



Home Counties Cochlear Implant Group

Spring 2011

www.hccig.org.uk

Report from Chair

Welcome to the Spring edition of HCCIG Magnetise which we hope you will find both interesting and informative. Please also remember if you change your email address do let us know.

Jenny Burdge

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UPDATES

Newsletter

Please submit articles for publication in the summer newsletter to hccig@gmail.com by **30 June 2011**.

Your newsletter can be emailed to you instead, to save on printing costs – just let us know.

Social media

- **Website.** <http://hccig.org.uk> If there is anything you would like to see on the website, be sure to let us know.
- **Blog.** Guest blog posts will be posted to the website; please email your blog post and photos to us at hccig@gmail.com
- **Facebook.** You can find us under Home Counties Cochlear Implant Group. Feel free to post links to your blog articles there and any CI-related news.
- **Twitter** @HCCIG

HCCIG DIARY

Wine Bar

Tuesday 10th May 2011

Tuesday 12th July 2011

6pm to 9pm, Brookes Brothers, Wine Bar 33 – 35 Brooke Street, Holborn London EC1N 7RS
Nearest tube Chancery Lane Exit 2
Just come along, join in and catch up on the latest CI chat.

Coffee Bar

First Wednesday of every month 1–3pm

2nd March 2011 **1st June 2011**

6th April 2011 **6th July 2011**

4th May 2011

36 Brigadier Hill, Enfield, EN2 0NQ
Child friendly, low cost coffee and snack bar, with free chat! Meet other CI users; find out more about Implants from people who have them. Everyone is welcome.

Canal Trip

Date TBA

The mooring is found by following the signs towards Harlow Town Station.

Summer event and BBQ

Saturday 2nd July 2011 12.00 to 17.00

Venue: Hertfordshire County Council Social Club, Leahoe House, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG13 8DZ

Cost: £6 per person

HCCIG Open Day

This years Open day for your diaries is on Saturday 19th March 2011.

Event Review: Turkey & Tinsel weekend 2010

Following the success of the previous year, a Turkey & Tinsel 2010 weekend was arranged at the Haddon Hall Hotel in Eastbourne.

In the days leading up to 3rd December, there were some heavy falls of snow in the south-east. Road conditions were a little unpredictable

and precarious. This led to a few people not being able to make the journey to Eastbourne. Some of the people who did make it enjoyed some Xmas shopping in the town.

The first night (Friday) we had 8 people for dinner.

On the second day (Saturday) we congregated in the bar area for drinks before trooping into the main restaurant to be seated at 4 tables, 27 people in total. An excellent choice was available from the menu.

After we had made our way through the several courses, we then walked downstairs and played a few games of bingo. This was followed by a raffle, which our group won several of the prizes. After a short fancy dress competition, we finished the evening with some dancing.

A most enjoyable weekend was rounded off when we were up again and bleary-eyed for an English breakfast at 8.30 on Sunday morning, before checking out and making our way home. Road conditions had improved considerably by this time.

Mark & Diane

NEWS FROM ADVANCED BIONICS

Did you know

HEARING PERFORMANCE

...that **AB** offers the widest input dynamic range and automatic environment adaptation?

...that only **AB** provides simultaneous current steering, which offers the best spectral resolution, a precondition for optimal hearing in the real-world situations and greater enjoyment of music?

...that **Phonak** pioneered dual-microphone directional technology and non-linear frequency compression, to name just a few industry firsts?

...that **Phonak** was the first to introduce advanced features such as automatic program switching?

FM & CONNECTIVITY

...that only **AB** offers a wireless connectivity solution that allows for highly focused listening and wireless connectivity to mobile phones, MP3 players, and more?

...that **Phonak** pioneered ear-level miniature FM receivers?

...that **Phonak** was the first to introduce automatic signal-to-noise ratio adaptation in FM devices?

RELIABILITY & ROBUSTNESS

...that **AB** has delivered advanced cochlear implant systems for the last two decades?

...that **AB** behind-the-ear processor electronics feature advanced water protection that resists water penetration and a special coating that provides a waterproof barrier?

DESIGN & ERGONOMICS

...that **Phonak** has developed state-of-the-art hearing instruments for over 60 years?

