



IFHOH JOURNAL

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v2

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In This Issue

From the Editor's Desk - by Carole Willans	3
IFHOH President's Message – by Ruth P. Warick	4
World Hearing Day at WHO in Geneva – by Siegfried Karg	7
4th International Accessibility Conference on Hearing Loops and Hearing Technology	9
2017 – A Milestone Year for Global Hearing Health Policy – by Julie Ligeti	11
Hearing Aids with Hearing Loops	12
IFHOHYP Opportunity & IFHOHYP AGM	13
Ljubljana 2018 – IFHOH BGM, EFHOH AGM, and Conference – by Darja Pajk	14
EFHOH News – by Marcel Bobeldijk	16
European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals Holds Mini-Symposium - by Marcel Bobeldijk	17
In Memoriam Werner Bütikofer – by Siegfried Karg	18
Dutch Hospitals Listen to Hearing Impaired People – by Martine van Hulst	19
Calendar of Events	21
News Bytes	24
IFHOH Sponsor – Cochlear	26
IFHOH Mission	27
IFHOH Board of Directors	28

The International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) is an international non-governmental organisation representing the interests of more than 300 million hard of people worldwide.

*IFHOH is registered as a charitable organisation at Vereinsregister Amtsgericht, Hamburg, Germany
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IFHOH Journal includes information about IFHOH activities, world news related to hearing loss, articles written by IFHOH members, and much more. It is published four times a year and posted on IFHOH's website, www.ifhoh.org. The Editor can be reached at journal@ifhoh.org.

All the views expressed in IFHOH Journal are those of the individual writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of IFHOH.

From the Editor's Desk



Carole Willans, Editor

Dear IFHOH friends,

When it comes to hard of hearing people and new technologies, it's a brave new world out there! During the fourth **International Accessibility Conference on Hearing Loops and Hearing Technology** to be held in Berlin this October, current technologies, such as hearing loops, t-coil compability, and wireless technology, will be discussed. These technologies may have been around for a while, however they are constantly being improved. As hard of hearing leaders, it is our responsibility to be aware of the latest developments so that we can share these with our members in our communities.

The cochlear implant was the last major innovation in hearing technology. It became available in 1985. Since then, only incremental improvements have been made to existing technology. When will the next major innovation occur? And more importantly, how will it improve the daily lives of hard of hearing people?



Scientists continue to work on experimental technologies that could transform our lives as hard of hearing people. Perhaps cochlear implants will use optoelectronics instead of the current electrical signals. Perhaps the sense of touch could be used - you could wear a device under your clothes to receive sound vibrations via touch in a way that would be more comfortable than wearing a hearing aid. Some researchers are looking past technology and are looking at gene therapy or at how to manipulate inner ear cells to restore hearing.

It's all very exciting, but for the time being, let's make sure that we know how to make optimal use of what's currently available in the here and now!

IFHOH President's Message



Ruth P. Warick, IFHOH President

For many of us, hearing aids or cochlear implants are essential to being able to navigate the world of sound. Born hard of hearing, I got my first hearing aid at age 11 and then my first FM system at age 24. T-coil compatibility of the hearing aid with the FM, loop and telephone has been essential to providing me with access on the phone, in meetings, performance theatres, and other venues. It is important that new developments continue to have t-coil capability, not only for me but for countless other hard of hearing persons.

Hearing loops, t-coil compability, accessible wireless technology - these will be some of the topics discussed during the fourth **International Accessibility Conference on Hearing Loops and Hearing Technology** October 6 and 7, 2017 in Berlin. Our German member, Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V. (abbreviation: DSB), has done a tremendous job of organizing the conference, and our thanks go to Aktion Mensch for being a major sponsor for the conference. Please attend but register immediately as the deadline is imminent.

I wish to share results from two important meetings attended this summer. Along with Avi Blau, IFHOH Vice-President, and Patrick Gift Egessa, Board Member, I attended the meeting of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) in New York from June 13 to 16.



COSP Assembly June 2017 New York

The COSP meeting involves representatives of member states of the UN. The representatives typically deliver three-minute summaries of disability issues in their country during the event. This year civil society was given space to comment. I delivered a brief speech to the COSP Assembly, highlighting the importance of accessibility for our community, including hearing aids, cochlear implants and captioning. I addressed the gaps in technology and services worldwide and called for support for the WHO motion on hearing loss prevention and hearing health care.



Avi Blau and Ruth Warick at the COSP Assembly in New York

During COSP there were educational side events and IFHOH co-sponsored a session with the International Disability Alliance on Accessibility for Hard of Hearing Persons. Avi, Patrick and I presented along with Dr. Elizabeth Lockwood, Representative to the UN for CBM and the International Disability and Development Consortium. We thank the Oticon Foundation for sponsoring this activity, thus enabling us to raise awareness and deliver our message on a world stage.



