

## Improving communication

Last issue we focused on how communication could be improved in the home, with house acoustics in mind. This issue, we're focusing on communication tips the speaker can use, in order to help those with a hearing loss.

Hearing loss is invisible, and with hearing devices becoming smaller and more discrete, it can be difficult to tell if someone is hearing impaired. Also, many people do not know what to do when communication starts to break down. We hope this will give you and your communication partner some helpful tips.

### Around the house

- Your listener must see your face.
- Do not speak from another room.
- Go to your listener before you start talking.
- If your listener misunderstands what you have said, REPHRASE what you said, rather than repeating the same words again.



### In the car

- If you are the driver, angle your head slightly toward your listener when speaking.
- If you're the passenger, look straight at your listener when speaking. Try not to talk towards the window.
- Turn off the radio and keep windows rolled up.

### Dining Out

- Be flexible with your choice of dining time, seating choice and restaurant.
- Position yourself so your listener can clearly see your face.
- Avoid talking with food in your mouth or with a napkin near your mouth.
- The shape and direction of our ears are designed to listen to what's in front of us. Hearing aids work in a similar way too. It's best to let your listener sit with the majority of the noise to their back.

### At Public Events

PUBLIC *Events*



- Look for venues with hearing loops or other assistive technology.
- Plan ahead and arrive early to get the best seats for optimal hearing.
- Discuss the event with your listener ahead of time, so they are better able to anticipate what may be said or performed.

### On the phone

- Use a landline phone if possible.
- Hold the phone close to your mouth and avoid multi-tasking while you talk.
- Enunciate clearly and use clarifying words when giving numbers or letters, for example: "C for cat".

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## Staff News

It's been an exciting time for many of our staff members since the last newsletter. So instead of just one staff profile, this issue will bring you up to speed.

### Congratulations Sue

Firstly, a BIG congratulations to Sue on being awarded an Outstanding Service Award at the recent Audiology Australia conference. The Certificate of Outstanding Service was established in 1994 to recognise the contribution of individual audiologists to Audiology Australia and to the profession of audiology, and to promote pride in the profession. The Certificates are awarded to only 6 audiologists every 2 years. Just like us, Audiology Australia thought Sue was pretty special. Congratulations, Sue!

### Welcome Jade

We have welcomed Jade Thompson to our team. Jade has taken a full-time administrative position and will be mainly at our Warragul office, but you will occasionally see her in Morwell. Jade is excited to be working back in her local area and looks forward to getting to know you. Robina has taken on a new challenge at Latrobe Community Health and we wish her well.

## And the winner is...

Thank you to everyone who entered our **Going Green!** competition that we ran in the April edition. We had lots of responses and the lucky winner was Russell L. from Inverloch.

Instead of choosing a voucher option, which was the original competition offer, Russell kindly requested we donate the \$350 to support John Olsen in "The Long Walk for Leukodystrophy". John has embarked upon a huge journey from Cape York (QLD) to Cape Leeuwin (WA) on foot. Gippsland Audiology was delighted to support this cause on behalf of Russell. If you would like more information on John's *Long Walk*, please visit [www.thelongwalk.com.au](http://www.thelongwalk.com.au).

Although the competition has closed you can still register your email with us to receive the newsletter electronically.

## 25 Years for Heidi

July marked the first year Meg & Andrew have been in business with Gippsland Audiology. We celebrated with a staff dinner in Traralgon and it was extra special, as July also marked Heidi's 25 years of service for Gippsland Audiology. We congratulate Heidi, and thank her, as well as all our staff, for their ongoing hard work. Thanks team!



## Baby news

Lastly, Meg and Andrew are excited about the impending arrival of their second baby, due in November. Meg plans to take some time off from early November. Bianca will continue to hold the fort in Warragul until Meg's return in early 2017. Congratulations, Meg & Andrew!

## New products!

How often do you get the kids or grandkids involved in noisy activities with you? Protecting little ears and getting kids used to using hearing protection early is extremely important to prevent noise-induced hearing loss later in life. We are excited to now stock **Edz Kidz Ear Defenders**. They provide an average of 22decibels of noise reduction, and are perfect for mowing the lawn, motor racing, music festivals and much more. They come in a variety of fun colours and are suitable from 6 months to 16 years of age (they even fit on Meg's head!). Available from all our clinics for \$30 (inc GST) a pair.



## How do you rate your communication?

Since 2014, we have been asking all new clients to the clinic to complete a one-page survey while they wait for the audiologist. The simple survey asks clients to rate their ability in a number of common listening situations, such as at work, in small groups, on the phone, etc.

These forms are used to help the audiologist obtain a quick overview of where the client experiences difficulties, and to help plan the most effective strategies to give improvement.

We have accumulated a lot of forms from people we have seen with normal hearing. This information has been analyzed to find “norms” for each situation and the results have been interesting!

For example, for people with normal hearing in the 40-49 age group, only 33% report “No difficulty” with communication in large groups, 31% report “Slight difficulty” and 36% report “Moderate – Very much difficulty”.

For people with normal hearing in the 50-59 age group, only 27% report “no difficulty” with communication in large groups, 32% report “Slight difficulty” and 41% report “Moderate – Very much difficulty”.

So when clients adjusting to hearing aids report some continuing problems in specific situations, the audiologist can use these “norms” to highlight that even people with normal hearing would also find some difficulty in these situations.



What can you never eat for breakfast?

*Lunch or dinner*

What looks like half an apple?

*The other half*

How can you lift an elephant with one hand?

*You'll never find an elephant with just one hand!*

## New to our services

We are pleased to be able to now offer wax removal as part of our standard services. Several of our audiologists have undergone the specialised training to perform micro-suction and curettage for wax and foreign body removal. This service is available at all our clinics.

Wax build up is a frustrating problem. It can cause itchiness & irritation, a blocked sensation & cause whistling hearing aids. Typical management is to have the ears syringed at your local doctor's surgery. However, it seems as if doctors are less inclined to do this these days and it also comes with a risk of eardrum perforation. It is also not recommended for anyone that has had middle ear surgery, outer ear infections or eardrum perforations in the past.

Micro-suction and curettage provide a more gentle and effective method of removing the wax. Many of you will know Shelley Straw who visits our Morwell office and also provides a wax removal service. We are happy that Shelley will continue to provide her services in Morwell as she has done in the past.

## Refer a friend & SAVE!

*Do you know someone that might need a little help with their hearing?*

Refer a friend, and you will both receive 20% off your next consultation at Gippsland Audiology. Simply give a friend or family member the slip below and once they attend for their appointment we will record the discount eligibility for your next appointment. We look forward to giving your loved ones the same care you have enjoyed.

Present this voucher at any Gippsland Audiology clinic to receive 20% off your consultation.

**GIPPSLAND**  
Your name: \_\_\_\_\_  
**AUDIOLOGY**  
Friend's name: \_\_\_\_\_



## The Team

## Audiologists

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