...that **Phonak** has innovated a special microphone cover that protects it from moisture, dirt, and debris?

DESIGN & ERGONOMICS

...that **AB** holds an award for excellence in sound processor design?

...that since 1993, **AB** has already decreased the weight of its sound processors by an amazing 94% without compromising performance?

...that **Phonak** holds numerous awards for product and medical design excellence?

...that **Phonak** behind-the-ear instruments are the world's smallest while their performance is second to none?

FITTING EXPERTISE

...that **AB's** fitting software offers unsurpassed programming flexibility with six distinct strategy options to best fit individual hearing needs?

...that **AB's** fitting software reduces programming time and requires recipients to make significantly fewer hearing judgments?

...that **Phonak** was the first in the industry to introduce cable-free programming?

PAEDIATRICS

...that **AB** offers multiple wearing options for paediatric recipients, from a lightweight nothing-on-the-ear processor to a comfortable behind-the-ear device?

...that **AB** offers a wide range of kid-friendly accessories specially designed to help little ears hear big?

...that **Phonak** is the number one choice for paediatric solutions?

...that the **Phonak** SoundRecover algorithm is considered the most important innovation in paediatric amplification in decades?

Do you have any questions regarding cochlear implantation?

Advanced Bionics (AB) invites you to meet a Clinical Specialist in person.

Are you considering a cochlear implant (CI) for yourself or your child or do you know someone who is?

Is your child or a member of your family already an AB user?

Do you teach or provide childcare for someone with an AB device?

Everyone is Welcome!

Your AB representative will be on hand at venues throughout the UK to answer questions you may have regarding the **Harmony™ HiResolution™ Bionic Ear System**. There will be an opportunity to find out about the new

ClearVoice™ feature, current hearing performance & reliability of the system. You will also have the opportunity to come and find out more about **Phonak Hearing Aids & FM systems** as well as Advanced Bionics future technology. At selected venues there will be a guest speaker to cover areas such as music appreciation and listening skills.

If you would like to attend or know more about what's on offer on these days **contact Advanced Bionics on 01223 847888 or email: uk@advancedbionics.com**

NEWS FROM COCHLEAR

Veterinary student is awarded scholarship

Cochlear is pleased to announce that veterinary student Bethan Hindson has been awarded the €6,000 2010 UK Graeme Clark Scholarship Award, which will help to support her through university.

Bethan, 25, from Leicestershire, was born profoundly deaf. After struggling with hearing aids, she received her Cochlear Nucleus® implant at the age of 11 at the Birmingham cochlear implant programme before transferring to the Nottingham programme some years later.

She is currently in her second year of a veterinary medicine degree at the Royal Veterinary College London, having completed a history degree at Cambridge University and a Masters at Sheffield University. Her ambition is to enter either farm practice or veterinary research. Bethan is the first profoundly deaf student to attend the Royal Veterinary College and has come first in her year for two consecutive years and has been presented awards for this achievement.

On hearing she had won the award, she said: "This opportunity is a dream come true – a dream I still can't believe. My whole life has been about striving for more, educationally and otherwise. My implant was the first big step in aiding this and this award will be the next big step. It offers both the freedom to fulfil my love of learning without fear of monetary worries and the verification that all my efforts so far have been worth it. Thank you, Cochlear for honouring me with this life-changing award! Words can't express my gratitude to you and all those who have helped me with my deafness throughout my life."

Chris Bertrand, Regional Director - Western Europe at Cochlear said: "The sponsorship is a wonderful opportunity to help our recipients by supporting them financially when they continue their education. It also highlights how lives are enhanced through access to our technology, together with the help of healthcare professionals."

The UK Cochlear™ Graeme Clark Scholarship is open to Nucleus® recipients who were implanted in the UK and plan to continue their studies in the UK. It was set up to help implant recipients achieve more in continuing further education and is an annual award.

Would you like to apply for the 2011 €6,000 education scholarship?

If you're completing your final year of school or college and have been accepted onto a university or tertiary education course, if you're a mature aged student, or a younger student undertaking a university degree or other tertiary education course then you can apply!

