

soundscape

NEWSLETTER OF THE OTICON FOUNDATION IN NEW ZEALAND

THE OTICON
FOUNDATION IN
NEW ZEALAND WAS
ESTABLISHED IN
OCTOBER 1976.

INCOME GENERATED
FROM THE FOUNDATION'S
INVESTMENTS IS
DISTRIBUTED TO GROUPS
AND ORGANISATIONS
SEEKING FINANCIAL
SUPPORT FOR
PROJECTS THAT
BENEFIT THE HEARING
IMPAIRED.

MARCH 2010



Applications for 2010 grants now open

Every so often a major project comes before the Oticon Foundation that really tests us. A proposal from the University of Canterbury in the last funding round was one of those! The research proposal looking into prevention of hearing loss during ear surgery had so many positives attached to it. It also came with a rather large price tag. The Foundation believes the benefits of this research are so great, that we have committed the funding to make it happen. It is a project that will have immediate benefits for individuals, but also to help create the University of Canterbury as world

leader in this area. We hope to provide regular updates about the research on our website www.oticon.org.nz – so keep an eye on it.

We are now focussing on grants for 2010.

Applications close on 31 March, so time is running out. Please get your applications into us providing the details required as set out on the back of this Soundscapes newsletter. Application information is also available at www.oticon.org.nz.

Kind regards

Karen Pullar, Secretary to Trustees

\$350,000 Grant Makes Research Into Hearing Loss During Surgery Possible

Work is underway on research into hearing loss prevention during ear surgery thanks to the major \$350,000 Oticon Foundation grant to the University of Canterbury.

The research headed by Dr Greg O'Beirne (PhD) and Mr Phil Bird (MBChB, FRACS) from the University of Canterbury's Department of Communication Disorders is looking into methods to monitor hearing and reduce hearing loss during otologic surgery – or ear micro-surgery. Also involved in the study is Audiologist Melissa Babbage, who will be undertaking this work as part of her PhD.

"Data collection has started as we develop the monitoring system to be used during surgery. The new system will enable continuous objective measurement of both middle and inner-ear function, and will use new stimuli and measurement techniques that help improve the quality (signal-to-noise ratio) of the intraoperative recordings," says Dr O'Beirne.

In addition to improving intraoperative monitoring, a randomised, double blind, placebo-controlled trial of a protective pharmaceutical agent (intratympanic

dexamethasone) will be conducted. If effective, these techniques will result in a reduced risk of sensorineural hearing loss for individuals undergoing otologic surgery.

WHAT WILL THE RESEARCH MEAN?

The study findings are likely to benefit a large number of people undergoing ear surgery – around 60 in Christchurch and thousands worldwide and help establish New Zealand as an internationally recognised centre for clinical interventions to improve hearing and balance outcomes following surgery.

OTOLOGIC SURGERY & HEARING LOSS

"Otology" is the branch of medical science that deals with the ear and its disease. Therefore, microsurgery of the ear is often called "otologic surgery".

Many types of otologic surgery involve a small but significant risk of permanent inner ear damage, especially at frequencies above 8 kHz which are not typically measured. Patients may experience dizziness or imbalance problems after surgery that can be transient or permanent.



The University of Canterbury accept a grant from the Oticon Foundation

the oticon foundation



Professor Peter Thorne

2009 – a big, busy year at the Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre

The Centre had a very substantial year of activity in 2009. It continued its successful quarterly Hearing Research seminars at the School of Population Health at the University of Auckland. These seminars include a presentation from a prominent speaker and an opportunity for colleagues to socialise and network. They are very popular and give an opportunity for hearing professionals, scientists and the community to get together.

Excellent presentations in 2009 were given by James Whitlock on *Community noise*; Dr Srdjan Vlajkovic talked on the *Role of antioxidants in hearing loss and the potential for new treatments*; Dr Colin

Brown gave a very thoughtful account of *New methods for the diagnosis of hearing loss*, and Professor Christine Yoshinaga-Itano provided an inspiring talk to a large audience on *Raising the bar: age level expectations for all children with hearing loss*.

