

Cochlear Family

Keeping you supported, connected, inspired

April 2022

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5 important milestones for hearing you might have missed this year



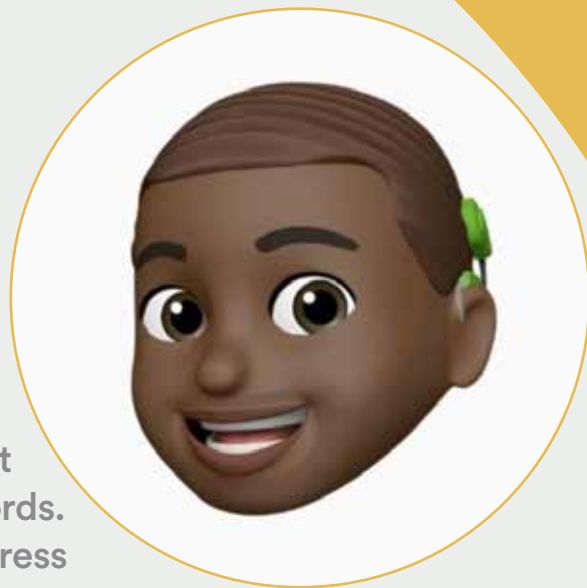
“My hope is that all girls can have equal opportunities and that we ensure a world where every girl can have access to free, safe and quality education. Hearing loss doesn’t need to be an obstacle to education.”

- Malala Yousafzai

What a difference a year can make – and the world of hearing is no different.

When the World Health Organisation (WHO) released the first World Report on Hearing in March 2021, it marked a milestone for the hearing loss and Deaf community globally because the report’s message is that ear and hearing care need to be a public health priority. It was a powerful moment.

But what happens after the release of a report is also powerful: actions speak louder than words. Here’s a wrap up of major initiatives and progress since the report’s release – from increasing awareness and improving people’s access to sound to how Apple’s new Memoji cochlear implant feature helps the hearing loss community.



1 The WHO calls for screening for all adults over 50

Adults older than 50 where feasible should be screened for hearing loss as part of routine health checks in addition to screening for newborns, infants and children, urges the WHO.^{1,2}

These recommendations are outlined in the new WHO guidance, *Hearing Screening: Considerations for Implementation*, developed in response to the World Report on Hearing to support hearing screening programs around the world.

Accessing hearing screening and getting an early diagnosis is crucial for helping people to understand and treat their hearing loss. Yet systemic hearing screening programs are limited in countries around the world.³

2 Apple launches the cochlear implant Apple memoji feature

In 2021, Apple released a cochlear implant memoji feature. This means that if you have a cochlear hearing implant and use Apple products, you can create a memoji that has a cochlear implant for you to share in digital messages and FaceTime. Memojis are Apple’s version of emoji characters designed to use in electronic messages to help you visually describe your personality and key features that are special or defining to you. They are also a way of visually describing the way you are feeling or your mood. ▶

“The Apple memoji is an important stepping-stone in raising recognition, awareness and promoting the inclusion of people with cochlear implants around the world,”

Julie Ligeti, Director of Global Public Advocacy for Cochlear.

3 Australian government becomes a leader in hearing health awareness

The Australian Government is considered one of the first to acknowledge the challenges that are highlighted by the WHO's message that ear and hearing care needs to be a higher public health priority, including for older adults.⁴

A new national hearing health awareness campaign as part of a 'Roadmap for Hearing Health' aims to help inform older people about ear and hearing care, and signifies a national response to raising the importance of hearing health.

"A national three-year hearing health campaign will focus on preventing, treating and destigmatising hearing loss and damage, including for people in aged care," said the Hon Mark Coulton MP, Federal Minister for Regional Health.

5 More funding for cochlear implants in New Zealand

New Zealand is also prioritising hearing health by allocating extra government funding for adults to receive cochlear implants. Announced as part of their 2021 annual budget, this means more people annually will have access to cochlear implants.⁵

What does it all mean?

