

# CICADA CHORUS

The Magazine of CICADA Queensland (Cochlear Implant Club and Advisory Association)  
Patrons: Dr Anthony Parker MBBS, FRACS & Dr Christopher Que Hee, MBBS (Hons), FRACS, FAC

October 2020 Issue 11  
Affiliated with CICADA Australia, Inc.

## ROUNDUPS FROM OUR WONDERFUL REPS!

**T**he **Darling Downs branch** enjoyed spectacular views and sunshine at the Picnic Point Café at the August and September meet-ups. Around 10 people attended each meeting, with lots of conversation, support, questions, good food and coffee. Some attendees are considering a cochlear implant, some have a brand new implant and others are experienced cochlear implant users. A range of topics were discussed, from transcription apps to rehabilitation strategies.

We're a new group on the Darling Downs, but our member base is expanding, with new members joining each month. All four brands of cochlear implants are represented in our Darling Downs group. We're lucky to have wonderful support from our local audiologists and CI surgeon in Toowoomba, spreading the word about our new group. If you'd like to join us, everyone is welcome—contact Darling Downs Representative Louisa Handyside on 0416 060 514 or email [louisahandyside@gmail.com](mailto:louisahandyside@gmail.com)

**D**ue to restrictions still in place at the Pialba Library the **Fraser Coast meet up** was held at the Sticky Fig Gallery Café. 14 attended but we were able to squeeze in more chairs. A few people travelled extra miles to attend, from Bundaberg and Pilerwa which is about 25 kms outside Maryborough.

We welcomed back Penny Phillips, Sunshine Coast CICADA Representative. Penny attended 2 of our meet ups last year and enjoyed catching up with members she had met previously.

We were pleased to welcome Karen Lovelock, Clinical Account Manager with Cochlear in Brisbane. Karen was happy to answer member's questions, however  
*Continued page 4* ▶▶

**MERRY XMAS  
AND HAPPY  
NEW YEAR TO  
ALL CICADA  
MEMBERS**

## CHRISTMAS PARTIES

### BRISBANE

Yeronga RSL, Cnr  
Fairfield Rd &  
Kadumba St, Yeronga

November 28 from  
11.30 onwards

Parking and a  
courtesy bus from the  
train station to the  
venue is available.

Please RSVP by  
November 20 to  
Shirley on [shirley@  
hotchipz.com.au](mailto:shirley@hotchipz.com.au)

### SUNSHINE COAST

Sunshine Castle, Bli Bli  
Tuesday 24 November

Contact Penny on  
[pennyphillips1@  
bigpond.com](mailto:pennyphillips1@bigpond.com)

### FRASER COAST

Venue TBA  
December 2

**Join us for great food,  
raffles and xmas cheer!**

**IN THIS ISSUE** PROFILES | OUT & ABOUT | YOUR SAY | UPDATES | HUMOUR

# Communication Tips When Living With Hearing Loss



Hear and Say  
Opening worlds

## Auditory Learning

Auditory learning focuses on your hearing and listening skills using your cochlear implant. Hear and Say's Listening and Spoken Language Specialist, Tracey Taylor, shares her top tips for getting the most out of your cochlear implant.

### 1. Listening in noise

When you're in a restaurant, or driving the car, try using your assistive listening device. This helps you to understand speech more clearly with background noise, decreases your effort to listen and reduces fatigue.

### 2. Cochlear implant 'alone' time

Regardless of whether your implant is newly switched on or you've been wearing it for years, consider incorporating some implant 'alone' listening. You may like to tune into a podcast or music, stream an episode of your favourite TV show or complete tasks in a listening app.

### Connect with us

**P** 07 3850 2111

**E** [mail@hearandsay.com.au](mailto:mail@hearandsay.com.au)  
[hearandsay.com.au](http://hearandsay.com.au)



Located in Brisbane, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Toowoomba and Townsville. **Telepractice services are available Australia-wide and internationally.**

### 3. Setting goals

Continue setting specific goals for using your implant. These might include feeling confident using the phone, hearing your children speak in the back of the car or being able to participate in online meetings.

### Hearing Implant Program

Hear and Say's holistic hearing implant and rehabilitation program is for people of all ages, and offers an interdisciplinary approach to support pre- and post-implant journeys.

Connect with Hear and Say's friendly team today to find out more about auditory learning, and get one step closer to achieving your hearing and communication goals.



## PRESIDENT'S PEN

Welcome CICADA members to the Spring edition of CHORUS.

The Covid-19 virus has had an affect on the operation of the Club, which could be said came to a standstill with most of our normal functions unable to proceed. Some meetups took place, but with a limit of 10 people.

The push to keep CapTel is gaining support, but there is still a long way to go. Konnekt seem to be resolving their system problems, especially the captioning part. I have used the Konnekt system lately and it's definitely shown a marked improvement to the way it was operating three months ago. It is good that both Konnekt and CapTel are both out there and it might even come that both systems will be available giving us a choice whether to just have a caption screen or a Skype and caption screen.