Patrick Gift Egessa, Jennifer Madans, Ruth Warick and Avi Blau shown together following a UNICEF workshop with facilitator Jennifer Madans

During the first week of July I attended meetings at the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarters in Geneva hosted by the WHO Programme on Prevention of Deafness and Hearing Loss. We celebrated the passing of a motion about hearing loss prevention and hearing health care at the 70th World Health Assembly in May 2017. This

was the first such resolution on hearing loss since the WHA 48.9 motion passed in 1995, 22 years ago. As part of the resolution, the Assembly requested a report on progress made toward achieving the goals outlined in the motion.



WHO Meeting- cheering the passage of the WHO Hearing Motion 2017
First row (l. to r.): Sharon Curham, Paul Breckell, Sally Harvest, Paige Stringer and Ruth Warick

WHO is already at work preparing a framework for a world report on hearing loss, with plans to develop a toolkit to provide guidance to member states. Our community will have an important role to play in this process, both internationally and at the country level involving member organizations. We will keep you apprised of developments regarding the World Report. For more about the WHO motion, go to:

[http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB139/B139_R1-en.pdf?ua=1;](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB139/B139_R1-en.pdf?ua=1)
http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA70/A70_34-en.pdf

At the WHO meeting, representatives of NGOs involved in ear and hearing care, civil society groups, professionals in the field, manufacturers, researchers and other partners discussed the concept of becoming a more formal consortium connected either within or closely allied to WHO. There will be more discussions on this topic in the coming months. The momentum for working together is very positive and bodes well for future initiatives to increase access and hearing health care for hard of hearing and deafened individuals.

In closing, we are at the half-way mark of 2017 and already much has been done. There is also still much to be done to achieve full accessibility and well-being. I welcome your thoughts and comments so please drop me a line - president@ifhoh.org.

Warmest regards,
Dr. Ruth Warick
President, IFHOH



World Hearing Day at WHO in Geneva

Worldwide Costs of Hearing Loss

A World Health Organization Estimate

By Siegfried Karg, Winterthur, Switzerland



From left to right: Dr. Shelly Chadha (WHO), Avi Blau (IFHOH Vice-President), and Lidia Smolarek Best (EFHOH Vice-President) Photo: Siegfried Karg

The first ever estimate of the global costs of unaddressed hearing loss was presented in a seminar at the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, on World Hearing Day, March 3, 2017. The enormous amount of \$750 billion (international) dollars world-wide can be attributed to untreated hearing loss, according to Prof. Dr. David McDaid from the London School of Economics, who did the research for the World Health Organization (WHO).

In her opening statement, ENT doctor **Dr. Shelly Chadha**, Technical Officer Prevention of Deafness and Hearing Loss at the WHO, stated that 360 million people world-wide are affected by hearing loss. The use of hearing aids is, according to Chadha, cost effective, but she emphasized that it is most effective "when the use is continuous and accompanied by audiological rehabilitation". Unfortunately, the latter is often lacking.

In his presentation, **Prof. Dr. McDaid** presented data for the global costs for untreated adults aged 15 to 64 with at least moderate hearing impairment.

Untreated hearing loss often results in productivity losses. In addition, there are significant costs within the health care system and in education. Not to be neglected are the societal costs involving the "detrimental impacts on quality of life of hearing loss, including discrimination, social exclusion and pain".

McDaid mentioned that it is necessary to treat the numbers with caution, but emphasized that they are conservative. He summarized his findings with the reminder to policymakers that "potentially major economic costs are averted if hearing loss is addressed."

The detailed report "Global costs of unaddressed hearing loss and cost-effectiveness of interventions. A WHO Report, 2017" can be accessed at: www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/2017/en

Much can be done to prevent hearing loss and the ensuing costs, by measures such as treating ear infections and protecting against loud sounds. Therefore, the theme of World Hearing Day was "Action for Hearing Loss. Make a Sound Investment".

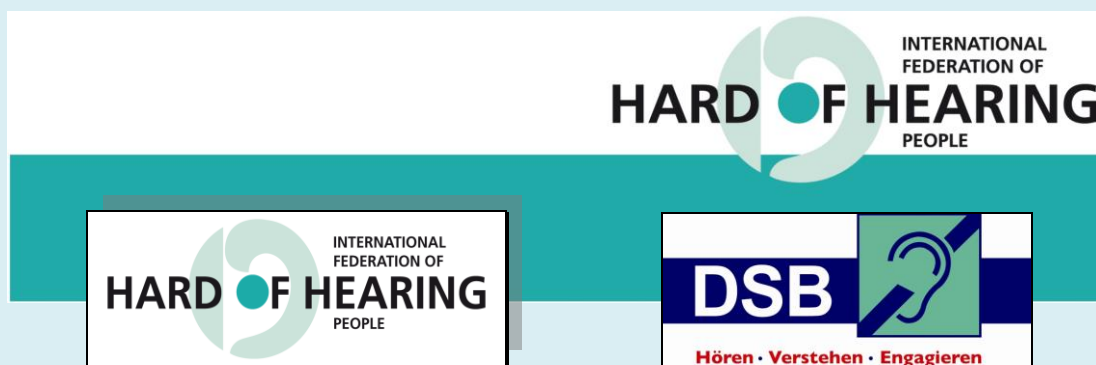
Another measure can be undertaken by screening newborns and school children and thus identifying hearing loss early. **Prof. Dr. Charlotte Chiong** from the University of the Philippines showed in her case study the cost-benefit of neonatal screening for hearing loss done in the Philippines since the year 2009.