Each of these announcements helps to shine a spotlight on hearing health and how we can help people around the world gain access hearing care. The more conversations people have about hearing screening, hearing loss and cochlear implants, the better the chance people will have for accessing a diagnosis and treatment. It will also help reduce any stigma around hearing loss that people may experience.



4 Malala Fund and Cochlear Foundation launch global partnership

Malala Fund and Cochlear Foundation announced a partnership to raise awareness about barriers that keep millions of children and young people with hearing loss from accessing a quality education. The two non-profit organisations are inviting children and young people with hearing loss to share their stories of personal achievement as part of the 'Achieve anything program.'

This new program will highlight and publicly recognise their real-world experiences of hearing loss to promote their equal rights to an education and early access to hearing healthcare and support.

What you can do?

As a member of Cochlear Family, you already know the value of hearing screenings and treatment. You can help others by reminding your family and friends – even your doctor – about the importance of hearing screening, early diagnosis and seeking help with hearing loss.

[Learn more about our work with the Malala Fund](#)

Do you have a love for the water?

Here's how to stay on air and in water.

“When we swim in the water, we use Aqua+ and it is very helpful so that even in the swimming pool we are able to communicate well.”

Mother of Celline, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient. ▶



Celline, Cochlear™
Nucleus® System
recipient.



Watch this video to hear Mary speak about her Aqua+ experience.

- ◀ Mary has wanted to learn to swim for almost 70 years, but her father's near-drowning when she was younger meant she never had the opportunity because the incident kept her family away from the water. Now, decades later, Mary is fulfilling a lifelong dream to learn to swim thanks to the Aqua+, a sleeve which covers her sound processor and helps her hear while she's in the water. By using the Cochlear™ True Wireless™ Mini Microphone 2+, her swimming coach's voice streams to Mary's sound processor so she can hear his instructions clearly while in the pool. "I can hear the instructor under water," she says. "Not only is it allowing me to achieve a goal for almost seven decades, but I'm enjoying it very much."

"I can hear the instructor under water"

Mary, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient.



Hear Siddharth speak about his love for sport and passion for swimming.

Siddharth was diagnosed at the age of five with severe to profound hearing loss in one ear and mild to moderate hearing loss in the other. With early implantation and continued therapy, Siddharth now excels in academics and is also an exceptional swimmer and badminton player.

"I have represented my school in swimming competitions since I was in the fourth grade. With my Aqua+ I no longer need to worry about my sound processor. I am able to confidently swim and enjoy the water."

Siddharth, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient.

Whether you're swimming in the ocean, splashing in the pool or soaking in the bath, you want your sound processor to be safe. Learn more about the Aqua+

Storyteller turns to YouTube to destigmatise cochlear implants

When acclaimed Australian author Libby Hathorn crossed paths with a young girl with hearing loss, Libby was so overcome by the girl's experience, that she wrote a story about it, creating a sensorial experience.

'What Rosie Hears' follows the journey of a little girl, before and after her cochlear implant surgery, and the extraordinary new world of sounds that she experiences afterwards.

As a prize-winning author of more than 70 children's books, some of which have been adapted for films, plays and operas, Libby is no stranger to storytelling. ▶



◀ But what's different about this project is the use of digital animation to bring together the story, music and art, creating a sensorial experience that enables Libby to celebrate the sounds that Rosie can suddenly hear.

"After her operation for a cochlear implant and after care, Rosie marvels at what she can hear just around the house – her own footsteps, laughter, music – and is equally alarmed by noises such as the toilet flushing and a garbage truck going by."

Libby draws your attention to the revelation in every simple sound Rosie hears – from her gurgling baby brother to the sliding musical notes of the piano, and even the sounds of making a cake. The "grating coconut" and "sloshing of milk" to the "thud of butter" and "the delicious trickle of melted chocolate".

"What I was interested in was that journey going from the non-hearing world for Rosie, into the hearing world where so many sounds would be new," says Libby. "And the importance and joy of all our five senses."