The UK Cochlear™ Graeme Clark Scholarship is open to Nucleus® recipients who were implanted in the UK and plan to continue their studies in the UK. The Scholarship winner is awarded financial assistance towards tertiary study at an accredited university, college or other institution of further education.

To find out more please email Kate King: kking@cochlear.com or telephone 0779 365 2182.

Our latest CP810 Sound Processor will soon be available for Nucleus® 24 recipients

As part of Cochlear's™ ongoing commitment to our recipients we are pleased to announce that the CP810 will soon be available for all Nucleus 24 recipients, bringing increased performance benefits.

The Cochlear™ Nucleus® CP810 Sound Processor is designed not only for style and comfort but to give recipients the best hearing performance by adjusting to different environments such as busy streets, classrooms or noisy restaurants.

The Sound Processor works with a Remote Assistant which lets users choose how to manage their own or their child's hearing. It enables the sound processor's settings and

functions to be adjusted and acts as a complete monitoring and troubleshooting system.

Benefits of the Cochlear Nucleus CP810 include:

Improved speech performance in noise compared to the Freedom™

Advanced user control offered by the Remote Assistant

Small and light design

Two omni-directional microphones for improved directional hearing

Four tailored listening models for different sound environments

For further information please visit our website www.cochlear.co.uk

The Cochlear™ Nucleus® CP1500 Series cochlear implant – designed for a whole new level of hearing

Over 25 years of collaborative clinical and technical research and development has culminated in the world's thinnest and strongest receiver-stimulator – the Cochlear™ Nucleus® CP1500 Series cochlear implant. Since its launch, the 20,000th was built in Sydney in November 2010. This symbolises a great milestone for Cochlear and more importantly, for the hearing impaired around the world.

Designed for a more natural fit

The human cochlea is a marvel of biology - powerful, delicate and as small as a pea. Part of the implant goes inside your cochlea. This is called the electrode. Its design and fit are crucial for your hearing outcomes.

Curled to match shape of your cochlea

We have built on more than 10 years experience to develop patented thin electrodes that curl around your cochlea to match its natural shape.

The right length

The delicate design length is matched to your hearing loss profile and the natural location of the hearing nerve. This gives you access to all the important sounds in the real world, while aiming to avoid damage to the cochlea from inserting the electrode too deeply.

Gentle design – Softip™

A patented Softip™ at the end allows for gentle insertion and is designed to minimise the risk of damage to the delicate cochlea structures.

AutoNRT™

AutoNRT™ (Automated Neural Response Telemetry) enables your specialist to confirm the precise placement of the stimulation contacts by measuring your hearing nerve response. It is the most advanced system available.

With this proven design combination, your surgeon can position the electrode closer to your hearing nerve for a more focused and accurate stimulation - and apply less pressure to the cochlea.

Designed to deliver more natural sound - Largest number of stimulation points

Only with Cochlear does your implant electrode come with 22 real platinum stimulation contacts, designed to offer full "Hearing Zone" coverage for accurate delivery of sound to your hearing nerve.

161 different sound pitches

The sophisticated microchip - in combination with our proprietary sound coding strategy - makes it possible to perceive up to 161 different sound pitches, and experience sound in a more natural way. This means your audiologist has the flexibility to program sound the way you like it best.

A thinner, stronger cochlear implant - built for life

When it comes to implant strength and reliability, second best won't do. That's why Nucleus® implants are more reliable than any other. And with each new generation of the Nucleus implant, we take the best and make it better – consistently.

2½ times stronger - built to last a lifetime

We developed the first titanium based implant more than 25 years ago to:

withstand your most active lifestyle choices
work in harmony with your body.

The CI500 Series is 2½ times stronger than our previous generation Nucleus implant Nucleus Freedom™. It already complies with standards that are likely to be required by regulators in the future.

40% thinner – the world's thinnest cochlear implant

Cochlear implant surgery today is a well established and low risk procedure carried out globally. As with all previous Nucleus implants, we have developed the CI500 Series with

surgeons from around the world with the intent on making it even simpler.

The result of all this expertise and experience is:

the world's thinnest cochlear implant

a single, strong micro-device just 3.9 mm thin

better conforming to the shape of the head

a cochlear implant ideal for people of all ages.

