

# 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.

SEPTEMBER 2006



This year marks 30 years since the Oticon Foundation in New Zealand first started reaching out into the community with financial support for projects to help improve the lives of the hearing impaired.

During that time our commitment to finding better solutions to hearing loss and increasing public awareness and understanding of hearing impairment has never waned.

The effort applicants put in and the range of ideas and projects we have seen has been impressive, and we are proud of the activities we have been able to support.

2006 is no different.

The Oticon Foundation's 2006 grants have now been awarded, from a pool of applicants that included an interesting mix of research related work, community projects and different forms of continuing education.

Through the 2006 grant recipients and the Oticon Foundation's continuing support of the University of Auckland's Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre we believe many people's lives will be touched again with activity to benefit the hearing impaired.

We're looking forward to the next 30 years of support for the community.

*Karen Pullar, Secretary to the Trustees*

## Reaching out to Māori and Pasifika kids with hearing aids

Māori, Samoan and Tongan children with hearing aids and their families are to benefit from a new story book in te reo Māori, Samoan and Tongan languages to help them understand and take care of the child's hearing aids.

Māori and Pacific island children are much more likely to experience hearing loss than other children. It is estimated that approximately:

- 2 to 3 children in every 1000 wear hearing aids
- Māori children are significantly more likely to have a hearing loss than other members of the community.
- Pasifika children are also over-represented in hearing loss statistics.



Māori



Samoan



Tongan

The OtiKids booklet "Your Hearing Aids – a guide for helping children and their families understand and take care of their hearing aids" is being translated into the three languages.

The story book provides step-by-step advice about having and using a hearing aid.

It has been designed as a story book that teachers and parents can read to their children and not only educate about hearing aids, but stimulate language development.

"Ō Taonga Whakarongo – He aratohu hei āwhina i ngā tamariki rātou ko te whānau kia mārāma ai, kia tiaki pai ai i ā rātou taonga whakarongo" – the OtiKids "Your Hearing Aids" booklet in te reo Māori is available now.

It provides hearing impaired Māori children, their whānau, teachers and caregivers quality te reo resources, and

a better understanding of the child's hearing aids and the hearing solutions used to help them reach their full potential

The booklet provides useful tips about how to put your hearing aid on, how to take care of it, tips on changing batteries, use with computers and taking the aids out at night.

The Oticon Foundation and Oticon New Zealand are working on translations of the OtiKids booklet into Samoan and Tongan, which are expected to be available before the end of the year.

The booklets are being provided to hearing care professionals and are available from the Oticon Foundation on email [info@oticon.org.nz](mailto:info@oticon.org.nz) or phone 0800 684 266.

the oticon foundation

# Hands-on Help for Hearing House Staff and Children

Enabling deaf children to speak clearly and naturally can be a big ask – but the job just got easier for the team at the Hearing House in Auckland.

The Auditory-Verbal Therapists at the not-for-profit organisation have benefited from the skills and expertise of Australian Auditory-Verbal Therapist Cheryl Dickson – thanks to the Oticon Foundation.

The Hearing House’s primary purpose is to enable children with a hearing loss who wear a cochlear implant or hearing aid to listen and speak clearly.

“Thanks to the Oticon Foundation we were able to bring Cheryl to Auckland for a week of professional development,” says Megan Piper of the Hearing House.

“This sort of overseas expertise, with hands-on practice, supervision and critique of our team while they are working is invaluable for our staff and for the children and families we work with,” says Megan.

“The Auditory-Verbal Therapy field is very dynamic. It is vital that our therapists

receive regular training and supervision to ensure hearing impaired children can become age-appropriate in oral language.”

The team at the Hearing House is now able to put the guidance from Cheryl Dickson into practice for their children.

“The benefits have included both academic and hands-on clinical expertise,” says the Hearing House’s Senior Clinician Liz Fairgray.

“We have discussed the role of visual cues, family routines and general expectations of behaviour as extra cues which help a child appear to accurately understand language. This has enabled us to show parents these extra cues are separate from the language we are teaching in each Auditory-Verbal Therapy session,” she says.

The Hearing House session was held in early September.



*Alexandra Crosbie, Hearing House Auditory-Verbal Therapist puts into practice some of her learnings in a therapy session with Hao Wang and her mother Bin.*

# Hearing Better in Hospitals and RestHomes

Next time you visit someone in hospital or a rest home keep an eye out for new signs alerting people to a patient’s hearing loss.

The Nelson Hearing Association has spearheaded a nationwide initiative to produce and distribute bedside signs for



*This is of Mavis Rowe (a resident of Omaio Village, Stoke) along with one of our Field Workers, Mandy Prattley (on the right).*

people in hospital or in rest homes, alerting visitors, nurses, doctors and staff to the fact the person has a hearing impairment.

Fifteen hundred signs have been produced and distributed to Hearing Associations around the country to provide their local hospitals and rest homes – with Oticon Foundation funding.

