



MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed 08:00 NZT Thursday 12 June 2025

Kiwis are among the first to access the world's first and only smart hearing implant system

- The new Cochlear™ Nucleus® Nexa™ System is the first and only smart hearing implant featuring internal memory capability and upgradeable firmware.[±]
- New Zealanders living with hearing loss will join other countries including Australia and China (special zone) to be among the first to access this latest technology from 16 June 2025.
- 1 in 5 New Zealanders (880,000) are living with some form of hearing loss¹, and in the next 50 years the number of New Zealanders aged over 70 living with hearing loss is expected to double².

Auckland, New Zealand, 12 June 2025: Cochlear, the global leader in implantable hearing solutions, today launched the Cochlear™ Nucleus® Nexa™ System – the world's first and only smart cochlear implant system.[±]

New Zealand born Stu Sayers, President of Asia Pacific & Latin America at Cochlear, explains the next generation technology has completely reimagined the internal components of the hearing device: "There are more than 10 years of research and development advancements built into the new Nucleus Nexa System. Powered by the new state-of-the-art chip, the Nexa System marks the beginning of a new era in smart hearing implants, serving as the platform for Cochlear's future smart implant innovations. This latest release represents a significant step forward in technology not just in our industry but importantly for people living with hearing loss."

"The Nucleus Nexa System comes with a distinct advantage – it is the world's first cochlear implant with built-in memory, allowing user's personalised hearing settings (MAPS) to be stored securely in the implant. This advancement brings a greater level of personalisation to the hearing implant and offers unmatched convenience and efficiency."

"Previously, if users misplaced or damaged their sound processor, they would need to visit a clinic and may experience a few hours or even days of what's called 'time off air' being unable to hear with their cochlear implant. With the Nucleus Nexa System users will have access to a brand-new feature called 'Smart Sync' which automatically copies and synchronises MAPs allowing users to hear again in a matter of seconds," explained Sayers.

The groundbreaking Nucleus Nexa System also offers the world's first hearing implant solution with upgradeable firmware, revolutionising the way people with hearing loss access can future technology. Today's conventional implants can only access future innovation by upgrading their sound processor. With the Nucleus Nexa System this limitation is removed. People with a Nucleus Nexa System can experience new features and advancements, via both updates to the firmware in their smart implant and upgrades to their sound processor over time.

Jan Janssen, Chief Technology Officer at Cochlear, likens the Nucleus Nexa Implant to a smartphone for hearing: "This is the first cochlear implant in the world with its own firmware, meaning users can upgrade

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to new features and innovations throughout their lifetime. Just like a smartphone receives a firmware update, now people with a Cochlear implant can stay connected to the latest technology updates seamlessly today and well into the future.”

“The Nucleus Nexa System combines 40+ years of proven reliability of our trusted implants and technology leadership, with the cutting-edge new chipset packed with innovative features. With onboard diagnostics that monitor system performance to ensure optimal hearing, it reduces the burden on users and carers, setting a new standard in implantable hearing technology,” added Mr Janssen.

Hearing loss affects one in five New Zealanders¹ across Aotearoa, with the emotional, social, and financial impacts felt at every stage of their life. It can manifest in various ways such as difficulty following conversations, frequently asking others to repeat themselves, or struggling to hear on the phone. Nearly 30 per cent of people with hearing loss report feeling isolated, while over 70 per cent experience communication challenges that can strain relationships and reduce social participation³.

Lee Schoushko, CEO of Pindrop Foundation, a national patient advocacy group, explains the impact of living with hearing loss and encourages Kiwis to ask for support from a health professional. “Hearing loss can profoundly affect daily life, including communication, social interactions, and mental well-being. For many New Zealanders, a cochlear implant will help provide access to sound clarity so they can enjoy the world around them.”

“When older Kiwis face hearing difficulties despite using hearing aids, they are often not aware of other options. It’s a conversation they should be having with their health professional or audiologist if their hearing aids are not working well, they should be asking, ‘What other options are there?’,” said Schoushko.

Dr Michel Neeff FRACS MD, ENT Surgeon and Clinical Director of the Northern Cochlear Implant Programme for Adults in Auckland, highlighted the importance of identifying and treating hearing loss: “Reluctance to acknowledge hearing difficulties is far more common than we might think. Some people will struggle for years or even decades before acting on their hearing. Early diagnosis is key, and I would urge anyone that is concerned about their hearing, or a loved ones hearing, to discuss it with a professional.”