MRI friendly

Nucleus implants are designed to fit with your lifelong medical requirements. Foreseeing the trend towards MRI scans more than 10 years ago, we designed a removable magnet into our implants.

With a Nucleus implant you can safely undergo a:

medium strength MRI up to 1.5 Tesla with your magnet in place

high-powered MRI up to 3 Tesla with your magnet removed in a simple outpatient procedure

Designed for today and the future

The powerful microchip in the CI500 Series comes with extra capacity. That means you can take full advantage of our advances in decades to come. It is as simple as upgrading your sound processor.

So with Cochlear, you always have the confidence of never being left behind.

For further information on our latest cochlear implant systems or Reliability Report please visit our website: www.cochlear.co.uk.

MRI scans – what to consider when choosing a cochlear implant

There are a variety of imaging techniques available to obtain images of the body such as x-rays, CT scans, PET scans and ultrasounds. Different techniques are required for different reasons. MRI is becoming increasingly popular thanks to its ability to capture detailed images of soft tissue and joints, plus its ability to diagnose other conditions such as heart disease and breast cancer. In fact it's predicted that most people will need at least one MRI in their lifetime.

What is MRI?

MRI stands for Magnetic Resonance Imaging and uses a very powerful magnet to provide

detailed images of a person's internal organs and tissue.

How does a cochlear implant affect MRI scans?

There are two main ways:

The internal implant contains a magnet which holds the external sound processor coil in place. When placed on an MRI scanner this magnet can cause a blur 'artifact' over the medical image which may hinder the ability for an accurate diagnosis on brain scans. As a quarter of all MRI scans are performed on the brain, having the flexibility to remove the internal magnet is an important consideration when choosing a cochlear implant

The magnetic field used in MRI will naturally pull on the magnet within the cochlear implant. As MRI scan strength (Tesla) increases, so does the force of the pull on the internal magnet. For these reasons, Nucleus® implants from Cochlear™ have been designed with a removable magnet. This ensures Nucleus recipients have access to the latest MRI technology for the best possible medical diagnosis. The magnet does not have to be removed, but Cochlear recipients have the option if required.

Other brands may not feature a removable magnet. This means that recipients may be limited by older MRI technology or may need to have their entire implant removed even for a scan of a different part of the body.

Why is MRI compatibility strength so important?

A higher Tesla number means better image resolution and more reliable detection of any abnormalities and faster scanning times.

1.5 Tesla strength MRI's are considered standard at present. However, 3.0 Tesla scans are becoming increasingly popular due to their superior image quality.

MRI compatibility differs between cochlear implant manufacturers. Nucleus implants from Cochlear are approved for MRI scans at 1.5 Tesla with the internal magnet in place and 3.0 Tesla with the magnet removed *

No other implant manufacturer can offer this level of MRI compatibility for 3 strength Tesla machines. For more information – please speak

to your hearing healthcare professional or implant centre

Nucleus Cochlear Implants and MRI's – a summary of benefits:

- > The industry's most MRI compatible implant
- > A removable magnet to allow for high strength MRI scans and less obstruction on brain scans if required
- > The ability to safely undergo a 1.5 Tesla strength MRI with the internal magnet in place
- > The industry's only implant to be considered safe at 3.0 with the magnet removed
- > The flexibility to adapt to future advances in MRI technology without having to remove the entire implant

* Magnetic resonance imaging safety of Nucleus 24 cochlear implants at 3.0 T

F. Risi*, A. Saldanha, R. Leigh, P. Gibson

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CI recipient helping others to Hear now. And always

Steve Matthews, Cochlear CEL Customer Complaints Coordinator, Weybridge, smatthews@cochlear.com

Born profoundly deaf, Steve Matthews looks back on a long journey to attain good hearing. Today, he lives a fulfilling life and enjoys helping others hear well in his job with Cochlear.

"I was born in the UK in 1974 to the delight of my hearing family – yet, there was one problem: I was profoundly deaf. My hearing journey began with my parents fighting the local health services for an official diagnosis of deafness; of course, I passed the test of the rattle that was being shaken behind my head... I saw the audiologist go behind my mum's back! The battle continued - my parents did their best to help me speak by putting headphones on me whilst using a microphone hooked up to an amplifier.

