



# soundscape

NEWSLETTER OF THE OTICON FOUNDATION IN NEW ZEALAND

MARCH 2013

## Tears of happiness in the Cook Islands

**I**t'd been a year since a 66-year-old Cook Island local had heard a person's voice properly.

That was until a volunteer Ear, Nose and Throat specialty team went to Rarotonga to help people with hearing impairment.

Christchurch Audiologist Virginia Good was one of them, and did it with help from the Oticon Foundation.

"When this man heard my voice he beamed broadly and said 'it's good, I can hear you, I can hear you now'. His wife promptly burst into tears," says Virginia.

Virginia saw 45 people, providing hearing tests and fitting them with new hearing aids.

The ENT specialty clinic was held at Rarotonga Hospital and supported through AusAid and New Zealand Aid.

The Oticon Foundation grant helped fund behind the ear hearing aids, temporary hearing aid ear tips, batteries and other clinical tools.

The first day there, Virginia saw a 13-year-old boy with his father. He had had his hearing loss for a long time - possibly since birth and his speech was affected.

"I fitted him with hearing aids and checked which sounds he could hear. He raised his hand at every sound and then, somewhat overwhelmed he began to weep.

"His father asked him 'can you hear me now son'. His boy nodded and continued to weep.

"The World Health Organisation reports that 80 percent of the worldwide burden of hearing loss is found in developing countries like Rarotonga, where half the cases are preventable," says Virginia.

The Western Pacific Region has the highest rate of hearing impairment worldwide because of meningitis, and the second highest rate due to otitis media (glue ear).



Virginia Good - volunteering in Rarotonga

### TIME RUNNING OUT TO APPLY FOR 2013...

If you have a project, research or initiative that you want support for get your application for funding into the Oticon Foundation ASAP. Grant applications close on 31 March 2013.

[Check out the back of Soundscape to find out how to apply](#)  
[or go to www.oticon.org.nz](http://www.oticon.org.nz)



## Check in with the Foundation's Trustees

Once a year people have the chance to seek grants from the Oticon Foundation that will help people and communities with hearing loss. Researchers, community groups and individuals have the rest of this month to pitch to us their ideas for financial help. Grant applications close on 31 March 2013.

We've had some really interesting projects in the almost forty years since we've been giving out grants.

We like to back a mix of initiatives - ranging from significant research projects through to one off activity that has an immediate impact on the community. So please get your application in now.

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

# Helping one in every six customers with hearing impairment

Tips on communicating with people with hearing impairment have found their way into the hands of shop owners and staff, carers and family members through simple information cards put together by the Hearing Association.

The Hearing Association wanted to do something to help communicate better to the estimated one in six people who are hearing impaired.

It has developed information cards to encourage and promote the recognition of hearing loss and best communication practice with frontline staff.

The card helps people recognise the signs of hearing loss in a customer, and provides strategies for better communication with a hearing impaired customer.

"It's a common misconception that everyone knows how to speak to someone who is Deaf - staff are surprised that shouting does not help," says Bridget Thompson from the Hearing Association Nelson.

"Knowing this usually inspires people to learn more"

The card is not only for frontline staff.

"It's been given to couples and carers. Often for the first time they come to understand why their partner or person 'hears' and other times 'ignores' them. Explaining the need to concentrate all the time is often a turning point in many communication conflicts."

Twenty thousand cards have been produced and provided to Hearing Associations around the country to share with their communities, shops and during talks.



## SUPPORTING DEAF RELAY ADVISORY GROUP

Mike Hamill is a member of the Advisory Group of New Zealand Relay – a telephone service for the Deaf, Deaf Blind and Hearing and Speech Impaired.

It's a new role for Mike, who lives with (spastic) Athetoid Cerebral Palsy. Mike works from home and it is crucial to his work on the Relay

Advisory Group to have an up-to-date, reliable computer. He uses specialist software and hardware for his Cerebral Palsy to allow him to use video links for VRS calls.

The Foundation has been pleased to be able to support Mike to secure this new technology.

## Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre **News Update**

The Oticon Foundation Hearing and Education Centre at the University of Auckland:

- supports postgraduate education in audiology
- provides continuing audiology education
- facilitates the transfer of research knowledge into clinical audiology
- promotes community education in hearing and hearing loss
- promotes graduate research in audiology
- provides equipment and facilities for training and professional development.

The Centre is planning its annual symposium now and will shortly announce the winner of the Oticon Foundation audiology prize to one

of its students. Updates will be on [www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/soph/depts/audiology/ofhec.aspx](http://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/soph/depts/audiology/ofhec.aspx)

### LOOKING BACK TO LAST YEAR

#### April 2012

- Meniere's Disease: Medical and Surgical Management, Michel Neeff

#### August 2012

- Middle Ear Surgery and Inner Ear Injury: Exploring the Associations, Dr Michael Bergin

#### September 2012

Presentations by current PhD students at The University of Auckland.

- Speech Sciences: Speech errors in children with hearing loss in New Zealand–Areej Asad.

- Audiology: Transcranial Direct Current Stimulation (tDCS): Effects on Tinnitus Suppression– Giriraj Singh Shekhawat.
- Engineering and Audiology: Multiple venting configurations for hearing aid applications– Daniel Stevenson
- Audiology: Hearing protection use in New Zealand manufacturing workers –Ravi Reddy.

### The Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre 2012 Spring Symposium:

- Translational Research in Audiology and Communication Sciences: the interface between the clinic and research.

Plus tutor support for the Master of Audiology programme.