The Royal Victorian EYE and EAR Hospital put out a media release on the treatment of adult hearing loss. Here is an excerpt from the release:

*The consensus paper provides a framework for countries around the world, including Australia, to optimise care for adults and reinforces the importance of health professionals referring people with severe to profound hearing loss for cochlear implant assessment.*

A gentle reminder to all members that time is fast approaching when our **annual raffle** will be drawn and three lucky winners will have some Christmas spending money.

Can tickets be returned to the Secretary by October 24 in the addressed envelope provided? As they say, you have to be in it to win it!



The paper went on to say that cochlear implants are an effective medical treatment for many adults living with severe to profound sensorineural hearing loss but only just 10%-12% of Australian adults who could benefit from cochlear implant have one. One category was the cost implications of cochlear implants and this is going to be the hard part. With the massive cost to the government of the virus there won't be a lot of money in the foreseeable future for implant funding.

***As this will be the last magazine for 2020, I'd like to wish all our members and everyone a Happy and Safe Christmas and a prosperous New Year.***

Until next time

Stephen Willis, President



## ROUNDUPS FROM OUR REPS CONT...

▶ *Continued from front page*

to overcome the background noise and seating at one long straight table it was decided that Karen would talk to each person one on one. This proved successful as Karen spent time moving around the table to sit beside those who had questions.

I do know Karen made one lady very happy by correctly pairing her mini mic so she can use it with confidence in noisy situations. But I have no idea what the other questions are. Judging by the happy faces I am sure Karen's help was much appreciated.

So maybe those people will share their questions and answers at our next meet up on 7 October? If we can't use the Library Room for this meet up a generous offer was made by a recipient of a works lunch room which is in the final stages of being renovated. Thank you – it is very much appreciated.

It gave me great pleasure to see members helping each other by sharing their knowledge of apps on mobile phones. Another member was over the moon to have the LIVETRANSCRIBE app installed on his mobile.

A Support Group is all about sharing experiences, sharing knowledge and supporting each other... thank you all we provide that by the bucketful!

Our last meeting on the **Gold Coast** was on 2 September, with a small attendance. We are very fortunate to have the Able Centre meeting room for our meetings and storage of CICADA material.

Also thanks to Southport Hearing Australia for displaying our groups meeting itinerary.

Our next Meeting will be on 7 October at 10.00am at 13 Sykes Court Southport.

Meet Ups on the **Sunny Coast** recommenced in June 2020 with a COVID friendly get together at the local Bli Bli park, it was good to catch up and we enjoyed being out in the fresh air with friends we hadn't seen for a while.

The following months saw a return to the Sunshine Castle Café as it became a safe COVID place with some restrictions like paper cups/plates, signing in and keeping social distancing.

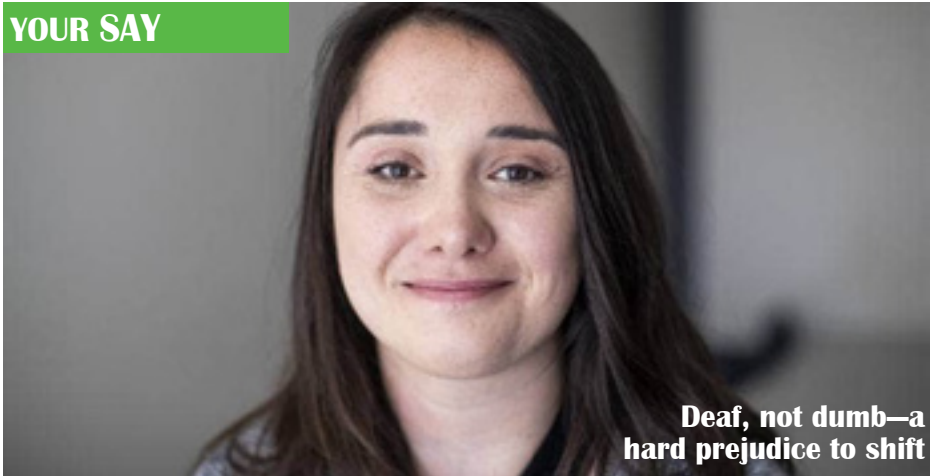
In August we had our very own Joyclyn as a Guest Speaker who is an AB (Advanced Bionics) representative. She had a lot to tell us about her AB implant which generated a lively discussion about accessories and how they can help us improve our hearing health.

In September we had the Aspire presentation to Penny with Kathy Thompson Nurse Manager for Patient Experiences and an Executive Director attending from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and it could be filmed so watch this space.

In October we have Karen Lovelock as guest speaker on behalf of Cochlear and we are hoping to have a Q&A session about all things cochlear implants.

That just leaves our November meet-up which will be a quiet Xmas party and hopefully the New Year will bring happier times.

