

WELCOME TO CIICA

ON INTERNATIONAL CI DAY FEBRUARY 25TH 2021

On International CI day we are delighted to announce the launch of CIICA – a new and innovative community of organisations, individuals and experts sharing the vision of increasing access to cochlear implants, and lifelong support for those who benefit from them.

THE GROWING GLOBAL CHALLENGE OF HEARING LOSS AND DEAFNESS

Hearing Loss and deafness are major and growing health challenges globally. WHO figures show that approx. 466 million people were living with disabling hearing loss in 2018. Unaddressed hearing loss and deafness have a huge impact: in children it is linked to delayed language and educational attainment, and in adults to social isolation, loss of independence, unemployment, mental health issues, falls, cognitive decline, resulting in the increased use of health and social care services.

THE GAP IN PROVISION FOR CI

Today's technologies can change this: but globally access to cochlear implants (CI) is low and provision inadequate. In the past fifty years there have been transformative developments in cochlear implantation which provides hearing for both children and adults. It is estimated that in high income countries between 5-10% of adults have CIs of those who could benefit and in low and middle income countries access is even lower. This gap in provision results in a massive public health issue in dealing with the consequences of unaddressed hearing loss despite the proven benefits of CIs.

Cochlear implantation improves communication, individual wellbeing and reduces health and social care costs. Cochlear implants reduce the impact of an individual's hearing loss and the financial burden on health and social service systems. Investing in hearing care gives a Return on Investment of 10:1 in savings on health, social services and other costs.

CI ADVOCACY IN ACTION

To address the gap in CI provision and long term support, CIICA provides a new way of working for CI advocacy groups, bringing them together with opportunities to exploit the synergy between them.

CIICA will:

- Increase access to the provision of CI and lifelong services globally
- Develop a global community of CI advocacy groups, with opportunities to share activities and resources and collaborate to strengthen the user and family voice.
- Provide CI advocates with the tools for change they need to increase access to CI services.

CIICA: led by users and family groups, working closely with professional organisations, experts in the field of CI and other stakeholders.

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United by a common mission and goals to maximise access to and lifelong support for cochlear implantation.

OUR SUPPORTERS

This initiative is being supported by leading figures from CI users and their families to professional experts working in the area.

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Here in Australia and throughout the world, people are missing out on the opportunity of hearing. Hearing which a cochlear implant can provide. I fully support CIICA raising awareness and advocating for cochlear implant life-long access and support, through sharing evidence based information and collaboration.
Prof Cathy Birman, Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre.

I'm a CI user and an ENT specialist for rehabilitation – and I know the change CI makes to life. But, it's only if we have rehabilitation and after care – not just the CI operation. I support CIICA as part of the advocacy community to make this change.
Harald Seidler, CI User and ENT specialist, Germany.

You won't appreciate the value of what you have until it has been taken away from you. Hearing is such a valuable gift that once you lose it, getting it back is a lifetime commitment to technology and rehabilitation. There are no shortcuts to its recovery. CIICA will further CI advocacy work globally and I believe those of us in the developing countries will benefit from such a platform to gain stability in our own advocacy efforts for CI.
Eddie Mukaaya, Parent, HearHisVoice, Uganda.

Please count on us from Mexico, as ScorzalCI, a.c. our CI Family Group.
Teresa Escorza

I am thrilled and excited that something like this is happening. I would love to be a part of this and contribute in whatever way I can.
Asst Prof Neelam Vaid, Head of BIG EARS CI programme, Pune.

What a fantastic initiative, where do I sign up? We will certainly share this with our HEarUS members and friends, and support a global strategy to support and strengthen CI connections, particularly, in spreading the word about CI.
Surida Booysen, HEarUs, South Africa.

CI related organizations must create global **synergies** to achieve **access** to cochlear implantation at any age, especially with the elderly in a growing aging society.
Teresa Amat - EURO-CIU President

On behalf of CICADA we are happy to be named as Foundation members and join the International Community of Action! Hoping we can achieve our goals by working with some creative members across the world.
Sue Walters, CI User and President, CICADA, Australia.

I wish this new space to be fruitful in challenges and achievements, sharing resources and closeness with those who need it.
Hernan Spotti, CI User, Argentina.

Cochlear implant uptake, availability and after-care are woefully inadequate in so many countries. Advocacy around these issues is vitally important by consumers, professionals and interested persons working together. We are part of CIICA to further this important work.
Ruth Warick, President, International Federation of Hard of Hearing People

NOTES

1. CIICA was established after an international consultation of over 100 user groups, advocates and professionals working in the area. For more information on the background to the current crisis and support for the establishment of CIICA see CIICA Foundation Document at www.ciicanet.org.
2. For a summary of the Internationally recognised standards of care that CIICA is supporting see New Global Guidelines on Standards of Care for Adult Cochlear Implantation. To be found at www.eurociu.eu and at www.ciicanet.org.
3. Key Facts about hearing loss. The most recent WHO estimate suggests that approximately 466 million people (or 6.1% of the world's population) were living with disabling hearing loss in 2018. This estimate is projected to rise to 630 million by 2030 and to over 900 million by 2050. The Global Burden of Disease study, which incorporated mild and unilateral hearing loss, estimated that the population with hearing loss rose from 1.2 billion (17.2%) in 2008 to 1.4 billion (18.7%) in 2017. For adults, hearing loss is now the highest cause of Years lived with Disability over the age of 70 (Davis, 2016). In a recent study the cost to the European Union (EU) of reduced quality of life due to unaided hearing loss of 25 dB and above was estimated to be 224 billion euros, and the cost to the EU of reduced quality of life due to treated hearing loss (hearing aid use) of 25dB and above, was estimated at 168 billion euros (Shield, 2019). Unaddressed hearing loss poses a huge global financial burden of over 750 billion US dollars (WHO, 2017). Hearing loss is also associated with poor cognition and addressing hearing loss is one of the ways of preventing or ameliorating dementia. (Lamb and Archbold 2019, Livingston 2017).

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This is exciting . . . where do we join? Visit our website and join our growing and evolving community and share what you are doing with others, from 25 Feb 2021.

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