

[Learn more here.](#)

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[MED-EL - How to use our Adult Rehabilitation Kits at home](#)



Designed to offer structured and visually appealing listening practice, the MED-EL Adult Rehabilitation Kits (ARKs) incorporate auditory training, auditory and cognitive processing, and lifestyle activities for cochlear implant rehabilitation.

The ARKs were originally developed to offer rehab professionals tips and materials for their work with cochlear implant recipients. To gain the most benefit from your CI, you can use the ARKs for your listening practice with a communication partner at home too!

No matter where you are on your listening journey, you can tailor the activities in the ARKs to meet your individual listening needs.

In our [dedicated Blog article](#) you will find the MED-EL ARKs to download and some examples of things you can do to make listening activities easier or more challenging.

[Learn more here.](#)

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[OTICON MEDICAL initiates the first ever annual Bone Anchored Hearing Awareness Day – Good Vibrations](#)



On the 3rd of May Oticon Medical launched the first ever Bone Anchored Hearing Awareness day – Good Vibrations. By initiating this annually recurring “Good Vibrations” day we celebrated bone anchored hearing as a treatment and raised awareness of how this treatment has affected users across the globe.

Over 250,000 people, from all over the world, use some form of bone conduction hearing device, so we wanted to bring these users together to celebrate them and the treatment – regardless of the brand.

Bone anchored hearing systems today consist of a small implant, an abutment/connector and a sound processor that attaches to the abutment/connector. The processor transmits sound by conduction through bone directly into the cochlea. In this way, bone anchored hearing systems uses both the body’s natural ability to conduct sound as well as its ability to osseointegrate.

The date May 3rd was carefully selected as it is the birthday of Per-Ingvar Braanemark. Braanemark was a Swedish physician and research professor known as the father of osseointegration and the godfather of bone anchored hearing. His discoveries enabled today’s bone conduction hearing devices.

On Good Vibrations Day users joined us online to celebrate. We were overwhelmed with the amount of people who shared their personal stories of how receiving a bone anchored hearing device affected their life.

One user, Paul from the UK, described how after being fitted with a bone anchored hearing device he was able to turn his volunteering for the UK ambulance service into a full-time career:

“Having the Ponto gave me the ability to apply with confidence. It enabled me pass the health assessment with flying colours; I asked the assessor if my hearing would cause a problem, she said; ‘no issues there, I’ve been testing you throughout this entire interview – by speaking in a low voice and turning my head and a lot of other tricks and you have reacted as if you have normal hearing’.”

We look forward to more people and organisations joining us to celebrate Good Vibrations next year and long into the future.

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[OTICON MEDICAL - CIs help users where it matters most](#)



Although CIs make a world of a difference, it is well known that CI users often find noisy situations challenging to listen in. Analyses of several thousands of CI data logs by Bush and colleagues (2017) show that CI users spend twice as much time listening to speech in noise than in quiet, and this pattern holds across all age groups. CI users usually find themselves in noise levels that are moderate, and CI signal processing algorithms should therefore target these situations. These algorithms work like sieves: they attempt to identify and block noise, and only let through the signal of interest, for example the voice of a dear friend over the background noise of a café.

One technology to do so are directional microphones; a trialled and tested technology that has been available in CIs for over 15 years, yet developments continue to improve performance. The Neuro 2 sound processor has two microphones, whose input is carefully compared and combined to result in reduced sensitivity for sounds coming from the sides and back. The Oticon Medical directional microphone system, called Free Focus, can be adjusted to four settings, for an increasing amount of help from Optimised Omni to Speech Omni, Split Dir, and finally Full Dir.

Two studies recently compared the benefits of two of the microphone settings; Speech Omni versus Optimised Omni in adult Neuro CI users. The study results were published earlier this year in the peer-reviewed scientific journal *Audiology Research* (Bastos Cordeiro et al, 2021). As expected, Speech Omni, where the directional microphones are engaged to reduce moderate levels of background noise without compromising the listening experience of the user, resulted in significantly better speech identification scores compared to Opti Omni. The people participating in the studies were 12 new Neuro CI system users from Brazil and 11 experienced Neuro CI system users from France. Their task was to listen to and repeat sentences in controlled noisy situations. The users alternated between Optimised Omni and Speech Omni without knowing which directional microphone mode they were trialling, to avoid any potential bias. Interestingly, the results show that Speech Omni was most effective in moderate levels of noise, where CI users spend most of their days, and thus a very valuable microphone setting for CI users.

Study: Bastos Cordeiro et al. Adult Users of the Oticon Medical Neuro Cochlear Implant System Benefit from Beamforming in the High Frequencies. *Audiology Research*. 2021, 11, 179–91.

Link: [To read the full article reporting the studies](#)

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