## YOUR SAY



## Deaf, not dumb—a hard prejudice to shift

BY CARLY GOOCH, SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

Asti Maera received a cochlear implant just before government funding for them was reduced. She still struggles to understand some conversations or online videos and courses.

*It's not being deaf that's the challenge, it's society's limitations for people who are hearing impaired that makes it hard.*

I lost my hearing gradually through childhood, now I'm 95 per cent deaf. I could hear OK through primary school but pretty much from 11, 12 onwards I needed hearing aids full-time. Then when I got to about 15, 16, I was pretty much unable to hear. I

pretty much just gave up at that point. I dropped out of school, I didn't talk to many people, and I don't think that's uncommon for deaf people.

Asti received a cochlear implant four years ago, but she says it's not the quick fix some imagine. The hearing aids helped but I didn't know how bad it was until I got my cochlear implant. I've had that four years this December. The implant changed my life completely but I don't think it's changed a lot from other people's perspectives. I think there are some assumptions when I speak a bit differently. A big one I've heard a lot is: 'Where are you from?' It's more the

older generation, but a lot of people still say 'deaf and dumb'. They don't necessarily mean to be offensive with it, some of them do - so that's still out there. I don't want people to get the wrong impression with having a cochlear implant, I still struggle with hearing.

A lot of other people I know that have implants struggle with having to talk to other people all day, they find it really tiring. Your brain has to re-learn everything, basically from scratch when you've been deaf for so long. It's a lot of work and a lot of focus; you're constantly trying to make sure that you are hearing things.

People think having a cochlear implant is a ▶▶

## YOUR SAY CONT...

quick fix, that suddenly I can hear perfectly and if I don't hear them, they think I'm ignoring them. I have had co-workers in the past that were like, 'She's so rude'.

I don't hear clearly, it's kinda like being in the shower or the jug is boiling and your child over in the corner is trying to talk to you. My mum is also completely deaf as well as my grandmother and aunt. Mum got her implant when I was about eight. With my mum being deaf, it gives me a bit more acceptance over the whole thing.

Over the years, I've noticed a shift with younger people that they're kind of surprised about the lack of support that I had growing up. For them, they learned sign language in class and I never had that. And technology is always improving. I mean, it is incredible, there's a thing in my head that helps me hear. I can't really imagine life without it.

The implant is funded for some in New Zealand: I think it's down to seven cochlear implants a year

for the entire country. They cut the funding right after I got mine. They do fund for children because they have a better success rate. Once you're 18, there's very limited funding. For the cochlear implant, I'm pretty sure the surgery is somewhere between \$70,000 to \$100,000; it's not cheap. People actually move to Australia to get it done.

*I find it really hard to get a job being hearing impaired. I think a lot of people have been reluctant to hire me, even at supermarkets and fast food joints.*

Asti is studying a Bachelor of Information Technology at Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology. She says that it has been really great; they have really supportive tutors. They're 100 per cent behind me getting this qualification. I really want to do that, and get through it, and be able to make a career for myself. I'm getting to 30 and I don't have a whole great plan ahead of me, but I hope I can start a plan.

I'm not sure what the issue is. I've applied for lots of that sort of work and I've never got past the first stage. There's always that little part, if you have any medical history, and I would prefer to be up front about it because I am deaf and I can't escape that. If they're not willing to deal with it, I'm probably better off not working for them.

I mean I don't have a huge education, but you wouldn't expect that for something like Countdown. I have really great references for the jobs that I have had and yet still, I find it really hard to get a foot in. I've had a number of jobs, most of them have been manual labour including painting, Sealords and dairy farming. I've done fibre installations at Chorus, which was actually really great; they're a pretty good equal opportunity employer.

Being deaf has definitely impacted me; who I am as a person, emotionally, politically, how I see the world.

The opportunities that I've had in my life, it feels ►►



**YOUR SAY CONT...**

like a lot of them have been decided by the fact that I'm deaf.

*I feel very strongly about having equal rights for deaf people.*

The biggest thing for me right now is getting captions everywhere because there's absolutely no legislation

around captions in New Zealand, and it drives me mad. I can't even really watch the news because the captions are all chopped up because they barely have enough funding to do them in the first place.

A lot of people don't learn sign language, not everyone got to go to Van Asch, a school for

the deaf. Not everyone had the opportunity to learn sign language, the same way that a lot of Māori people didn't get the opportunity to learn te reo.

They learn sign language a bit in schools now, and if I'd been born five years later, I'd probably be doing a lot better.

● Reprinted and published with permission: Stuff Co NZ

# PANDEMIC PETALS

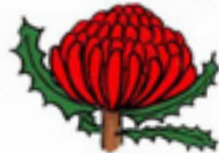
What is your inner blossom this spring?