In 1977, the same year that Professor Graeme Clark inserted a blade of grass into a turban shell, I received my first hearing aids, which were body-worn like the early Cochlear Speech Processors. At three years old, it was a tough task to make me wear them but soon the light went off in my head: hearing aids = hearing!

Speech, tears and education

Having a very motivated set of parents soon meant that the daily chore of speech therapy was my life. Every morning and evening would be the same ritual of half an hour of listening to my parents' voice and repeating what I had heard. Soon, the hard work was paying off and at age 7, whilst being tucked into bed one night, unprompted I put my first sentence together and told my mother that I loved her.

In September 1981, I joined a new school that had opened, a Christian school called "The King's School". There were less than a hundred pupils in the first few years, but more than enough teachers. For me, this was to be the basis of a very successful education. Almost in every class I had support, homework sessions and - you guessed it - more speech therapy! I finally left school with a distinction in the Vanguard Poetry Society exam, and went on to college to study at the National Nursery Examination Board.

Hearing aids versus CI

Time to fast-forward a few years to my mid 20's, when I was frequently suffering from Menière: the quality of my hearing had started to worsen and I was struggling to manage in everyday circumstances. My cochlear journey started with a chance meeting with Brian Archbold, then of the Ear Foundation, followed by a Menière attack which landed me in hospital. My assessment for a cochlear implant was soon underway, and several months later, I found myself agreeing to accept the recommendation to be implanted, but I had one condition... 'since you (the surgeon) have so much faith in this product, then show me results with my worse ear rather than the better one'. I feared that I had too much to lose to give up what was my only source of hearing. The next task was to choose the manufacturer of my implant - luckily for me, my father assisted with the research as this was not going to be a light decision. We carried out our research separately and with different criteria. Once we both had decided, we sat down and talked about our choices, reasons

- and, thankfully, we had both picked the same manufacturer. Our research led us to conclude that we had picked the most innovative, the most reliable, the ONLY backwards-compatible and obviously the BEST manufacturer! You guessed it - Cochlear!

Surgery was soon a distant memory and switch-on was just remarkable - to recognise my father's voice from the other side of the room was just the start. To hear the newspaper pages being turned whilst sitting on a train home - dazzling! I know many of you will have heard many stories about just how great it is to be able to hear all the little things in life, but what is difficult to understand is the difference it makes: for me, it was being able to read stories to my 3-year old nephew whilst he was sitting on my lap, rather than having to sit opposite him so that I could see what he was saying.

Working with people is my passion

I spent seven years training and working with children in a nursery setting, which was followed by 13 years within a supermarket management team. After having my implant done, I spent three years running a deaf charity called DELTA (Deaf Education through Listening and Talking).

Whilst manning an exhibition stand for DELTA, I met Kate King who mentioned the Cochlear Volunteer Advocate programme that she was setting up for Cochlear Europe. Having been a volunteer for DELTA for many years, I was happy to sign up to the first round of training in order to become a volunteer advocate.

My experience to date has been most rewarding. When I met a lady who was thinking about having an implant but was very nervous about what her family and work colleagues might think of her, I was able to reassure her with my own experience of having an implant at the age of 31, after wearing hearing aids since three years of age. My family had been very supportive but naturally apprehensive at the thought of surgery and whether it would work as well as my hearing aids.

Recently, I chatted with a young lad who had just finished university and was looking to find some work but felt that he needed to do more to be able to hear his fellow colleagues in the workplace. I was able to spend time with him and his family and share my own experiences of why I went for an implant and what it has done for me. I took care to ensure that his

expectations of what the implant could do for him remained realistic.

Enriching life

Being fortunate to have travelled to several countries in recent years, both for work and pleasure, I am almost every time confronted politely by somebody asking me what I have stuck in my head. Since I am somewhat hair follicle-challenged, I do not have much hair to cover up my implant and coil with. But these conversations are often great for passing time at the airport.

Every story of a CI recipient is different - some are more amazing than others, but they are nevertheless life-changing for the majority!