The highlight of the seminar in Geneva was the moving presentation of 10-year old **Elaine Mukaaya** from Uganda who has a cochlear implant and addressed the audience in English. Her father **Eddie Mukaaya** then related Elaine's life story and explained how difficult it was, when the family realized that Elaine had a profound hearing loss and what it took to bring her from Uganda to the United States to be fitted with her life-changing cochlear implant.



Elaine Mukaaya (Photo Siegfried Karg)

The international attendees of the seminar agreed with the WHO recommendation that "hearing loss must be addressed as a public health issue."



4th International Accessibility Conference on Hearing Loops and Hearing Technology

*Friday, October 6 and Saturday, October 7
in Berlin, Germany*



This event will provide opportunities for **international exchanges of experience** on:

- Inductive Loop Systems: technology and planning, microphone setup, care and support, future visions, database
- Newest technology: iPhone-Couplings, Wifi, Bluetooth, Greta&Starks, Infrared, 2.4-GHz-Standards

Conference Sessions will include:

- Internationally recognised speakers
- Experiences from all around the world
- State of the art Hearing Loop Technology
- Stakeholder perspectives (User, Audiologist, Service provider, Hearing aid Manufacturer, Loop Manufacturer, Architect, Installers and Maintainers, Advocates)
- Lectures and discussions
- The Impact of legislation
- Installations and understanding complex Hearing Loop Systems and related Technologies
- Demonstration area

The **Keynote Speakers** of the Conference represent the three conference topics: Technical development - Experience - Motivation - the featured speakers include:

- Horst Warncke, a social and technical innovator in the field of medical and hearing technology, Director Audiology Oticon GmbH, Hamburg, Germany
- Juliette Sterkens, an audiologist and the National Hearing Loop Advocate with the Hearing Loss Association of America
- Peter Dieler, a counselor, coach and mediator for hearing issues working as Head of Audiotherapy, MEDIAN Klinik am Burggraben, Bad Salzuflen, Germany

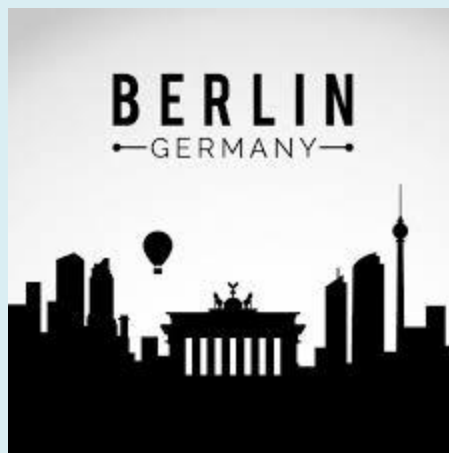
Further Designated Speakers:

- Volker Albert, Deutsche Tinnitus-Liga, Germany
- Avi Blau, IFHOH, Israel
- Dieter Fricke, ReSound, Germany
- Bernadette Fulton, Phonak, Germany
- Siegfried Karg, pro audito, Switzerland
- Thomas Kaufmann, OTOjOY, USA
- Juha Nikula, Qlu, Finland
- Julian Pieters, Ampetronic, United Kingdom
- Aida Regel Poulsen, EFHOH, Denmark
- Andrew Thomas, Contacta Systems, United Kingdom
- Anna Kain Wyatt, The HODA Project, Sweden

Click [here](#) to see the conference pages with all the information.

The next issue of IFHOH Journal will include reporting from this International Accessibility Conference.

Welcome to Berlin!



2017 - A Milestone Year for Global Hearing Health Policy

By Julie Ligeti, Global Manager Public Advocacy, Cochlear Limited, Australia



Julie Ligeti and Ruth Warick

In March this year the World Health Organization (WHO) released an economic estimate of the global cost of untreated hearing loss, an eye-watering \$750 billion per year. With inaction no longer an option, the 70th World Health Assembly (WHA) unanimously passed a resolution to prevent deafness and hearing loss. This resolution should make a positive difference in the lives of millions of people. Advocacy work over many years by IFHOH and other international advocacy and professional organisations has gained support for a global response. Now it is time to turn policy into action!

The WHA resolution sets a new global standard for hearing health policy

With global prevalence rates for disabling hearing loss estimated by the WHO at 360 million in 2012, the resolution is an overdue call for action for governments around the world to implement national hearing health plans based on contemporary health care knowledge. The WHA resolution outlines a practical public health approach starting with;

- Raising community wide awareness about the importance of hearing health care;
- Hearing screening programmes for infants, young children and older adults;
- Preventing hearing loss where possible; and
- Improving access to affordable, high-quality assistive hearing technologies, including hearing aids and cochlear implants through universal health care.