**NUMBNUT GUMNUT**  
 - What day is it?  
 - Vague  
 - Is it still 2020?



**FULL-THROTTLE BLOOMIN' WATTLE**  
 - Still blooming  
 - probably still baking sourdough



**BLAH BLAH WARATAH.**  
 - loud, random  
 - bit spikey



**VERY SILLY LILLY PILLY**  
 - anti-masks  
 - covid-conspiracist  
 - Did their own "research"



**GOT-A-CRUSH BOTTLEBRUSH**  
 - exploring Love In The Time of Corona



**CRANKY BANKY**  
 - over it.

@JessHarwoodArt

## PROFILES

### SARAH'S NEXT CHAPTER

With schools opening their doors once again after the coronavirus-induced hiatus, 12-year-old Sarah has an exciting piece of technology to bring back to the classroom.

After being diagnosed with a permanent hearing loss in her left ear last year, Sarah recently underwent cochlear implant surgery—and amidst the stringent conditions of a global pandemic, had her implant switched onto sound at the Hear and Say Brisbane centre.



“Due to coronavirus my implant surgery had been on and off several times which was disappointing, so when I was finally able to have the surgery I was really excited,” said Sarah.

“When it came to switch-on day, my excitement was mixed with nervousness as it felt like I had been waiting forever to hear again. Mum and Dad kept saying that it would sound different than normal hearing, but it was impossible to know what this difference might be like.

As soon as I heard some sounds, my nervousness stopped and I felt only excitement – and once my ‘good ear’ was masked, I was amazed that I could distinguish between different sounds

and understand some words, even though what I could hear was like rapid beeping.”

Since having her cochlear implant switched on last month, Sarah said she was adjusting to hearing through her new implant, and enjoying trying out features like Bluetooth streaming.

“I have started streaming stories straight into my implant and following along with the book – it has been lovely to revisit some of my favourites from when I was little. During coronavirus there is even an Instagram account with celebrities reading books, so I have an endless supply,” said Sarah.

### CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

Hear and Say alumni, Darcy had an extra reason to celebrate his birthday well this year. Lending his voice as an ambassador of the recent Hear and Say: Here to Stay Giving Day, Darcy said he was thrilled to see the campaign raise well over its initial \$200,000 target, one day after he turned 22.

“I was stoked to see the community’s response to the Giving Day, because ▶▶





## PROFILES

Hear and Say has had a massive butterfly effect on my life and for so many others like me. I wouldn't have had the friends I have now, I wouldn't have worked in all the jobs I've had, or gone to the school I went to, or have the beautiful relationships with my family that I do, if I hadn't had my cochlear implants from a young age," said Darcy.

As one of the early "Hear and Say babies", Darcy is currently working on a property and preparing to start studies in graphic design. Darcy said he could still remember the Hear and Say team who taught him to hear and

speak many years ago, and said he still felt a special sense of community and gratitude whenever he visited the Brisbane centre. "If I was to lose the ability to hear and speak, it would be like losing all the colour in the world. I'd be losing so much of the depth and conversations I have, and the ability to talk and be able to share opinions and ideas with everybody – that's something that is very important to me, and a lot of people take it for granted."

● Source: *Hear and Say newsletter 24/06/2020* republished with permission.

### HEARING IS BELIEVING

With a laundry list of accolades under her arm, including an Order of Australia and Queensland Senior Australian of the Year (2018), calling Dr Dimity Dornan AO a pioneer run close to being an understatement.

As a graduate of the first speech therapy course offered in Queensland, Dimity entered the health sector as a sole practitioner. She became the first fulltime speech pathologist at the Princess Alexandra, Royal Brisbane and Royal Children's Hospitals, where she worked with patients who had suffered head injuries or strokes.

Seeking better forms of treatment for children experiencing extreme hearing loss, and knowing the cochlear implant would soon be available, Dimity studied and then adopted the auditory-verbal approach. After launching her own specialised practice, she established the not-for-profit Hear and Say in 1992,



which is now a world-leading paediatric auditory-verbal and cochlear implant centre

Hear and Say now shares its programs internationally and is considered a 'gold standard' global professional training program capable of assisting hundreds of thousands of children around the world.

In 2016, Dimity founded Bionics Queensland, which was incorporated ►►

## PROFILES

in 2018 to accelerate the bionics industry and help bring new bionics solutions to market for the benefit of people with previously untreatable medical problems. The scientifically researched outcomes of Hear and Say programs are contributing greatly to the rapidly expanding development of other types of human bionics such as bionic eyes, limbs and other organs.

"I remember Peter Beattie (a former Queensland premier) was visiting Hear and Say to announce funding for hearing screening for every newborn baby born in Queensland, and as we were walking to the podium to make the announcement I got word that this mother I had been working with (her son was diagnosed with deafness) had given birth to a second baby, a little girl, who had also been diagnosed with deafness, this time through the newborn screening. I was told she was devastated. Well, by the time I came off the podium I got another message from her saying, 'It's OK, we've done it before with our first little one and we know the program works.