Today, I find myself working as a Customer Complaints Coordinator for the very company that has given me the gift of good quality hearing. There are many recipients who perhaps are not getting the best from their implant. Being a CI recipient myself, I understand the necessity of complaints being dealt with quickly and professionally. I have a personal interest and experience to strive to give good and understandable feedback to ensure that Cochlear's customers are Hearing now. And always - as I do!

NEWS FROM MED-EL

New member for MED-EL UK's customer service team

Adam Feast is a welcome addition to MED-EL UK's customer service team. Adam, who joins the company as a technical assistant, brings with him a wealth of experience gained in various customer service-related roles in the telecommunications field.

In addition to a proven track record in customer care, he also has a good appreciation of the healthcare sector, having studied Adult Nursing at Sheffield University. Together with his colleagues in the MED-EL UK team, Adam will be working closely with both clinicians and patients, to enable MED-EL to provide the highest level of service to both customers and patients.

Introducing the Vibrant Soundbridge, now suitable for Children

The Vibrant Soundbridge is an alternative to conventional hearing aids and offers an innovative method to overcome hearing loss for adults and children with mild to severe sensorineural hearing loss or conductive and mixed hearing losses. However, unlike a hearing aid which amplifies sounds, the Vibrant Soundbridge converts sound into mechanical vibrations.

How does it work?

The Vibrant Soundbridge directly stimulates middle ear structures in much the same way as normal sound moves them via the ear canal. This "direct drive" stimulation enables excellent sound quality without blocking the ear canal.

Discreet audio processor

It consists of an external and an internal part. The external part is an audio processor and is worn on the head. The internal part is an implant which mechanically vibrates the middle ear structures. The special design of the Vibrant Soundbridge allows the external audio processor to be hidden discreetly and comfortably under the hair. The audio processor is available in different colours to match with the user's hair colour.

Natural sound quality

The Vibrant Soundbridge offers improved hearing quality and speech understanding, particularly in noisy surroundings. Users describe the sound quality as more natural, including the sound of their own voice. Many users report that they are able to hear softer, high frequency sounds, such as children's voices and birds singing.

Suitable for children

The Vibrant Soundbridge is the only middle ear implant that is attached only to the structure of the middle ear which it is stimulating. This makes the Vibrant Soundbridge independent of skull growth and therefore suitable for implantation in children. The Vibrant Soundbridge received EU market approval for implantation in children and adolescents in June 2009.

For more information about the Vibrant Soundbridge visit www.medel.com and click on implant solutions or contact office@medel.co.uk.

*The **First UK Paediatric Vibrant Soundbridge Middle Ear Implant case is going to be***

televised on **ITV1 on Friday 11th March at 20:00** on *Children's Hospital at Manchester Royal Infirmary*.

TROUBLESHOOTING

User-friendly, useful advice at the click of a mouse ! Web-based User Support from MED-EL on www.medel.com

Nobody likes problems, but everyone appreciates a speedy solution and that is why MED-EL are proud to announce the addition of a troubleshooting section to their new look website.

The troubleshooting pages can be found in the "User Support" area of the website, this section is indicated by a white and red life buoy.

Easy to use

For ease of use troubleshooting is divided into different categories of problem:

Processor malfunction

FineTuner

Using audio devices

Something is broken

None of the above

Quickguide

Sound quality issues

Navigating the help provided is very straightforward. You are guided through the advice and information by clicking on a "yes" or "no" button in response to step by step questions. Animated sequences and videos demonstrate procedures such as how to replace batteries, change a cable or replace an earhook.

Time-saving

As its name suggests, the quickguide is designed to save you time. This one page flowchart diagram will indicate the correct pages of the Opus 2 Processor manual you should consult to find the answers to your queries.

Introduction to the Opus 2

The troubleshooting section also includes a series of videos which will familiarise you with the workings of your Opus 2 processor. This includes an introduction to the different parts of the processor, switching on and off, disassembling the processor, the FineTuner, DaCapo System and the Baby BTE.

Customer Service

MED-EL hope that you will find the troubleshooting section of the website useful and time-saving. However, should your problem remain unresolved, please contact your clinic.