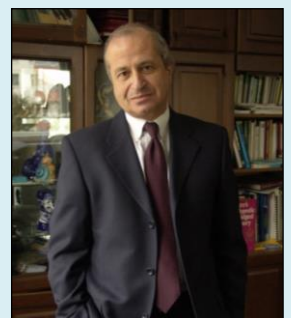
Find more info and the text of the WHA resolution at: <http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/en/>.

What happens next?

The World Health Organization will soon begin work with global hearing health care stakeholders on the preparation of a World Report. This report will provide a roadmap for countries to implement the resolution and help them achieve better outcomes for their populations. A 'toolkit' will be developed to provide practical assistance. Lead international advocacy and professional organisations will continue to be involved and ensure momentum for action continues to grow.

Turning policy into action through advocacy

MD, Prof. G.A. Tavartkiladze is the Director of the National Research Centre for Audiology and Hearing Rehabilitation in Moscow. He is also Secretary-General of the International Society of Audiology and lead efforts by hearing health professionals to place hearing health on the WHA agenda. He is acknowledged for his determination to ensure better access to hearing health care.



Prof. G.A. Tavartkiladze

Be involved in these exciting changes

Now that this exciting resolution has passed, there is a great opportunity to turn policy into action and help millions of people. For this to be achieved advocacy, consumer, professional organizations and NGO's, as well as cochlear implant manufacturers will continue working together to support the high quality work of the WHO. When we look back upon 2017 wish to say that for sure - it was a milestone year in hearing health policy!

Hearing Aids with Hearing Loops

An Unbeatable Combination

By Ruth P. Warick, IFHOH President

Hearing aids are great - at short distances. Beyond nine feet or when there is a lot of background noise, hearing aids need to be supplemented by loops or FM systems.

Speaking at a meeting of the Vancouver Branch of the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association in September 2016, Dr. Juliette Sterkens discussed the benefits of loop systems. Users can simply turn their hearing aids or cochlear implants to a t-switch to have increased hearing gain where loop systems are installed. No attachments are needed. Turn on the t-switch and, presto, there is hearing as if the speaker were right next to you!



Dr. Juliette Sterkens presenting at Vancouver workshop

She summed up the benefits of hearing loops as dignified and easy to use, affordable since there is no additional cost and available.

Access to hearing technology increases the quality of life of the hard of hearing person. As a result of better hearing, they are more able to be engaged in community life and to enjoy activities formerly enjoyed or take on new ones.

For hearing loops to work effectively, users need to have a telecoil in their hearing aids and it is important that manufacturers include the t-coil in their products, stated Dr. Sterkens who retired in 2014 after 30 years as an audiologist to become a Hearing Loop Advocate for Hearing Loss Association of America.



Dr. Juliette Sterkens

Dr. Sterkens recounted her own introduction to hearing loops as being an "Aha" moment for her when she heard David Myers, author of over 20 books on hearing loss, speak on the topic. She realized that this technology would have huge benefits for hard of hearing persons. When she started less than two dozen places were looped in the Fox Valley of Wisconsin; now there are hundreds.

Hearing loop installations involve the placement of a loop wire or an array of wires around the space and is linked into microphones used by the speakers. Popular venues for hearing loop installations are churches, theatres, school, business counters, and auditoriums, but the possibilities are endless. For more information visit www.hearingloop.org or www.LoopWisconsin.com.

Editor's note: The International Federation of Hard of Hearing People and their German member organization, Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund (DSB), will be hosting the fourth IFHOH Hearing Loops and Accessibility Conference in Berlin, Germany from October 6 to 8, 2017. More information is available elsewhere in this issue and on the IFHOH website (www.ifhoh.org).

IFHOHYP Opportunity

International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People

<http://www.ifhohyp.org>; www.facebook.com/ifhohyp

Follow us @IFHOHYP

The European Youth Forum, one of IFHOHYP's partners, is looking for expressions of interest for **RBA training 2017**. This training is offered to those member organisations of the Youth Forum (IFHOHYP is a member) who

wish to understand and mainstream a rights-based approach (RBA) throughout their work. **Deadline: September 30, 2017** - [Apply here](#). For more information, please contact the IFHOHYP Board (info@ifhohyp.org).



IFHOHYP AGM

The IFHOHYP Annual General Meeting will take place in **Helsinki, Finland from October 26 to 29, 2017**. We will be welcomed there by IFHOHYP's Finnish member organizations: Kuuloliitto Ry and Svenska Hörsselförbundet r.f.



LJUBLJANA 2018 - IFHOH BGM, EFHOH AGM & Conference

Accessibility Removes all Barriers

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Clubs Association of Slovenia are glad to invite you to IFHOH BGM, EFHOH AGM and Conference in our capital Ljubljana on May 11 to 13, 2018.



Topics at the conference will focus on adaptation and accessibility of both, the physical environment as well as the people living in it. We believe that understanding the problem of hearing loss allows a better understanding of the need for accessibility and integration into everyday life.