The playful animation is a collaboration with fine artist illustrator Bethany Macdonald, inspired animator Hamish Gilbert, and one of Australia's most eminent musical composers, Elena Kats-Chernin, who wrote the score to What Rosie Hears.

The story is also one of friendship, as Rosie gradually finds the confidence to play with Isabel, the girl next door, who is Libby's real-life grand-daughter – also a cochlear implant recipient.

As such, the story is deeply personal to Libby, whose inspiration for the project comes from her desire to educate others about cochlear implants and to destigmatise hearing loss, particularly among children.

And it was through her grand-daughter that Libby met Rosie at an event run by The Shepherd Centre, a not-for-profit organisation in Australia that supports children with hearing loss.

What Rosie Hears is available for viewing on YouTube (click here)

You can also watch Libby, her collaborators, Isabel and Rosie herself talk about the project as part of the launch of What Rosie Hears (click here)

"It's been an absolute pleasure to be asked to be a part of the project. I hope that it creates the awareness and support that it so deserves to give children like myself and Isabel the benefit and help we deserve."

Rosie,, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient

10 ways to improve your listening skills in everyday life

Did you know that you can improve your listening skills while doing simple activities like washing your car, listening to the radio or a podcast, waiting for a doctor's appointment or even sitting in a noisy cafe?

The key, says Dianne, who received her first cochlear implant in 2012, is to immerse yourself into daily activities that are part of your real world – your everyday life – and listen to the sounds around you.

“Listening is the key to communication for anyone, but as cochlear implant recipients, we need to work harder than most people,” says Dianne. ▶



Dianne, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient

“To improve my listening skills in the real world, I had to become part of it.”

Dianne, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient.

◀ **Here, Dianne shares her top 10 tips that worked for her and helped her to improve her listening skills:**

1 Noisy environments are challenging, but the real world is noisy so this is a good way to work on your listening skills. When I'm in a quiet environment with up to three people, my interaction and listening skills are good. So, to challenge myself I practise listening in noisy cafes, restaurants, at parties and in large social groups. Remember, you are working to improve communication skills by listening and this helps your social skills.

2 There is nothing wrong with asking someone politely would they mind repeating the sentence or word. Don't pretend that you have understood the speaker; it is better to ask for them to repeat what was said. It will save embarrassment if you answer incorrectly.

3 With our cochlear implants we can hear, but listening requires paying attention – it takes conscious effort. The saying "Practice makes perfect" means that it is possible to learn something or develop a skill if you practise. It takes persistence and there are challenges. You may feel at times that your progress is hindered, but it's important to continue with your effort.

4 In a restaurant, at parties or where there is a group of people, I try to position myself in a well-lit area with my back to the noise and away from any music speakers in the room.

5 Try simple things like going for a walk where you can find a connection to environmental sounds such as cars approaching, rustling of the trees, hearing unseen birds, ocean waves and the sound of wind.

6 Wear your sound processor from the time you get up until bedtime. By wearing your sound processor all day every day and having sound around you, will help to achieve all the wonderful things that a cochlear implant offers. Remember, we have been given a second chance to hear and it's up to us to give it our best effort.

7 If you live alone, ensure you have some noise around you – such as a radio, television, podcasts or audiobooks so that you are practising your listening skills.

8 Communicating with people with an accent can make it hard to understand. But it's also good practice. I make sure I'm face to face when communicating in this situation. I also give the other person my undivided attention and fully concentrate of what is being said.

9 Take every opportunity to practise your listening. When cleaning the house or washing the car, I had a small radio in my pocket. I didn't always know what was being said, but knew I would benefit in the long term by surrounding myself with sound.

10 Don't give up.

Watch Dianne's video to know more about her hearing experiences.

Jeff is on a mission to help others.
This former policeman is now a teacher, amateur radio operator and he also runs a social media support group to help others who also have a Cochlear Baha® System.

Tips from Baha Volunteer's online support group



Jeff, Cochlear™ Baha® System recipient.