MEMBERS CORNER

One member's experience of recent annual assessment

I recently attended my CI centre for my annual assessment on the processor. I came away not feeling happy as follows:

At the start of the appointment, the audiologist informed me that I was on the wrong programme. I already thought I was on the right map from the previous year.

Secondly I didn't seem to have much interaction with the audiologist. All that seemed to happen was the computer was linked to my processor and then a few buttons pressed and hey presto a new map came out of the computer.

When I went for the lip reading/hearing tests, my results were a bit down from the previous year. OK I wasn't feeling great that day. What really surprised me was that I was informed that the new map may not be the right one for me, and was asked to see how this pans out in the next few months. I seem to get the impression that the audiologist has the assumption that I had normal hearing when switched on. I have been deafened since day one, and how the hell do I know what is normal hearing?

I am now pondering whether to go back to the hospital in the next few weeks to have a recheck, by a different audiologist, as the "few months" have passed. Will now liaise with the Co ordinator on this issue. It's a pain as I have to take extra time off work, travel a great distance to get this sorted out.

OK, I know that there are a lot of cut backs on various public spending, but surely many of us have had implants for so long, the care should be there. I felt like being an open and shut appointment with the GP.

If anyone experienced what I went through please let us know.

Anonymous writer (name withheld)

CURRENT EVENTS

Graham Fraser Memorial Lecture: Cochlear implantation – challenges in the 21st century (Professor Shakeel Saeed) 3rd February 2011

There are now more than 120,000 implant users from all makes and choosing the best by the individual is still a major concern. Out of the four top manufacturers there is no clear leader. The implant group should offer more than one device.

Advice from other users, the implant team and the looks of the CI all play a part in selection. The aesthetics of the CI in today's fashion conscious world are important especially today's youngsters, something the manufacturers should take good notice of.

The UK has a low rate for problems with CIs. This is partly due to the high training of its experts who are now seeing new staff coming through just as well trained by them. Children do well with two implants and now have taken over in the amount of CI operations being done. Now, the need is for more adult operations to be done especially bi-lateral. The success in childrens CIs is shown in the fact that 6 out of 10 are able to attend mainstream schools, and overall including adults one third are able to use the phone with familiar voices but still background noises and music still are problematic.

The challenges of abnormal procedures still go on with the problem of patients with meningitis etc, but with the use of split electrodes and drilling through the bone this operation is continuing. Only in extreme cases is a Brain Stem Implant deemed necessary. Infection can still cause problems especially with scalp breaking and then the removal of the CI, infection can also occur later in the life of the implantee.

What is now available to help the team is the use of cone beam CT, which gives a much better picture of the patient. It should be used both pre and post op and although is an expensive piece of equipment, it works out half the cost of MRI giving much better data and quite a lot quicker.

With current cut backs all round more demand is being put on current staff, charity donations are reduced and research and development slows right down, although the major manufacturers spend (MED-EL 20% on R&D, Cochlear 13% and Sonova 7%) they still need to improve the

noise and music aspects of the CI but tinnitus sufferers have noted vast improvement of their condition with the CI. And now the geographic growth areas for CIs are India, China and the Middle East but they are faced with cost of course, more so than the West, bearing in mind the cost of one CI there equals roughly 150 hearing aids.

NEWS FROM MANUFACTURERS

Connevans

It's Connevans Mobile Phone Month: we are excited to announce that all our mobile phones are on Special Offer this month, with savings of up to £25. These are extra loud, simple to use, Hearing Aid compatible GSM mobile phones. All you have to do is get yourself a SIM card with minutes and/or texts, it's very easy, your local supermarket will probably sell them, pop the SIM card in and away you go! Perhaps if you have a friend or relative who doesn't have a mobile phone, this could be just what they need.

We are pleased to introduce the new travelTim vibrating travel alarm clock, capable of waking a deaf or hard of hearing person. The travelTim is battery operated and can be set for vibration, audible alarm or both together. This clock also incorporates an optional bright white LED light that will visually alert you when the alarm is sounding/vibrating.