We are confident that the conference will not only be interesting and informative for you, but it will also show you how to raise awareness of the environment and provide opportunities for the exchange of good practices among participants.

In Slovenia, deaf, hard of hearing, cochlear implant users and deafblind people of Slovenia are joint together in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Clubs Association of Slovenia (acronym ZDGNS) -

ZDGNS is a non-governmental expert organization that endeavors for equal status and the rights of people with hearing loss and collaborates with competent governmental agencies and bodies.

Deaf and hard of hearing people established the first club in Slovenia almost 90 years ago, so we are a relatively old organization. But specific hard of hearing board was established 30 years ago and in the last three years we are also active in the field of cochlear implants.

The Association is an umbrella organization uniting 13 member clubs organized across the country with almost 4600 members (more than 3100 hearing aids users and more than 50 CI users).

The fundamental scope of the Association is creating jobs and conditions for full inclusion of people with hearing loss in daily jobs, working environment, and social life. In the past few years we are focused to remind people around us of the needs of the various adjustments for people with hearing loss.

The Association offers its own informative resources, including video production, broadcasting, and a monthly newsletter.

Since 1999, ZDGNS has the status of an association working for the public interest in the field of social care and has been registered as a representative disability organization.

In order to host the BGM, AGM, and to organize the conference we have booked the M hotel in Ljubljana (see <https://www.m-hotel.si/>). It is located between the Ljubljana ring road and the city centre providing a fast connection to the city center, airport and other tourist destinations and attractions in Slovenia. The city center is only a 5-minute drive away with public transportation and the closest bus stop is 50 metres away from the hotel.

Here are some links to useful information about your stay in Ljubljana:

- *Airport info: <http://www.lju-airport.si> (transport from airport to Ljubljana - shuttle /9 €, taxi 20-25 €, bus 4,10 € - it takes you not more than 30 minutes). But we are not far away from the airports in Austria, Italy, Hungary and Croatia.*
- *Living in Ljubljana: <https://www.visitljubljana.com>*
- *Traveling around the city: <http://www.jhl.si/en/single-city-card-urbana>*



Board meetings of IFHOH and EFHOH will be organized on Thursday in the ZDGNS' meeting room, which is near the M hotel. In the late afternoon we will show you our beautiful city and after that we will have a reception and a social evening. Conference day will take place on Friday, May 11, and it will be followed by IFHOH BGM and EFHOH AGM on Saturday.

We recommend you to come to Ljubljana on Thursday and stay until Sunday and have a nice trip to some beautiful places in Slovenia.

A detailed program will be published in the next issue of *IFHOH Journal* and the EFHOH newsletter. We will include further details and registration forms to come to Ljubljana in 2018.

The events will be organized in English. However the conference day titled "Accessibility Removes All Barriers" will be also translated to Slovene. We will provide a good professional service in English, loop systems, real time speech to text services and if possible, individual headsets. We will ensure that you can understand and hear everything as well as possible!

Darja Pajk
Member of Organization Team

EFHOH News



By Marcel Bobeldijk, EFHOH President

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) is pleased with the approval of the WHO Motion at the World Health Assembly (WHA) on May 30, 2017, which raises the stakes in delivering national policy actions related to hearing loss prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. EFHOH is very happy to see the need for quality of hearing aids, cochlear implants and most of all quality of hearing care delivered by trained professionals are recognized as necessary for reaching the best outcomes for hard of hearing people.

EFHOH, together with its partners, the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturer Association (EHIMA) and the European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals (AEA), look forward to supporting the implementation of the Resolution in Europe. This partnership forms a triangle of cooperation (between EFHOH-AEA-EHIMA), and we have agreed to a joint policy about our co-operation.

It was great to meet most of the EFHOH members in London at EFHOH's AGM 2017, which took place in London (UK) May 5-7, 2017 under the theme *"Staying Connected, Informed and Empowered"*.



EFHOH would like to thank the members and the board of the NADP for their great job as host. Also, we want to say thank you to all the speakers for their insightful presentations and thanks to all the sponsors who supported this event.

One of the most important result of our annual general meeting (AGM) in London was the EFHOH London 2017 Declaration. The declaration is based on a motion by our member from Norway (HLF) with the support of the other EFHOH members from the Nordic countries.

At the AGM, we thanked Ritva Liisa Schädling for her great work as the interim treasurer and we welcomed our new treasurer, Darja Pajk from Slovenia. The EFHOH AGM 2018 will be held in Slovenia and this will be organised together with the IFHOH BGM.

HOW TO CONTACT EFHOH

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European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals Holds Mini-Symposium

By Marcel Bobeldijk

On May 28, 2017, the European Association of Hearing Professionals (AEA) held a Mini-Symposium on *Personal Sound Amplification Products (PSAPs) and Over the Counter Hearing Aids (OTC) - The Views of the Users, Manufacturers and Professionals*. There were 28 participants from 13 European countries at the event, held at the Audiology University College, the Institut Libre de Marie-Haps, in Brussels.