We'll do it again and this time it will be even better because we've got an earlier start.'" Therein lies the essence of what Hear and Say aims to do, Dimity explains. "The difference between Hear and Say and other programs around the world is our ability to help and guide families whose babies are diagnosed with hearing loss. As a parent, finding out that your child is deaf or has hearing loss is scary. Parents often feel helpless and anxious about what this diagnosis could mean for their baby. Our aim is

take their hand and help them navigate the uncertainty.

"Being able to look parents in the eye and say, 'With every good luck your baby will grow up to be able to listen and go to school and do anything you dreamed of for them' ... that's a favourite moment for me.

My other favourite moment is seeing a child hear for the first time with a bionic ear. It's incredibly emotional and powerful." Dimity says she's constantly amazed by Hear and Say's 'graduates'—newborns who grew into children who are now adults with degrees, jobs and children of their own.

One notable example is Jamie-Lee Lewis, daughter of rugby league great Wally Lewis. Diagnosed as profoundly deaf when she was just one-year-old, Jamie-Lee has gone on to become a sportsperson, coach and mentor. Like many Hear and Say graduates, Jamie-Lee gives back by being an ambassador for Hear and Say as well as the Active Deaf Kids Program.

Jamie-Lee was also the first patient to try Macquarie University's world-first cochlear implant brain scanner, something that encouraged many families to embrace cochlear implant technology and bionics.

**"When it comes to bionic devices, the possibilities and combinations are incredible and endless."**

● Source: Reprinted from National Seniors newsletter Winter 2020

# BONE DISEASE MEDICATIONS MAY REVERSE HEARING LOSS

Preliminary findings from Harvard Medical School researchers at Massachusetts Eye and Ear may pave the way for trials to test bone density medications for hearing loss.

Hearing loss caused by damaged nerves, whether from sound exposure or aging, is irreversible. There are currently no medications approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat and reverse the most common type of hearing loss, called sensorineural hearing loss (SNHL). But a new animal study hopes to pave the way for future trials to see whether this type of treatment can be used in people.

It has been found that medications called bisphosphonates, which are commonly used to prevent bone density loss, were able to regrow damaged nerve connections in the inner ear in mice with SNHL.

One type of hearing loss, called conductive hearing loss, occurs when sound transmission from the ear canal to the inner ear is impaired (such as by a middle ear infection, fluid, or impaired vibration of middle ear bones), leading to a reduction in sound levels reaching the inner ear and an inability to hear soft sounds.

SNHL, on the other hand, occurs in the inner ear. The most common causes of hearing loss are noise exposure and aging, which results in loss of connections, called synapses, between nerve cells and sensory hair cells found in the inner ear. This type of SNHL is referred to as cochlear synaptopathy.

Previous research from the lab looked to identify potential pathways to treat SNHL. Their analyses found that osteoprotegerin, a substance typically secreted by bone cells to inhibit bone

remodelling, is highly produced by cochlear neurons and promotes their survival. In previous studies, doctors have observed that people with SNHL due to severe otosclerosis who take bisphosphonates have the ability to significantly improve their hearing loss and understand speech.

The scientists administered bisphosphonates to mice 24 hours after noise exposure. They found

that the medication had a dramatic effect at regenerating the synapses between inner hair cells and spiral ganglion neurons found in the ear, and restoring cochlear function.

The team further suggested that their finding provides possible mechanisms that could explain why some patients in

*“This is a significant finding because it opens the possibility for repurposing bisphosphonates, which typically treat severe osteoporosis and metastatic bone disease, for the treatment of SNHL. It is hoped that the promising results from this pilot study can lead to clinical trials within the next several years.”*

Continued page 19 ►►

## UPDATES

### SOPHONO™



Sophono is a hearing solutions division of Medtronic, a medical device company based in Dublin, Ireland. Sophono manufactures the SOPHONO™ magnetic bone-anchored hearing system, which is designed for use in adults and children with moderate to severe conductive hearing loss.

▶ **First transcutaneous BAHA:** The SOPHONO™ was the first transcutaneous BAHA system, meaning it was the first to transmit sound through unbroken skin instead of requiring an abutment that penetrates the skin. The sound processor attaches with a magnet, and when it is removed the device is invisible under

the skin.

▶ **Smallest implant:** The SOPHONO™ magnetic bone anchored hearing system is the smallest hearing implant available. It has a flat profile and can be implanted flush against the skull so that it is not visible when covered by your hair. This also makes it safer in case of accidental trauma to the head.

▶ **Optimal sound amplification:** The SOPHONO™ system offers the most sound amplification of any implantable hearing system on the market.

▶ **MRI safe:** The SOPHONO™ hearing system does not have to be removed for use in an MRI. In fact, it is safe for up to three hours and causes only a five-centimetre shadow on the MRI.