◀ If you're a born communicator like Jeff, a Cochlear Volunteer in the UK, losing your hearing can severely impact your life. "I became the quiet man," says Jeff. "I couldn't take part in social interaction in noisy places like restaurants, and it also stopped me from carrying on my second chosen career. "When I retired from the police, I trained as a teacher, but being deaf prevented me from doing that. After I had the Baha, and especially with use of the accessories like the Mini Mic (Cochlear™ Mini Microphone 2+), I was able to go back to teaching and I worked for 10 years in special education and secondary schools." Now retired from teaching, Jeff can continue communicating with others, thanks to his Cochlear™ Baha® 5 Power Sound Processor on his left side, and an acoustic hearing aid in his right ear. "My main hobby is amateur radio – I'm a radio ham – and hearing is an essential part of being able to communicate around the globe," says Jeff. "Much of my radio is digital, text-based, but when I am using voice modes I often use the Mini Microphone 2+ to hear the other stations. Now, with the Mini Microphone 2+ plugged into my radio and streaming directly to my Baha, I'm able to hear voices clearly over the radio, speaking to – and, more importantly, hearing – people in other parts of the world, learning about their lives and their cultures." ▶



Jeff, Cochlear™ Baha® System recipient.

“I became the quiet man, I couldn't take part in social interaction in noisy places like restaurants, and it also stopped me from carrying on my second chosen career.”

Jeff, Cochlear™ Baha® System recipient.

◀ Jeff is also passionate about helping others: “Today, I help run a Facebook support group for Baha and other bone anchored technology users.” “With close to 3,000 current members, the other admins and I are kept busy giving advice and sharing our hearing stories about how bone-anchored technology has changed our lives.” Although the group is based in the UK, it has members in the US, most of Europe, Australia and several other countries around the world. “Social media – and Facebook in particular – are either a curse or very useful tools,” says Jeff. Baha Users UK (the Facebook group Jeff helps to facilitate) exists to bridge the gap between the uninformed – and often dangerous – sites found on the Internet, the manufacturers and the hearing health professionals. Jeff says the most common questions asked by members of the Facebook support group relate to pairing accessories, questions about using Baha sound processor programs, the Cochlear Baha Smart App.

Jeff’s top tips

- 1 “Don’t rush, it takes time for the brain to adjust to the new stimulus.”
- 2 “For those who have an abutment, do not be too vigorous with the abutment cleaning. Find a gentle routine that suits you and stick with it. I use a mild herbal shampoo in the shower every morning, rinse thoroughly and pat dry with a soft towel.”
- 3 “Read the instructions about pairing accessories carefully and follow them in the correct order. Taking shortcuts will result in failure.”
- 4 While Jeff himself prefers to use the program button and volume rocker on his Baha 5 Power rather than the Baha Smart App, he receives many queries about the app from users in the group. “Don’t be tempted to turn the volume up too high. Doing so often distorts the sound and can lead to feedback screeching. The Baha 5 Power has a volume rocker on the side but others, such as the Baha 6 Max, do not. It is possible to change volume levels in iPhone settings, but it is much easier using the Smart App.”
- 5 “Smile. You are using one of the best hearing systems in the world.”

“Today, I help run a Facebook support group for Baha and other bone anchored technology users.”

Jeff, Cochlear™ Baha® System recipient.



Smriti, bilateral Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient.

Everyday tips to look after your Kanso® and Kanso 2 Sound Processor

“My devices are my ears and just like I would take care of any other parts of my body, I owe it to my sound processors to always keep them in the best health. Given my hectic schedule, I calendarise and set reminders to avoid missing my care and maintenance tasks.”

Smriti, bilateral Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient. ▶

- ◀ When you're hard at work or enjoying time with family or friends, you want to enjoy living in the moment and not think about your hearing.

So, it's helpful to know some simple tips and strategies to keep your sound processor performing at its best. Whether you have a Kanso® or Kanso 2 Sound Processor, here are top tips for keeping it dry, clean and performing at its best.