A major highlight of the year was the International Tinnitus Symposium, held at the Maritime Museum. This was the theme for the annual OFHEC Spring Symposium in 2009. During the two day meeting up to 100 delegates were treated to presentations covering the basic sciences and clinical management of tinnitus. International speakers included Professor Larry Roberts from Vancouver,

Canada and Professor Billy Martin from Portland, Oregon. The proceedings of the symposium will be published as a special supplement of the New Zealand Medical Journal. Dr Martin also contributed a public lecture and participated in discussions around Noise-induced Hearing Loss with the National Foundation for the Deaf.

The OFHEC supports the training of graduate audiologists through the Master of Audiology programme at the University of Auckland with support to clinical tutors and equipment for students in training.

Professor Peter Thorne, School of Population Health. The University of Auckland

FOR YOUR DIARIES

Hearing Seminars School of Population Health, Tamaki Campus University of Auckland, Glen Innes, Auckland 5.00pm-6.30pm.

April 28: Dr Johanna Montgomery, Centre for Brain Research, University of Auckland: *New Insights into the Development of the Cochlea and its Nerve Supply*

May 26: Louise Carroll and Chris Peters, The National Foundation for the Deaf: *The Changing Face of the Hearing Sector*

July 21: Professor Peter Thorne, Audiology, University of Auckland: *Advances in Imaging the Inner Ear*

September 29: Dr Grant Searchfield, Audiology, University of Auckland: *Tinnitus and its Management*

Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre Spring Symposium

The OFHEC Spring Symposium will be held in October. We anticipate an announcement on the theme of the Symposium soon. For details please contact Heather Seal h.seal@auckland.ac.nz or Peter Thorne pr.thorne@auckland.ac.nz.

Community Education: As part of its commitment to Community Education around hearing and hearing loss the OFHEC is developing an on-line library of resource material (images, animations, powerpoint and articles), which will be made available to hearing health professionals and community organisations for their use. These will be available on the OFHEC website <http://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/soph/depts/audiology/ofhec.aspx>.

SHOW AND TELL WITH HOME LOOP SYSTEMS

In Hamilton the local hearing association is showing people the difference a loop system can make to people's home life.

The Foundation has provided the Hamilton Hearing Association with an Oticon Minicon Home Loop System to help educate and explain the benefits.

"We use the demo loop system with

clients so they can experience it for themselves. We demonstrate the system when out talking to people in the community and in our own rooms," says the Association's Raylene King.

"The feedback has been great. For some people linking sound from TV, the radio or CD player to their hearing aid using a loop

system means a much better quality of life for them and their loved ones."



Study reveals clients want more information from their audiologists

Every week, New Zealanders from all backgrounds, ages and locations visit a hearing care professional for help.

New research looks into the sort of reactions people have to their diagnosis of hearing loss and what hearing care professionals can do to help.

“Some of the common emotions from those who took part in the research were a sense of loss, sadness and resignation,” says Katrina Light, audiology graduate from the University of Canterbury. “There was also some relief.

“An individual’s sense of optimism tended to decrease in response to the hearing test result.”

Katrina recruited 30 research participants from across the country in her project, backed by the Oticon Foundation of New Zealand.

She says it was encouraging to find that the ratings of audiological counselling services were positive.

“There are two quite significant gaps where better information from the audiologist could help improve the experience of being diagnosed with hearing loss,” says Katrina.

- Better information and explanation about the hearing loss – particularly what the hearing loss may mean for the individual’s every day life.
- Better information before a hearing aid is fitted.

“A patient’s journey and experience are unique. It is important that the audiologist gets to know and understand the patient.”

It was recommended by participants in the study that audiologists and hearing

care professionals provide specific written information during diagnosis – covering causes of hearing loss, prevention and management.

Furthermore, better information before the fitting appointment is needed so the client feels informed and an active participant in the rehabilitation process.



Congratulations Kate Jepson Awarded the Oticon Foundation Audiology Prize

Kate Jepson has been awarded the Oticon Foundation Audiology Prize for the best Master of Audiology dissertation at the University of Auckland.