▶ **Programmable:** SOPHONO™ has eight channels and four programs. It also features a direct audio input that can be used with personal music players, cellular phones and FM radio.

● **Source:** <https://consumeraffairs.com/health/cochlear-implants/#sophono>

### COCHLEAR IMPLANT OSIA 2 SYSTEM

New model uses piezoelectric material used in microphones and high-end speakers. The FDA has approved the Cochlear Osia 2 System (Cochlear Acoustics), the first active Osseous integrated steady-state implant.

The Osia System can be used to treat hearing loss in adults and children 12 years and older with conductive hearing loss, mixed hearing loss and single-sided sensorineural deafness associated with conditions including chronic otitis media, otosclerosis and atresia/microtia.



The system features the Osia OSI200 Implant, which attaches to an osseous integrated BI300 Implant to send sound through the bone. The thin profile and monolithic design of the implant help to simplify surgery for the system. On the outside, the Osia 2 Sound Processor

## UPDATES

captures sounds and sends both the sound signal and power to the internal implant. The system comes with a choice of 5 colours.

The implant, which contains a transducer made of piezoelectric material, is designed differently from traditional bone conduction transducers. Driven by a wireless digital link, the transducer expands and contracts to create powerful vibrations that stimulate the inner ear while optimizing transfer of power and sound quality. Piezoelectricity has been used for years in many products like microphones, high-end speakers and medical equipment, but this is the first time it is being used in this type of hearing implant application.

One of the many advantages of the Piezo Power transducer, the manufacturer says, is its ability to amplify high frequencies, the area of sound most important for speech understanding. Results of a multicentre clinical investigation show a significant improvement in patients' ability to hear in both noise and quiet compared to unaided and aided preoperative testing.

The Osia OSI200 is placed under the

skin and works by bypassing damaged areas of the outer and middle ear, which sends sound directly to the inner ear. The implant is attached to the BI300 which is Cochlear's latest titanium implant featuring TiOblast™ surface technology. The implant is designed to promote faster and stronger integration to the bone (through a natural process known as Osseo integration).

**Piezo Power™ technology** Osia's System Piezo Power™ transducer (the part that vibrates) is designed to expand and contract to send powerful sound vibrations directly to your inner ear. This transducer has no movement between the inner workings of the implant, which provides you with reliable and consistent hearing performance over time.

The powerful transducer can help those with hearing loss up to 55 dB SNHL. This means it can help address a range of hearing loss levels and can help you hear now as well as if your hearing loss gets worse over time.

The Osia Implant is approved for MRIs at 1.5 and 3.0 Tesla with the internal magnet removed with a simple procedure.

● Source: Cochlear Limited, December 11, 2019

## ALPHA 2 MPO EPLUS

The Alpha 2 MPO ePlus™ magnetic bone conduction hearing system brings abutment-free bone conduction with the smallest magnetic implant on the market. Now with a peak output of 121 dB, the Alpha 2 MPO ePlus gives uncompromised sound with four programs, eight channels, and up to

250 hours on standard zinc air or a full day's use on the rechargeable battery (up to 32 hours). The Alpha 2 MPO ePlus is MRI compatible up to 3 Tesla<sup>3,4</sup> and has the smallest transcutaneous MRI shadow.

● Source: <https://bit.ly/343v7lx>





## TIPS ON A STAY IN HOSPITAL



A visit to hospital is fraught with nervousness and even more so when you have a hearing loss and you have to have surgery.

To alleviate the associated stress, here are some helpful tips:

- ▶ As soon as you get your admittance date, find out how administrative staff will contact you. Normally they call with a list of questions, but if you don't like voice calls, ask that an alert be placed on your hospital record for staff to use SMS or email instead of voice calls.
- ▶ Ask about a Hearing Resource kit when you arrive at hospital, as most hospitals now offer some form of help. Auslan interpreters can be requested for the Deaf and Pocket Talkers on loan are available in some hospitals for those that wear hearing aids. The pocket talker is a robust personal amplifier when hearing aids don't perform well.
- ▶ For cochlear recipients, wear a medical band or necklace that explains

no MRI and includes your medical details.

- ▶ Have a speech recognition program on your mobile to translate the speech of nurses and doctors to text on your mobile. If you don't have a speech to text app on your mobile, have a pen and paper on hand.
- ▶ Ask staff to write on the board in your room and in your hospital record that you have a hearing loss.
- ▶ Wear a hearing loss badge, or have a magnetic sign for the magnetic board in your room.
- ▶ Have a container for your aids and processors if you are staying overnight.
- ▶ Have fresh batteries in case you run out.



Most Importantly BE ASSERTIVE... don't pretend you have heard if you are not sure. Ask them to repeat instructions and information, this is so important!

Also a big bucket full of patience for explaining your loss to all you interact with in the hospital!

# NEW SURVEY LAUNCHING SOON!

CICADA will be launching a new survey in the coming weeks aimed at understanding more about how our members are coping with trying to communicate and keep in touch during COVID-19 restrictions.