Set-and-forget strategies

A helpful strategy for taking care of your sound processor is to set up a simple schedule to remember basic maintenance.

The nightly check-in

Follow these three steps every night when you're getting ready for bed. Brushing your teeth could become a cue.

- 1 Turn off your sound processor as well as any other accessories you're using.
- 2 Check your sound processor and accessories for dirt and moisture. Wipe them with a soft, dry cloth.
- 3 Keep your Kanso Sound Processor clean and dry every night by putting it in a dry aid kit.
- 4 Keep your Kanso 2 Sound Processor in the Home Charger every night.
- 5 Check the microphone covers for dirt and grime, removing any sand or dirt by softly brushing all indents and holes in the Kanso Sound Processor's casing.

The first day of each month

Mark the first day of the month to perform a monthly maintenance check. If you have a Kanso Sound Processor, turn it off and remove its batteries. Then check all contacts are clean, using a soft dry cloth to wipe them.



Every other month check-in

Moisture from perspiration and daily wear can affect your sound processor. The best protection is drying it out every night in its designated storage case or Home Charger.

Change the Dry-Brik desiccant every two months in your designated storage case, which also acts as a dehumidifier. Also, write the date on it so you know when to change it next. If you own a Home Charger, there is no desiccant brick required. Moisture from perspiration and daily wear can affect your sound processor, so it's important to make sure your storage case is working it's best to protect it and dry it out every night.

New season? New microphone covers

With the change of weather comes the reminder to replace your microphone protectors. If you experience muffled or poor sound, dirty covers might be the cause. Changing the microphone covers is a good place to start. To help with this habit, set a reminder on the first day of each new season. You can find a step-by-step guide for changing microphone covers in the Kanso Sound Processor User Guide.

Hear now. And always

Cochlear is dedicated to helping people with moderate to profound hearing loss experience a world full of hearing. As the global leader in implantable hearing solutions, we have provided more than 650,000 devices and helped people of all ages to hear and connect with life's opportunities.

We aim to give people the best lifelong hearing experience and access to next generation technologies. We collaborate with leading clinical, research and support networks to advance hearing science and improve care.

That's why more people choose Cochlear than any other hearing implant company.

References

1. World Health Organisation, Hearing Screening: Considerations for Implementation, p 8, 37.
2. World Health Organisation, World Report on Hearing, p. 83.
3. World Health Organisation, Hearing Screening: Considerations for Implementation, p36.
4. Australian Government Department of Health Budget 2020/21 p3 Media Release 6th October 2021. p6.
5. Hon Andrew Little, A better health system for all New Zealanders, 20 May 2021.

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*The Aqua Accessory and the Aqua+ sleeve are dust and water resistant to level IP68 of the International Standard IEC60529 and can be continuously submerged under water to a depth of up to 3 metres for up to 2 hours. Refer to the relevant User Guide for more information.

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. In Australia, Cochlear™ Nucleus® implant systems are intended for the treatment of moderately severe to profound hearing loss. In Australia, Baha® bone conduction implant systems are intended for the treatment of moderate to profound hearing loss.

For Cochlear™ Nucleus® and Baha® systems: These products are not available for purchase by the general public. For information on funding and reimbursement please contact your healthcare professional.

Views expressed are those of the individual. Consult your health professional to determine if you are a candidate for Cochlear technology.

Cochlear Baha 5 sound processors are compatible with Apple devices. The Cochlear Baha 5 Smart App is available on App Store and Google Play. For compatibility information, visit www.cochlear.com/compatibility.

The Cochlear Baha 6 Max Sound Processor is compatible with Apple and Android devices. The Cochlear Baha Smart App is available on App Store and Google Play. For compatibility information, visit www.cochlear.com/compatibility.

For information regarding the compatibility of Cochlear's Sound Processors with Apple or Android devices, visit www.cochlear.com/compatibility

For information regarding the compatibility of Cochlear's Sound Processors with True Wireless devices, visit www.cochlear.com/compatibility

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