



soundscape

NEWSLETTER OF THE OTICON FOUNDATION IN NEW ZEALAND

FEBRUARY 2015

Global human rights work supported by Foundations

A human rights educational 'toolkit' is going global thanks to a grant of over US\$120,000 from the Oticon Foundation in Denmark.

The toolkit was developed by the International Federation of Hard of Hearing (IFHOH) and is designed to empower people with hearing loss to stand up for their human rights, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD).

The Oticon New Zealand Foundation encouraged IFHOH to apply for the grant, which will cover the costs to develop print and video educational material to be delivered at human rights training forums worldwide.

Louise Carroll, IFHOH board member, is confident the training forums will be beneficial after successful pilots run in Ireland and New Zealand.

She says the CRPD has 159 signatories, including New Zealand and Australia, and is probably the most powerful tool that the hard of hearing can use to get their human rights met.

'This, together with the World Health Organisation's call for governments

to invest in hearing loss prevention, care, and awareness-raising, gets people talking and that empowers our work and brings about significant change,' Louise says.

Louise identified access to hearing aids as one of the greatest needs. In the Third World only 3% of those who need them actually have them. In developed countries the figure is only 13%.

'It is no longer acceptable for governments that have ratified the CRPD to say they do not have the resources to meet the needs of people who are hard of hearing.

'If you need a hearing aid but can't afford it, it's not just unfortunate, it's a breach of your human rights – your right to participate and communicate, and in this case your right to hear via assistive technology.

'Thanks to the Danish and New Zealand Foundations, we can spread the word far and wide about the CRPD, and the injustice of babies, children, and adults with a hearing disability being denied what they need to support their right to communicate,' Louise says.



IFHOH supports hard of hearing people of all ages and nationalities.

Get your funding applications in before 31 March

Grant applications close on 31 March, so send yours to the Oticon Foundation as soon as possible. [Check out the back of Soundscape](#) to find out how to apply or go to www.oticon.org.nz



Accolades and thanks

Happy New Year. It is wonderful to see Victoria Manning recognised in the New Year's Honours for services to the deaf and disabled communities. In 1994 Victoria received an Oticon Foundation grant to assist with her Master's Degree at Gallaudet University, Washington DC. The trustees at that time obviously recognised her potential!

Tim Olphert was a founding trustee when the Oticon Foundation in New Zealand was established in 1976. Since then, he has served as Chairman and Trustee until resigning at the end of last year due to health issues and other obligations. Thank you Tim, and good wishes for the future.

I have been associated with the Oticon Foundation since 1996 and am delighted that the trustees have asked me to continue in my role as Secretary.

It's time again to apply for the Oticon Foundation grants. How can we help you make a difference to the lives of people with hearing impairment? We need applications by 31 March. See the back page for how to apply.

Karen Pullar
Secretary to the Trustees

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.

the oticon foundation

Advocate and campaigner for deaf and disabled persons recognised

Receiving my Queen's award was a surprise and is an overwhelming honour,' says Victoria Manning about the NZ Order of Merit recognising her services to the deaf and disabled.

Victoria, deaf since the age of 4, is a senior policy advisor at the Disabled Persons Assembly.

In 1994 the Oticon Foundation provided a grant for Victoria to complete a two-year Master's Degree at Gallaudet University, Washington DC – the only university in the world for deaf people.

'I'd begun post-graduate studies in New Zealand, but 20 years ago there were not enough sign language interpreters or note-takers to enable me to participate, so I had to pull out.

'The costs of post-graduate study in the States was horrendous. It would have been out of my reach without the grant from the Oticon Foundation and two other generous benefactors. It is humbling that they invested considerable money and faith in me to fund my study,' Victoria says.

Victoria graduated in 1996 with a Masters degree in mental health counselling and after 8 months of post-graduate work experience in the

US, returned to New Zealand in 1997 to work as a mental health counsellor with deaf children and adults in the greater Wellington area.

She also returned with a heightened awareness of the unnecessary barriers faced by disabled people in New Zealand. Her first action was to lead a human rights complaint to make telephones accessible to deaf, hearing-impaired and speech-impaired people, which after '5 turbulent years', in 2002 resulted in the NZ Relay service.

Not one to rest on her laurels, as part of her work at the Office for Disability Issues, Victoria threw her energy into the development of the NZ Sign Language Bill, which passed into law in 2006. And she was instrumental in writing the 2013 Human Rights Commission report on the formal inquiry into New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL). The inquiry resulted in more government support for NZSL, particularly in early childhood, and the establishment of a NZSL government advisory board.

Victoria recently travelled to Geneva to present a shadow report from seven disabled persons organisations to the United Nations Committee



It's done! Victoria immediately after presenting the shadow report to the UN Committee in Geneva.

on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. 'Our report provided the vital voice of disabled people to the UN's examination of New Zealand's progress on implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and it sat alongside the Government's report.

'I had coordinated and written the shadow report, and it was a tremendous honour to be selected by the disabled persons organisations to present it in Geneva; it is a highlight of my career,' Victoria says.

And, still not resting on past achievements, she says 'I hope receiving a Queen's honour is not also a licence to retire, as there's still so much we need to do!'

A couple grants at a glance

Dr Andrew Griffiths and Professor Wouter Ten Cate of Tauranga Hospital to present the results of a retrospective review of ACC reports on whether a significant proportion of people with occupational hearing loss have a greater loss in the left ear.