Soon we'll be sending out a survey asking for your opinion on a variety of issues.

We want as many of our members as possible to fill in the survey and feel free to pass it onto others who are not members of CICADA but have an interest in what we do.

We hope to use the results to highlight any shortcomings affecting our members and advocating on your behalf for new and improved service delivery.



**DID YOU KNOW?**

**THE WORLD'S QUIETEST ROOM IS  
-9 DECIBELS, QUIET ENOUGH TO  
HEAR YOUR BLOOD FLOWING.**

## COULD YOU REPEAT THAT? FINDING HUMOUR IN HEARING LOSS

Life is full of humour, and it plays such a huge part in mine that I would be completely lost without it.

In fact, without my sense of fun, at times I think I would be totally speechless because of my love of puns, jokes, and one-liners. Yet I've observed that some people are almost afraid to embrace the humour in hearing loss.



I was an entertainer for 25 years, which included being part of a comedy duo doing stand-up across the UK. This seems like a lifetime ago now, and it was 30 years or so before my hearing loss. Losing my hearing has in no way changed my personality, and it shouldn't change yours either.

### LAUGHTER IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL

If you enjoy good-natured well-intentioned humour, that's great, because nothing on earth will help you get through the bad hearing loss days the way a good laugh will.

When I think about humour and hearing loss, one thing always comes to mind that never fails to make me smile. It's a scene from a 1970s British sitcom called "Fawlty Towers" in which an old woman

with severe hearing loss is doing battle with the hotel owner, played by John Cleese.

In my own life and in my own experiences with hearing loss, I have had many comedic scenes, not by design or good scripting, but by pure chance. The number of times I have misheard something and suffered the consequences have been the source of much amusement. In my family, it has become something of a standing joke and at times the comic in me finds it impossible not to milk it just a little – okay, a lot.

Humour really does make you feel good and also happens to be contagious – like yawning, only more fun. This is why stand up is so popular, as it involves someone else observing something amusing that other people find they too can relate.

### HUMOUR PUTS PEOPLE AT EASE

Many hearing people feel awkward around those with hearing loss, which can be uncomfortable for all concerned. However, try injecting a little fun into that particular equation and watch the difference.

I joke easily with strangers; it's the way I choose to break the ice and I'm good at it, though I did have a lot of practice. Stand-up comedian D.J. Demers is the same way. Not so long ago HearingLikeMe followed his tour. D.J. Demers, also known as "the hearing aid guy," has been doing stand-up since 2009 and fully embraces the humour in hearing loss.

Quote by Demers: "I was performing, [and] the battery in my right hearing aid died. First, I heard the warning beeps. I tried to plough through, but within 10 minutes the hearing aid was completely dead. For the first time in my comedy career, I had to make a battery change onstage in the middle of my set. It was actually a lot of fun. After I shut the battery door, I even had the students join me in counting down the seconds before my hearing aid turned back on. "

Now, that is certainly something I can relate to. You know what it's like. You arrange to go out for the evening, having stayed home for the last three weeks. An hour into your evening and your hearing aid beeps for a battery change, only you forgot to bring the battery. This happens to me all the time and for some really strange reason, only at important times. It's as if the universe likes to humble us when we least expect it.

Nonetheless, it took me a long time to start carrying spare batteries with me when I go out. In the meantime, you just have to laugh.

Humour is important and to assume that

because someone has a communication issue, they can't understand whether a thing is funny or not is insulting. Yet there are hearing people who think just like this. It is like those well-educated people who will offer Braille to deaf people, assuming somehow that it will be of use.

## FUNNY THINGS HEARING PEOPLE SAY

To finish off these thoughts, we'll look at some of the funny things hearing people say or do on the subject of, well, you know... If those hearing people could only see themselves through our eyes as they shout at us because they've just glimpsed a hearing aid, or speak super-slowly, because we all know how much that helps us to understand them.

What about when they say, "You don't look deaf?" My personal favourite is when they exclaim, "Wow you can talk!". It really all comes down to education. Mainstream society is simply unaware of what hearing loss actually means. Isn't it time we showed that we too can roll with the punches?

● Source: [www.hearinglikeme.com/could-you-repeat-that-finding-humor-in-hearing-loss/](http://www.hearinglikeme.com/could-you-repeat-that-finding-humor-in-hearing-loss/)  
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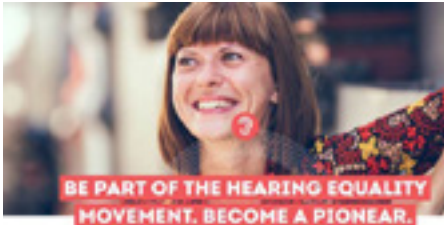
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## BITS & BOBS

### SOUNDFAIR

Congrats on a launch by Better Hearing Australia Victoria of its new trading name, Soundfair.



