

Hearing Matters



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Hearing Matters

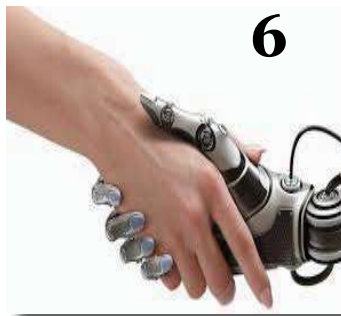


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SHHH MISSION

SHHH Australia Inc. is a voluntary organisation giving services and support to hearing-impaired people throughout Australia who communicate orally.



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Have your say!

SHHH welcomes your suggestions and ideas to spread and share with the community. You can do this through your letters (emails), comments and written contributions, which you would like us to publish. Personal experiences, difficulties faced, matters which can enhance the quality of life for the hard of hearing.

Please send your emails with "Attention: Editor, Hearing Matters", in the subject line. Send it to shhh@netspace.net.au

All material considered appropriate by the team will be published. Priority will be given to original content.

President's Message



Here we are at the beginning of a new year. For many who have enjoyed holidays and relaxing social time with family and friends over the Christmas and New Year break, it's now time to return to work and our 'real' day to day lifestyle. If this is you, and you have hearing loss, this often brings with it added pressures and anxiety relating to your ability to communicate and participate effectively in the workplace. All too often our work situation presents challenges, particularly when we might be faced with meetings, colleagues or workmates speaking quickly, plus phone calls and background noises that don't always add up to a good communication environment.

So I ask you: What have you done about your hearing loss or the fact that maybe you're not hearing quite as well as you once did? Are you still ignoring it and hoping it will go away? Have you had a proper hearing assessment done by a qualified hearing professional? Perhaps you've been prescribed one or two hearing devices and if so, are you using it/them - all the time? Do you try to incorporate oral communication techniques (e.g. face to face contact, speech reading) or auxiliary features such hearing loops, Bluetooth connectivity and/or phone captioning into your lifestyle? Perhaps I am pricking a few consciences here but I believe that if you have answered "no" to some of these questions then it may be time for some action. Think of it as a New Year's Resolution, and maybe a new start. To not be able to hear and communicate effectively, whether it is in the workplace or any other situation is not only stressful but can lead to a range of poorer health outcomes, and none of us really want that.

Many people with hearing loss participate very successfully in the workplace but it is often not without its challenges. In this edition of Hearing Matters, SHHH Board member Michele Nealon has so aptly described one such challenge and has invited readers to participate in her current research on Workplace Experiences of Employees with Hearing Impairment. Your participation in this research means that YOU can be heard, plus it is hoped that the information collected can lead to improved workplace communication offerings and sound policy changes.

Other features in this edition include Andrew Stewart's Q & A on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in relation to hearing loss; our representation at an International Day of Disabilities Transport Event (and the nice surprise discovered there); and the effect on the quality of life and brain function from hearing loss in the "What's Happening" section – all of which is aimed at keeping you well informed on the hearing loss landscape.

In other news, it seems that the Break the Sound Barrier campaign, of which SHHH is a stakeholder, is certainly having an effect politically. As a result SHHH was invited to submit and has recently lodged Parliamentary Submissions to a Senate Inquiry into the Hearing Health and Wellbeing of Australia and The Provision of Hearing Services Under the NDIS. Such platforms allow SHHH, other allied organisations and individuals to be heard, and the recommendations expressed in our submissions were aimed at raising hearing loss awareness and generating sound policy decisions by our government agencies. It is only through your support as members of SHHH that we are able to be involved at this level.

It is now time for me to sign off and for you to enjoy the read in Hearing Matters.

Christine Hunter