One of the main topics of this year's Mini-Symposium was facts and figures on PSAPs and OTC in the United States and the views of the European users, manufacturers and professionals. Mark Laureyns, President of the European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals (AEA), Lidia Best, Vice-President of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH), and Soren Hougaard, Secretary General of the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturer Association (EHIMA), gave presentations on this topic, which led to very dynamic discussions with the audience.



[READ MORE ON THE MINI-SYMPOSIUM.](#)

In Memoriam Werner Bütikofer

(1937-2017)

IFHOH Europe President from 1993 to 1997

On June 30, 2017, friends and family gathered to say goodbye to Werner Bütikofer, who had passed away in Olten, Switzerland, on June 14, shortly after his 80th birthday. The funeral service, held in the Swiss Reformed Church of Olten, was attended by many of his longtime friends from the hearing loss community. IFHOH and EFHOH were represented by Siegfried Karg (EFHOH Vice President from 2002-2010).



Werner Bütikofer, presenting the new Nokia neckloop at a BSSV meeting in Thun, Switzerland in 1998
(Photo: Siegfried Karg)

Werner Bütikofer held different positions before he was elected CEO of the Swiss Hearing Loss Association BSSV (now pro audito Switzerland) in 1974. He remained at the helm of the Association until his retirement in 2001.

In addition to his work for the hard of hearing people of Switzerland, Werner was also engaged internationally. When the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) was founded in 1977, Werner was instrumental in creating this new organization.

As CEO of BSSV, together with his team, Werner organized the Third International Congress for Hard of Hearing People in Montreux, Switzerland, in 1988. People who attended this congress continued in their praise of it long after its conclusion.

With the founding of the European Union it was deemed beneficial to have a European section of IFHOH with the hope of gaining financial support from the EU for the European work for people with disabilities. As a result, IFHOH Europe was founded.

In 1993 Werner became President of IFHOH Europe (now the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People EFHOH) until 1997, handing over the presidency to Christina Wahrolin from Sweden, and continuing as its Vice President (1997-2002).

At the IFHOH Congress in Graz, Austria, in 1996, Werner, as President of IFHOH Europe, presented a draft version of the conference resolution, which was discussed, amended, and passed by the delegates.



One of Werner's lasting legacies is the specific symbol for hard of hearing people which was adopted by IFHOH and is still used on its website www.ifhoh.org today. The symbol was originally designed by the Swiss graphic designer Fred Bauer of Küsnacht-Zürich for BSSV.

We are grateful to Werner Bütikofer for his tireless efforts on behalf of hard of hearing people and his dedication to EFHOH and IFHOH. Our sympathy goes out to his family.

Siegfried Karg, Winterthur, Switzerland

Dutch Hospitals Listen to Hearing Impaired People

By Martine van Hulst

Patient-kindness in hospitals is high on the agenda nowadays. Yet in dealing with hearing impaired patients there is still a lot to improve. We learned this during the Experience Sessions with the theme "Communication with physicians". Dutch NVVS-volunteer Martine van Hulst expressed in an article the problems, solutions and tips that were brought up during these sessions. Her article led to the onset of a successful project in the Netherlands. This project leads to improvement of the attitude, from (medical) desk clerk to doctor, while communicating with a hearing impaired patient.



nederlandse wetenschappelijke
vereniging voor seksuologie

Experience Sessions

The Dutch Association for the hearing impaired (Hoormij/NVVS) organizes small sessions where persons with a hearing problem share experiences and tips on a specific theme. A lot of persons showed interest in the theme *Communication with physicians*. Therefore multiple sessions were held. The participants in these sessions were critical about the communication with doctors, nurses and health authorities, and also about themselves. "Can I expect that physicians who hear, understand what I need?" asked one participant wondering. "Initially I did not even know it myself. I think it is not unwillingness of a doctor. During their training physicians learn almost nothing about communication skills and of course most of the attention is paid to the numerous diseases."

The participants spoke about the bottlenecks in communication where they themselves had run across in a hospital or other healthcare facility. For example: while sitting in the waiting room an inaudible name was called from a distance or a facemask muted the voice of a doctor on a very critical moment in the operation room. Some experiences were really shocking.

Project *Communication with physicians*

Declarations of support after the publication of the article made it clear that something should be done. NVVS-volunteers Willem Dekker and Martine van Hulst analyzed all the mentioned problems. They made a list of the often simple suggestions that were mentioned. In most cases these suggestions turned out to be real good solutions. The most focal point became clear, which is raising awareness of the communication problems through recognition and acknowledgment. A second important priority is providing practical solutions. Often simple cheap solutions are available.

Voluntary project members started visiting hospitals and other healthcare facilities. They talk with staff members who are in the position to bring about change in their organization. The volunteers bring a positive message with ideas for improvement. They leave a short brochure that covers the whole content of the mission. The volunteers are truly welcome and during their visits and the conversation they find interested listeners. The problems outlined are always recognized.

Challenges

One of the challenges is to find an entrance to the right person in a hospital who can further spread the message. Writing e-mails or letters did not work. The only proper way to create an entrance to the right person turned out to be through personal contact. Another challenge is the amount of hospitals. In the Netherlands there are 362 hospitals and even more other healthcare facilities. It is impossible for a few volunteers who are qualified for the job to visit them all.