“We had a lot of personal feedback from people with hearing loss about the difficulties they had in hospital, because staff in particular didn’t know they were hearing impaired,” says Nelson Hearing Association’s Ana Parkes.

“People weren’t hearing crucial information about their health status or what was happening next.

“Being in hospital is intimidating enough without being unable to hear properly what is going on,” says Ana.

The bedside signs aim to change that.

The bedside signs have been provided to hospitals and rest homes stating that the patient/resident is hearing impaired.

They set out three basic communication rules:

1. Face me when speaking
2. Speak clearly and slowly
3. Don’t shout

Generally the yellow and black signs will sit in a perspex holder by the bed or in a prominent position in the rest home resident’s room.

# Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre “What’s Up”

As major sponsor of the University of Auckland’s Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre, the Foundation’s Soundscapes will be providing regular updates and information about the Centre’s work.

Watch this space for upcoming events and key activities involving the Centre.

## First national Otitis Media symposium



Over 150 people turned out for the University of Auckland recent two-day symposium focusing on glue ear.

“We drew on overseas and local experts to discuss new ideas for assessing and treating Otitis Media with Effusion – or glue ear,” says Professor Peter Thorne, Head of Audiology at the University of Auckland.

Speakers included Professor Mark Haggard, Director of the Institute of Hearing Research at Nottingham, UK and Professor Lincoln Gray from James Madison University in Virginia, USA.

Professor Haggard is a world leader on the standardisation of the assessment of Glue Ear. He is currently carrying out an

international study on this. New Zealand is the only non-European country taking part in this study. Doctor Gray is an expert on the impact of conductive deafness on auditory processing by the brain and has developed a number of important tests to diagnose this problem

“This event brought together people from many disciplines, with a common interest, to share knowledge about the latest research and clinical practice and challenged our thinking about glue ear.” says Professor Thorne.

“Participants we have spoken to appreciated the opportunity to focus their attention on this important issue, network with and learn what other disciplines were doing, and debate the issues.” said Karen Pullar of the Oticon Foundation.

Dr Gray spent several weeks with the Audiology, Otolaryngology and Speech sciences staff at the University developing joint research proposals for further local research into treatment of glue ear.

## Northland Ear Nurses Successes

The symposium heard about the success of the Mobile Ear Clinic running in Northland. Since 2000, nurse-led community based clinics have been set up, allowing pre-school and school aged children to be seen on a ‘drop-in’ basis. Before this only school aged children were seen and they had to wait for the nurse to visit which only happened twice a year.



The new approach is paying off. Five year old failure rates for glue ear and hearing loss in Northland have halved – from almost 16% in 1999/2000 to 8% in 2003/04.

## Rotorua Active Learning Successes

The spotlight also went on the positive impact of the Active Learning systems in Rotorua Schools. In 2002, 30 classrooms, with 626 children in years 1-5 from different socio-economic backgrounds were studied. The results suggest that when used by an effective teacher, sound field amplification can significantly improve educational outcomes for all students. Rotorua Principals and the Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust have gone on to provide this technology to all schools in their area.

## Sweet Sounds in Motueka Church

A South Island community can now assure anyone who attends one of its churches, whether as a regular attendee or there for a wedding or funeral, that they should be able to hear the proceedings.

The Oticon Foundation is helping ensure church goers at St. Thomas Church in Motueka can hear what’s going on.

The church has received support for testing equipment for its loop system.

Technical director at the church, and dad of a 15-year-old deaf child, Gary Adams sought the funding.

“We want to optimise the use of the loop system for those attending church. Without testing equipment we can’t judge how useful the loop system is,” says Gary.



# Oticon Foundation grant recipients 2006

**ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF THE DEAF** – travel grant to attend Deaf Education Aotearoa New Zealand (DEANZ) forum meetings

**CARL LINTOTT** – travel grant to attend World Deafblind Conference in Perth Australia in 2007

**ELIZABETH REID** – Audiology Student, University of Canterbury – travel grant to present her Masters research at the ASHA Conference, Miami, USA

**GARY ADAMS** – provision of loop testing equipment for use at St Thomas Church, Motueka

**LIFE UNLIMITED** – for Christopher Lind, of Flinders University, keynote speaker at National in-service training

**MAULE-COOPER FAMILY** – travel grant to attend to attend John Tracy programme in Los Angeles, USA

**NELSON HEARING ASSOCIATION** – for hospital bedside notices for patients with hearing loss

**OTICON NEW ZEALAND LIMITED** – translation cost of hearing aid story booklets into Maori, Samoan and Tongan

**SARAH EDIE** – Audiology Student, University of Canterbury – travel grant to present her Masters research at the ASHA Conference, Miami, USA

**THE HEARING HOUSE** – towards training and supervision of Auditory Verbal Hearing Therapists

**UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND** – ongoing funding for Oticon Foundation Hearing Research Centre

## 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**  
**Phone: 0800 OTICON**  
**E-mail: [info@oticon.org.nz](mailto:info@oticon.org.nz)**

[www.oticon.org.nz](http://www.oticon.org.nz)