Kate’s project, supervised by Grant Searchfield, Mike Sanders and Kei Kobayashi, investigated the use of Auditory Training Programmes in the management of tinnitus.

The purpose was to assess the effect of two different Auditory Training Programmes (frequency categorisation training [FCT] and frequency discrimination training [FDT]) for tinnitus pitch tones on tinnitus perception (as assessed by questionnaire and numerical rating scale) and on the cortical representation of trained tones (as assessed by electroencephalography [EEG]).

The results showed that short-duration perceptual training can contribute to

a reduction in tinnitus perception and that these perceptual changes can be observed as changes in auditory evoked potentials. These results deserve further investigation using similarly designed studies that are of a larger scale and conducted over a longer time frame.

“The scope of Audiology appeals to me, as well as the varied work and interpersonal contact. When I decided to become an Audiologist, I saw it as a career in which I could build on my medical knowledge and which had the possibility of leading to a teaching or research role, as well as providing the clinical work I enjoy,” says Kate.



Independent education institute for hearing care professionals

Hearing care professionals around the world have the chance to benefit from the establishment of an independent education institute set up by the Oticon Foundation internationally.

The Ida Institute is based in Denmark and aims to promote professional collaboration and support new inquiry on hearing loss and its impact.

The Institute engages experts, and focuses on topics and areas of study that will deliver the maximum benefit for hearing professionals and the field of hearing care.

Go to www.idainstitute.com to look at the work they are doing.

There are online tools, invitations to be part of the Ida community and an ability to apply to attend a seminar.

If you want to talk to someone about Ida please email Karen Pullar, kp@oticon.co.nz.

Oticon Foundation grant recipients 2009

HAMILTON HEARING
ASSOCIATION, loop system
for demonstration

HEARING ADVANTAGE,
for loan hearing aids and
FM systems for Canterbury
District Health Board service

NORTHLAND PARENTS OF
DEAF CHILDREN, for deaf
youth project

UNIVERSITY OF
CANTERBURY (Katrina
Light), study into reactions to
hearing loss diagnosis

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND
AUDIOLOGY PRIZE, annual
prize for academic work

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND,
ongoing funding for Oticon
Foundation Hearing Research
Centre

UNIVERSITY OF
CANTERBURY (GREG
O'BEIRNE AND MR PHIL
BIRD), research into prevention
of hearing loss during otologic
surgery.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON, scholarship
fund to support Post Graduate
Diploma in Sign Language
Interpreting

how to apply for grants

Applications must include:

1. The name and address of applicant
2. If relevant, the organisation represented and position of applicant within the organisation, plus copies of latest balance sheet and annual report
3. Details of expenditure involved
4. Information about funding you are seeking from any other organisation for this or supplementary projects
5. Overseas travel details where applicable. Please state whether an applicant/s will be returning to New Zealand permanently after the visit is completed
6. How the hearing impaired in New Zealand will benefit from your project/research
7. Information about how you will publicise your project and its results. (We would like you to seek as wide an audience as possible)
8. Details about how you will promote the Oticon Foundation if your application is successful

Applicants applying for project funding should also include:

1. Title of project
2. Summary of project (not exceeding 150 words)
3. Qualifications of applicant relevant to project
4. Aims and design of project, and expected completion date

Applications for grants other than project funding should also include:

1. Details of grant requested
2. Reasons for request

Successful applicants will be required to:

1. Submit a report (five copies) within three months of completion of the project
2. Disseminate results or information from the project to as wide an audience as possible, such as to the bulletins and newsletters of professional groups, hearing impaired and Deaf groups
3. Acknowledge the Oticon Foundation in any reports or publications about your project/research

deadline

Grants are allocated annually.

Applications (together with five extra copies) should be made no later than 31 March in any year. Applicants will be notified whether their grant application has been accepted by 30 June of the same year.

Please address applications to:

The Secretary
Oticon Foundation in New Zealand
C/- PO Box 9128, Te Aro
WELLINGTON 6141
Phone: 0800 OTICON
E-mail: info@oticon.org.nz

www.oticon.org.nz