# Ear surgery research results coming through

Almost 100 people are now involved in University of Canterbury research into the prevention of hearing damage during ear surgery.

The team has completed one year of postoperative monitoring of nearly half those recruited from people scheduled to have middle-ear surgery.

PhD student Melissa Babbage has conducted over 400 audiograms pre and post-operatively at regular intervals.

"Preliminary analysis of the data has produced interesting results," says Dr Greg O'Beirne, Senior Lecturer in Audiology. "It is supporting our hypothesis about the incidence of hearing loss in the extended high frequency range following middle ear surgery,

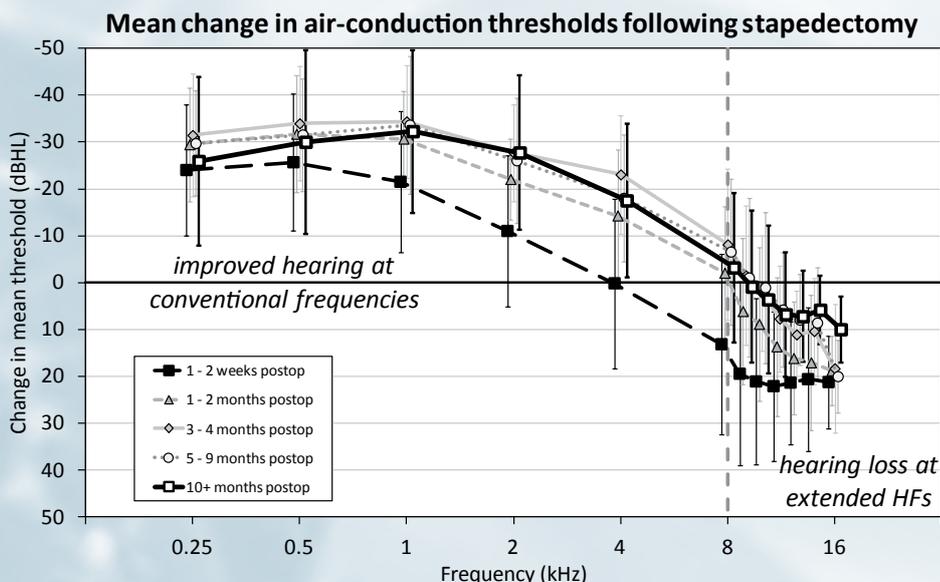
"We have shown that stapedectomy surgery has a very high rate of

success when the conventional frequencies are measured. However over 55 percent of patients showed an extended high frequency hearing loss at the final assessment."

This data is shown in Figure 1

Read an update on the research and more detail at [www.oticon.org.nz/grantRep.htm](http://www.oticon.org.nz/grantRep.htm).

**FIGURE 1**



## Making it easy to teach and learn about Sign Language

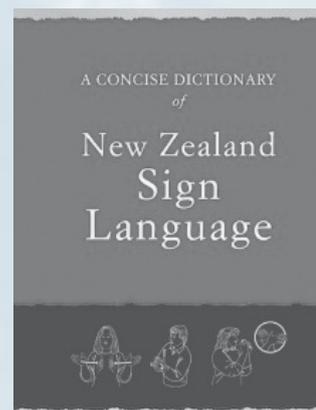
School libraries, teachers and students are better off than a year ago thanks to an initiative to get the Concise Dictionary of New Zealand Sign Language into every intermediate school in the country.

"Sign language is a part of the school curriculum in intermediate schools," says Bridget Williams, from BWB Publishing Trust. "We've worked hard to get a copy of the Dictionary into each school to make it easy to teach and learn about New Zealand Sign Language.

Around 1100 dictionaries have been distributed. The book is an authoritative reference for sign language teachers, schools, Deaf people and their families and a key

resource for anyone wanting to communicate with the Deaf.

The work is part of The Books in School Libraries scheme set up by BWB Publishing Trust to make excellent New Zealand books available in school libraries. It is the second phase of a project first backed by the Oticon Foundation which supported 64 Dictionaries into school libraries.



### Grant at a Glance

The Oticon Foundation has provided support for University of Auckland research into speech problems for children with hearing loss led by Professor Suzanne Purdy, Head of Speech Science. The study's findings will help inform decisions about speech therapy needs for children with hearing loss and further research.



# 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](mailto:info@oticon.org.nz)  
[www.oticon.org.nz](http://www.oticon.org.nz)

## Oticon Foundation 2012 grant recipients

**AUCKLAND PARENTS OF DEAF CHILDREN**, support for parents attending annual conferences

**BRIDGET WILLIAMS BOOKS PUBLISHING TRUST**, New Zealand Sign Language dictionaries in intermediate schools

**RYAN HUNT AND THERESA PAU**, Eriksholm Summer Camp

**NAPIER HEARING ASSOCIATION**, safe sound indicator and Frontrow to Go

**NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR THE DEAF**, Funding to attend Hard of Hearing Conference in Norway

**NELSON HEARING ASSOCIATION**, information cards for frontline staff

**MIKE HAMILL, NEW ZEALAND RELAY ADVISORY GROUP MEMBER**, computer support

**UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND (REBECCA WALKER)**, research into vitamin D deficiency as a risk factor for otitis media with effusion

**UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND (SUZANNE PURDY)**, research into speech problems for children

**UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND**, ongoing funding for the Oticon Foundation Hearing Education Centre

**UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND**, audiology student prize

**UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY**, research into prevention of hearing loss during otologic surgery

**VIRGINIA GOOD**, voluntary health services in Rarotonga, clinical items including hearing aids