Goals and changes

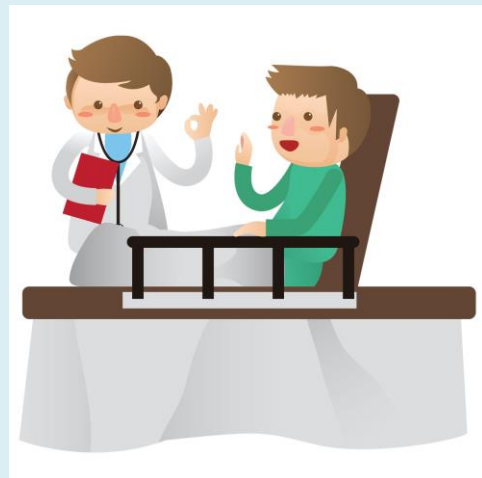
One of the most important goals is the adaption of patient records. Hospitals need to realize a pop up which appears directly after opening the record: "Patient is hearing impaired. Look at him while speaking. Make sure the message is understood." A leading Dutch academic hospital immediately acknowledged the value of this suggestion and promised realization.

Some hospitals ask for an article on their internal blog so all the workers can get aware of the problems and the improvement suggestions. Other hospitals invite the volunteer for a lecture to a larger audience, for example to their entire staff or to employees of a specific department, such as the geriatric ward. There are even hospitals where, after a lecture, on every desk this text appeared: "Are you hearing impaired? Tell us. We do take note."

Also great ideas, found in one hospital, are taken to other hospitals. For instance: the bedbox. This is a little box, which is attached to the bed when a patient goes to surgery. Due to the bedbox communication is accessible as long as possible because just at the last moment before an operation the hearing instruments are put into the bedbox. After an operation the hearing aids are immediately available. Hospitals embraced this idea after volunteers told them about it.

Changes become visible. Those responsible in hospitals realize that a topic is brought to their attention of which they have never consciously thought about in terms of solution

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Calendar of Events

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October 6-8, 2017 – 4th IFHOH Accessibility Conference on Hearing Loops and Hearing Technology

Location: **Berlin, Germany**

Information:

Website: <http://www.schwerhoerigen-netz.de/IFHOH-2017/english>

FaceBook: [FB/EuropeanFederationOfHardOfHearingPeople/4th Hearing Loops](https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanFederationOfHardOfHearingPeople/4thHearingLoops)

Contact: Gudrun Brendel, Conference Manager, IFHOH-2017@schwerhoerigen-netz.de



This important conference is organised by the German association DSB in collaboration with IFHOH. See pages 9 and 10 of this issue for more information.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

October 11-15, 2017 – ALDAcon 2017

Location: **Orlando, Florida, U.S.A.**

Information: www.alda.org



October 12-14, 2017 – Coalition for Global Hearing Health



REGISTRATION is OPEN:
8th International Conference of the
Coalition for Global Hearing Health
Working Toward Global Access to Care for Hearing Health
<http://cghh.usu.edu/>
University of Miami; Coral Gables, Florida
12-14 October 2017
Be sure to also register for our Pre-Conference offerings



 (NOW offering individual and organizational membership!)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**November 8 - 10, 2017 – 3rd International Conference of the
World Federation of the Deaf**

Location: **Budapest Congress Center, Budapest, Hungary**

Information: <https://wfdeaf.org/event/3rd-international-conference-world-federation-deaf/>

Contact: glob@congressline.hu



**3RD INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF THE
WORLD FEDERATION
OF THE DEAF**
8-10 NOVEMBER 2017
BUDAPEST, HUNGARY
WWW.WFDBUDAPEST2017.COM

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

March 14 - 16, 2018 – 11th TRI Conference and 2nd TINNET Meeting
Disruptive Innovations in Tinnitus

Location: **Regensburg, Germany**

Information: <http://2018.tri-conf.org/>

Contact: conferences@tinnitusresearch.net



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

May 10 - 12, 2018 - IFHOH Biennial General Meeting and EFHOH Annual General Meeting



Location: Ljubljana, Slovenia

Information: To view or download the program,
please click [here](#)

Theme: *Accessibility Removes All Barriers*

Contact: golob@congressline.hu

For more information, see pages 14 and 15 of this issue of
IFHOH Journal

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June 13-15, 2018 - 4th International Conference on Family-Centred Early Intervention for Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

Location: Bad Ischl, Austria

Information: www.fcei.at

Now posted: [Call for Papers](#) (deadline: Friday, November 1, 2017)

Contact: fcei@bblinz.at (Elisabeth Wild)



News Bytes

News Bytes

NEW U.S. LAW: *OVER-THE-COUNTER HEARING AID ACT OF 2017*

On August 3, the U.S. Senate passed the *Over-the-Counter Hearing Aid Act of 2017*, which had already been passed by the House. President Trump signed the *Act* into law on August 18, 2017. Now



the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will start writing rules and regulations for it. The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), a member organization of IFHOH, has supported this legislation, saying that it sends a message "that people with hearing loss need - and deserve - more affordable and accessible hearing health care." [READ MORE AND MORE.](#)

ACOUSTIC ATTACK ON DIPLOMATS?