Cochlear has provided more than 750,000 hearing implants to people around the world and the company’s implants are the most reliable in the industry which is one of many reasons people choose a Cochlear hearing solution more than any other brand.⁴⁻⁵ In 2024 Cochlear was named the number one most trustworthy company in the healthcare industry by [Newsweek in its rankings of the World's Most Trustworthy Companies](#). This prestigious recognition underscores Cochlear's unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and customer-centricity.

– Ends –

Commercial availability: The new Cochlear™ Nucleus® Nexa™ System will be available in New Zealand

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from June 16, 2025. For further information, please visit www.cochlear.com

About hearing loss in New Zealand

Nearly 1 in 5, or approximately 880,000 New Zealanders experience some level of hearing loss¹. Approximately 170 babies are born with hearing loss in New Zealand each year⁶ and in the next 50 years, the number of New Zealanders aged over 70 years living with hearing loss is expected to double⁷. The economic impact is significant, with the total cost of hearing loss estimated at \$4.9 billion in 2016¹. For more please visit <https://www.cochlear.com/au/en/corporate/media>

About Cochlear Implants

Unlike hearing aids which increase the volume of sound, cochlear implants work by enhancing sound clarity, bypassing the damaged part of the ear entirely to stimulate the hearing nerve directly. Cochlear implants focus on enhancing clarity of sound, while hearing aids mostly work by making sounds louder. This clarity could help people reclaim their confidence and fully immerse themselves in the meaningful moments of everyday life.⁷

About the Cochlear™ Nucleus® Nexa™ System

The new system includes the Nucleus Nexa Implant, the Nucleus Kanso® 3 Nexa Sound Processor and the Nucleus 8 Nexa Sound Processor. The Nucleus Nexa Implant and sound processors are supported by Nucleus SmartNav, Nucleus Smart App, Custom Sound® Pro fitting software and wireless accessories. The new Nucleus® Nexa™ System can learn about its user's listening needs and the environment they are in. It can then automatically adjust listening or power management settings to help people hear more clearly¹ or maximise battery life.^{##} Previously, cochlear implant users mostly managed their settings through a smart phone app. Users can enjoy clearer sound streamed directly from compatible* mobile devices and, in the future, at airports, concert venues and more using Bluetooth® LE Audio and Auracast™ broadcast audio.[¥]

Now available to eligible New Zealanders through the public health system (incl. Northern Cochlear Implant Programme and Southern Cochlear Implant Programme) and some private health insurance companies.^{**}

About Cochlear Limited (ASX: COH)

People have always been Cochlear's inspiration, ever since Professor Graeme Clark set out to create the first multi-channel cochlear implant after seeing his father struggle with hearing loss. Since 1981, Cochlear has helped more than 700,000 people in more than 180 countries to hear. As the global leader in implantable hearing solutions, Cochlear connects people with life's opportunities, and welcomes them to the world's largest hearing implant community. Cochlear has a global workforce of more than 5,000 people, with a passion for progress, who strive to meet the needs of people living with hearing loss. The company continually innovates to anticipate future needs, investing more than AUD\$3 billion to date in research and development to push the boundaries of technology and help more people hear.

www.cochlear.com

This media release is only intended for audiences in New Zealand.

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References and disclaimers

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

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3. Johnson C. The Early Intervention of Hearing Loss in Adults. Seminars in Hearing. 2018 May;39(02):115–22.
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5. Cochlear. Annual reports [Internet]. Cochlear. 2021. Available from: <https://www.cochlear.com/au/en/corporate/investors/annual-reports>
6. Newborn hearing screening [Internet]. Ministry of Health NZ. Available from: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/first-year/first-6-weeks/health-checks-first-6-weeks/newborn-screening-tests/newborn-hearing-screening>
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8. Mayo Clinic. Cochlear Implants - Mayo Clinic [Internet]. Mayoclinic.org. Mayo Clinic; 2024. Available from: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/cochlear-implants/about/pac-20385021>

± Smart cochlear implant system is defined as the first and only cochlear implant having Internal memory with upgradeable firmware.

Battery life varies for every user, according to the age of the battery, the programs used each day, your implant type, the thickness of skin covering your implant, and the size and type of battery used. Streaming from compatible devices, True Wireless Devices or FM may decrease sound processor battery life depending on how often and for how long streaming is engaged.

* The Cochlear Nucleus 8 Nexa and Nucleus Kanso 3 Nexa sound processors are compatible with Apple and Android devices. For compatibility information and devices visit www.cochlear.com/compatibility

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¥ As Bluetooth LE Audio compatible devices become available, a firmware update will be required for you to use certain features. Auracast™ broadcast audio capability is subject to third party adoption of the Auracast protocol.

**Conditions and eligibility criteria apply. Please speak to your health insurer and/or healthcare professional to confirm your coverage.

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