### COCHLEAR PROCESSOR PARTS

Some people have said that they find it difficult to order in parts using the [ci.support@hearing.com](mailto:ci.support@hearing.com) email address. It is said that the parts orders are not acknowledged and/or there is no confirmation of the order. Also orders can take up to a month to arrive. There are other ways in which parts can be ordered. You can visit the Hearing Australia office to order. Another way is to visit the Hearing Australia website and use the chat feature 'Chat now'. Don't forget to have your Hearing Australia client number and model of processor ready.

### DID YOU KNOW...

That this waterproof pill holder can also be used to keep your rechargeable battery in and add perhaps to your key chain? Handy if you are going to the beach. If you would like one, contact your branch representative.



### DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT SPARES...

It is never more important when travelling to have spare batteries on hand. In the case of rechargeable batteries, if the battery reaches the end of its life, and you haven't got a spare, it is very difficult to obtain a spare. You might like to take the disposable battery part that clips on to the processor, and a packet of disposable batteries. Purchasing 675 batteries is far easier as they are more common.

This has come about while a lady in New Zealand was faced with this dilemma. Adding to the drama was that the Cochlear website showed that the rechargeable batteries were out of stock. So it does pay to check the availability of rechargeable batteries and always have spares handy. Please note that it is important to keep disposables in the blister pack until they are needed.

### RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT PRINCESS ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL

- ▶ Personal amplified listening devices through Audiology – Ext 2314
- ▶ Telephone Typewriter (TTY) through ISU Help Desk 1800 198 175
- ▶ Public Payphone (TTY) in main foyer of Building 1 and waiting room of the Emergency Department
- ▶ Captioned Television channels (Patient Entertainment Network) in Building 1
- ▶ Interpreter services Ext 5882
- ▶ Audiologists Ext 2314

Please submit your contribution for the next issue by 21 January at the latest. No more than 400 words maximum please.



## MY COCHLEAR HARP

I have a harp inside my head, put there  
by Dr Chang

And every time I turn my head I hear a  
little twang

If I hold my head to the left, it continues  
with that note

And it just gets louder when I try to clear  
my throat

If I turn my head from side to side, it  
plays a little tune

And my cat's ears prick up, I'm sure she  
hears it, too

And if I stand up quickly, I hear a weird  
swishy static sound

That soon abates once I have my feet  
firmly on the ground

And when I go to sleep, I try hard to  
stay still

Cause when I move, that wretched harp  
really starts to trill

It wakes me up with a fright if I do doze  
off you see

The sound is so loud, it keeps me from  
falling back to sleep

The nights seem very long and I try to  
sleep with meditation

When that fails as it does, I try a sleeping  
medication

But the medication does not seem to  
block the sound

So I get up and go and watch TV in  
the lounge

I doze off in the arm chair and get a  
little sleep

Till I move my head then that harp really  
starts to shriek

If you think I'm going insane, it is really  
just a rumour

I'm try to keep positive, by using my  
sense of humour

It is getting better and I'm hearing some  
of what people say

And I know as time goes on, that  
wretched harp will fade away

In the meantime I'll try to be patient and  
take one day at a time

Till my harp is just a memory and my  
hearing will be fine

● *Source: a cochlear implant recipient*



▶▶ *New findings continued from page 11*

the clinic have improved their ability to recognize speech after bisphosphonate treatment. They also suggest that bisphosphonates are worth considering to reverse the loss of nerve connections for the treatment of human SNHL.

● *Source: Harvard Medical School 20 July 2020*

# Join Us!

Annual membership is \$20 per person and \$30 per family from July to June of the current year. If joining after December of the current financial year, membership to the end of June will be \$10 for singles or \$15 for a family.

This fee includes subscription to our CICADA CHORUS magazine.

Our Membership Form is available on our [Forms webpage](#).

## BATTERY SERVICE AND MERCHANDISE

CICADA Queensland provides a cochlear implant battery service. Remember if you are a NDIS Participant, NDIA will pay for your batteries if you give them our ABN and invoice numbers. Please let us know your NDIS reference number so it can be noted on the receipt.

Customised name badges, polo shirts, caps and Medical Alert! USB wristbands are also for sale. All merchandise has our logo. If ordering by post, postage cost is extra.

Our prices and account bank details are shown on our order forms, which are available on our [Forms webpage](#).

A second reprint of our information booklet on cochlear implants is still available for a donation. For a copy, please contact Shirley Edwards on [secretary@cicadaqld.com.au](mailto:secretary@cicadaqld.com.au)

## VISION STATEMENT

To hear, listen and be heard.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide education, information and support about the cochlear implant, and empowerment on hearing loss issues.

## BEQUESTS

We are a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

Our ABN is 29 911 299 608.

If you wish to make a bequest to CICADA Queensland, contact [secretary@cicadaqld.com.au](mailto:secretary@cicadaqld.com.au)

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