Equipment for research by the University of Auckland into central auditory processing in people with long term and recent single-sided hearing loss to determine whether central auditory reorganisation occurs, if so over what time frame, and whether it is beneficial to auditory functions such as speech perception in noise.

Don Schum: hearing care of the elderly

The Oticon Foundation sponsored US audiologist Dr Donald Schum to speak at a 2014 Auckland University OFHEC research seminar on hearing care of the elderly.

Don's lecture covered current research into age-related hearing loss; elderly persons' acceptance of health care; and their social interactions.

'Audiologists typically view a patient's hearing loss as a change in physiology that leads to disrupted encoding of auditory stimulation,' says Don.

'However, hearing loss generally only becomes relevant to a person when it disrupts communication. Ageing also leads to changes in social interactions.

'If these observations are combined with a reluctance to accept amplification, it becomes clear that a complex set of forces is at play for many elderly people,' he says.



THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

Early detection and intervention key to language and social development



The Longitudinal Outcomes of Children with Hearing Impairment (LOCHI) study has provided world-first evidence for the benefits of

early hearing aid fitting or cochlear implantation for babies with hearing loss.

The study was the subject of an address by lead researcher Dr Teresa Ching at Oticon's recent paediatric audiology seminar. Teresa was sponsored by the Oticon Foundation to attend.

Teresa says there is clear evidence that fitting a hearing aid by 6 months, or cochlear implant by 12 months, is beneficial for a child's development.

'Our assessment at 5 years clearly shows that early detection through neonatal hearing screening and early treatment, is vital before developmental delays set in,' she says.

However, this is not the total picture.

The study also reveals specific deficits in pre-reading skills and suggests that targeted intervention is necessary for children to obtain the full benefit of early intervention.

'We are well on our way to completing the 9-year-old assessments,' Teresa says. 'As children start school, many factors affect their development and education and we are continuing to assess speech, language and functional skills.'

'We are also investigating the effectiveness of device intervention for improving outcomes of children with unilateral hearing loss.'

'There is a belief that fitting a hearing aid or a cochlear implant is an effective therapy, but as yet there is no evidence to support this. We will be looking to provide an answer,' Teresa says.

The study is following nearly 450 hearing impaired children in Australia from birth, through school and beyond, to examine and compare their long-term speech, language,

psycho-social and educational outcomes. It is supported by a control group of children with normal hearing to compare their performance to that of the children with hearing loss.



Neonatal screening and early intervention are vital for a baby's development.

Tim Olphert: Champion of hearing issues

Tim Olphert was there at the establishment of the Oticon Foundation in New Zealand in 1976. Nearly 40 years later he has retired, having served as Chairman and Trustee for all those years.



Over that time Tim has seen the joy of people when the Foundation has supported them to achieve something they couldn't otherwise.

'An early example,' he says, 'was the installation of a hearing loop in a small Huntly church. It meant hearing-impaired parishioners could hear the Mass for the first time.'

The Foundation has donated more than \$4 million since it was set up.

'We have supported a vast number of individuals, researchers, teachers and organisations. All have been enabled to contribute significantly towards helping, understanding and, where possible, preventing hearing loss.'

The Foundation also supported the outstanding work and research of audiologists such as Michael Heeney and Oriole Wilson. Grants have been given for a wide range of projects from testing newborn hearing to investigating classroom acoustics. These audiologists also make the community aware of the importance of hearing issues.

For many years Tim has been a volunteer at the Order of St John in New Zealand. His legal background means he's able to give what he calls 'helpful suggestions'. He has the title

of Commander of the Order of St John.

Tim retired from legal practice several years ago and then served as chairman of two immigration appeal authorities and as counsel on the Independent Police Conduct Authority. Now fully retired, he enjoys spending time with his children and seven grandchildren, all of whom are in Wellington.

This year Tim plans to combine two of his interests, opera and travel, with a trip to hear 'Aida' on the waters of Sydney Harbour. Then he and his wife Lorraine will travel to Europe, Russia, Scandinavia and England. One goal of the trip is to visit his ancestral home in County Donegal, North West Ireland, which was built in 1640 after his Dutch Huguenot ancestors fled persecution in Holland.



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 (an electronic copy (Word or PDF) and four hard 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

Oticon Foundation 2014 grant recipients

HILTON BRIDGER and **INA LABARENTOS**, attendance at the 2014 Eriksholm Summer Camp, Denmark.

DR ANDREA KELLY, Auckland DHB, travel grant to attend the inaugural International Symposium on Innovative Paediatric Hearing Science and HEAL (HEaring across the lifespan) conference in Italy.

DR ANDREW GRIFFITHS, Bay of Plenty DHB, review of ACC reports re chronic noise induced hearing loss.

DR DONALD SCHUM, travel grant to present at Auckland University.

HEARING ASSOCIATION MANAWATU, purchase of a Front Row to Go system for community education initiatives.

NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR THE DEAF, Advocacy programme delivery.

NZ AUDIOLOGICAL SOCIETY, travel grant for Professor Charles Berlin to present at the annual conference.

TERESA CHING, travel grant as keynote speaker for paediatric educational seminar.

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND, Juno sound system for teaching and lesson capture.

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND, Eclipse evoked potential system for research and teaching.

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND, audiology student prize.