And don't forget also available is the Sonic Shaker, a particularly nice vibrating travel alarm clock with good vibration. The clock is very easy to set and use; with vibrate only, beep only or vibrate with beep modes. There is also a shipping discount at the moment for the Sonic Shaker, which can save you ££'s.

Some really nice news, the Phonak AS10,11 & 12 Direct Input shoes are now available in 'clear' - some folks might not realise that a Hearing Aid can be connected directly to audio sources, such as an iPod or CD player and these little connectors, known as a 'Hearing Aid direct input shoes' are the key! Now these shoes are available in 'clear', as well as the existing colours.

Professionals, have you had your FP35 Hearing Aid test box upgraded yet? An FP35 text box V6 software upgrade is now available which makes

testing frequency shifting hearing aids, such as the Phonak Naida, Nios and Nathos, very straightforward. If you haven't had your test box upgraded yet, please call today for details - we need the serial number from your test box so remember to have this handy! Please call 01737 247571 or email john@connevans.com

Relocation... Relocation!! Connevans has a new home, after 24 years in Reigate, Connevans has a new home in neighbouring Merstham, Surrey. Our new address is Connevans Limited, Bridge House, 1 Nutfield Road, Merstham, Surrey, RH1 3EB, UK. Moving 11,500sq ft of stores, factory and offices was not an easy task, but a lot of fun was had along the way! If you would like to see some photos of the move as it happened please visit www.facebook.com/connevans

NEWS FROM CHARITIES

The Ear Foundation

The Newborn Hearing Screening Programme's annual conference 'Innovations for Better Outcomes' is being held this year on Tuesday March 22nd in London. To register for the conference go to www.venueandhotelservices.com

For further information on NHSP, please visit <http://hearing.screening.nhs.uk>

Have you visited The Listening Room recently? It is always worth a look! The Listening Room provides a steady stream of FREE activities and resources to support the development of speech, language and listening skills in children, adolescents and adults with a hearing loss. There are games, murals, ideas and fun listening activities to suit all ages and they are lively, colourful and engaging. Any child would enjoy looking at and talking about the Snow Fun mural which is currently available along with lively characters to place in the scene.

<http://www.advancedbionics.com/CMS/Rehab-Education/The-Listening-Room/>

Topics on the forum this month include lost processor (insurance issues), Harmony lead for iPod or computer, practising using the phone, oral language modifier at GCSE. You can find the Ear Foundation's forum at

<http://soundingboard.earfoundation.org.uk/forum>

Hearing Link

We hear from Hearing Link that they still have places on some of their UK assisted holidays for people with hearing loss (summer and autumn dates). Requests for information should be addressed to Events, Hearing Link, 27 The Waterfront, Eastbourne BN23 5UZ (or email events@hearinglink.org)

HCCIG : Position of trustee

We currently have a vacancy for a trustee within the Charity. We are advertising this to the members of the group and it is an opportunity for one person to be involved in the running of the charity. There is a leaflet available to be downloaded from the charity website www.charitycommission.gov.uk entitled "the Essential Trustee". This outlines the basic duties of a trustee and if you want to look at this document, this will give you an idea as to what to expect. We do have three trustee meetings a year to help the running of the charity.

Should anyone wish to obtain further information please contact Darren Pallett by e mail Darren@dspallett.co.uk and I can e mail the leaflet if you need this and answer any questions you may have.

Kind regards

Darren Pallett BA FCA

Disclaimer

HCCIG accept no responsibility for any information relating to third party organisations featured in this newsletter. While HCCIG makes every effort to ensure details are accurate, we advise our members to check these with the organisations concerned. HCCIG does not endorse any product or service of, nor does it verify any preferential treatment, offered by the organisations. All queries should be directed to them. Certain of the offers and services featured in this newsletter are only available to customers of those organisations. HCCIG does not provide medical advice or make recommendations with regard to any particular implant and no article in this newsletter should be construed as doing so.

Contacting HCCIG

Please would you only contact Jenny on HCCIG business during working hours of 9.00am to 5.00p.m. Monday to Friday. This is to allow Jenny some free time with her family. Thank you.

Trustees

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Magnetise & website: Tina Lannin

[A Voluntary Group Funded by Members](#)

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