According to a report from *The Washington Post*, a few US diplomats in Havana, Cuba began reporting symptoms in the fall of 2016, including severe hearing loss. It seems that symptoms were so serious for some of the Americans that they cancelled their tour early and returned to the US. Sources report that after months of investigation, US officials concluded that the Americans had been attacked with an "advanced sonic weapon that operated outside the range of audible sound and had been deployed either inside or outside their residences." US State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert recently stated that the investigation is ongoing into possible source or cause, which are still unknown. [READ MORE.](#) You can also click on this link for [Video report.](#)

FENNEX APP TURNS AIRPODS INTO PERSONAL AMPLIFIERS

The Swiss startup, Fennex, has recently released an updated version of its Augmented Hearing App. This application, available for free download, allows the user to turn a wireless Apple AirPods (or a wired EarPod) into a personal amplifier. Fennex's app may be the only one designed specifically for AirPods, and can serve as an alternative to traditional headphones. [READ MORE.](#)



ANKER'S ZOLO LIBERTY+ OFFERS BLUETOOTH 5.0



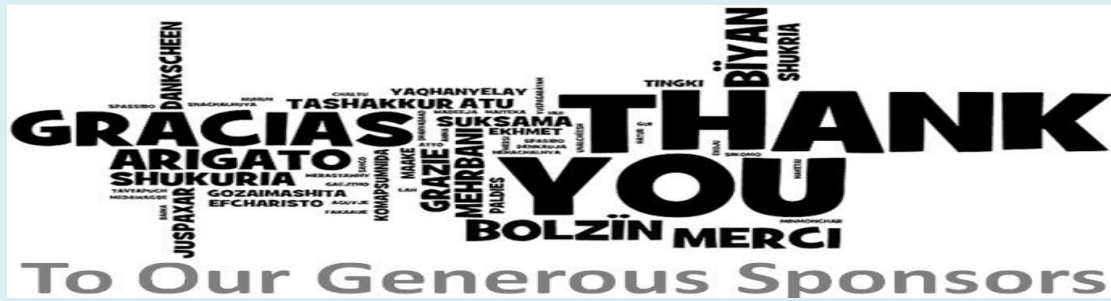
California-based company Anker has developed the Zolo Liberty+ hearable, which it describes as able to solve the problems associated with traditional wireless earphones. The enhanced technology is said to offer a "zero compromise" wireless headphone alternative. It is among the first devices to incorporate the new [Bluetooth 5.0 protocol](#). Interestingly, the company's Kickstarter campaign vastly exceeded its fundraising goal of \$50,000, totaling nearly \$3 million in just a few months. [READ MORE](#).

RAYOVAC DONATES BATTERIES IN INDIA

Rayovac recently donated 6000 of its hearing aid batteries to a University's charity project in India. The hearing aid battery manufacturer donated the batteries to De Montfort University's (DMU) Global/Square Mile Free Hearing Screening Trip to India, a charity initiative designed to create better access to hearing care for some on the country's poorest people. The initiative saw DMU students and staff visit India to lend support at hospitals and charities across the country.

More than 300 children and adults were screened for hearing conditions in the four day visit, with more than 100 people eventually fitted for hearing aids and given Rayovac batteries to power them.





*Help us thank our sponsors by
supporting them!*

Introducing Cochlear!



Cochlear Ltd are proud to become a gold member sponsor of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People.

Cochlear believe deaf and hard of hearing people should have access to hearing health care and the hearing technology they need to enable them to live full and connected lives. Cochlear's implantable hearing technology has helped over 450,000 people of all ages in over 100 countries to live full and active lives by reconnecting them with family, friends, community and work.

IFHOH JOURNAL

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is October 30, 2017.

Contributions are welcome!

The preferred length for articles is one page (400 to 500 words). Short and long articles, from 25 to 1,500 words, may also be accepted. News bytes and announcements of coming events are appreciated, including photographs and illustrations. Please send pictures in jpeg format and files as rich text or word documents. Many thanks!

Carole Willans, Editor, *IFHOH Journal*, email: journal@ifhoh.org



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The International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) is an international non-governmental organisation representing the interests of more than 300 million hard of hearing people worldwide. IFHOH is registered as a charitable organisation at Vereinsregister Amtsgericht Hamburg, Germany (Nr. 69 VR 10 527) and is also an International Non-Governmental Organisation having special consultative status with the United Nations' Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). IFHOH is a member of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and works closely with the UN system using the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a tool for change.



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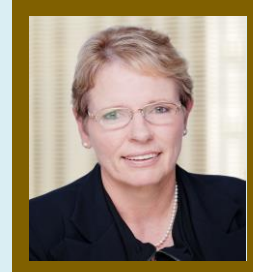
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