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'Ear 'Tis

Newsletter for Audiometry Nurses

www.anaa.asn.au

Audiometry Nurses Association of Australia Inc.
'The professional association for Audiometry Nurses'

Welcome to this issue of the ANAA Inc newsletter

Presidents Report

Hi everyone,

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our newsletter.

I am sure our Christmas break is now a distant memory, but I do hope you all had a lovely break. Maybe you are in the planning stages of your next holiday.

Since our last newsletter Gisella has been very busy planning our next conference. Make sure you put the date in your diary. October 15th to 17th at the Log Cabin in Penrith. No matter how many conferences you have been too, you always learn something. Plus, the networking is invaluable to most of us as we work as sole practitioners. There will be a theme. It will be race day attire. So, dust off your fascinator.

We have 6 nurses enrolled in the Audiometry course this semester which is a good number. Gisella and I both have students to tutor and mark this course. We hope they all enjoy their studies and go on to become an Audiometry Nurse.

Lucy Rindo and I represented ANAA Inc. at Macquarie University last month. This was to take part in the STORM project – Systematically Together Overcoming Racism Matrix. We are there to represent our hearing health organisation/professional body. These days helped us to learn and reflect on how the long-term impact of racism impacts Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Next steps will be to develop a framework to measure institutional racism and an anti-racism toolkit to reduce racism in ear and hearing care.

Our updating of the Audiometry Report and History Forms is well under way. We have taken feedback from you and the committee, sending off suggestions for change to the Ministry of Health. Our forms are on their next agenda for discussion March 13th. Hopefully we will have a draft of the forms drawn up to show you all in the coming weeks.

We will be looking at updating the standards throughout this year. Hopefully finalizing them early 2026. Any changes you think are needed please let us know.

We love hearing from our members. What have you been up to? Any interesting articles you have read. A great website you would like to share. Any farewells? Send us a small blurb with some photos. Send these to our editor Lee Lewis.

Please don't hesitate to contact your committee members with any issue you have in regards to Audiometry. Our contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

Kind regards

Kate

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Letters to the Editor

This column provides a forum for discussion and an exchange of ideas. The letters page gives members the opportunity to comment on newspaper and journal articles. You are invited to submit clinical case studies, questions or queries for discussion. Send any comments or concerns that you would like to go to the committee to this column. Have a go and tell us your news! – Editor

Hi everyone,

No letters this edition but I have received some bits of information from the committee that have been included. Hoping all our members and family and friends remained safe during the recent cyclone and flooding. Remember to send in your area “mapping” from the conference telling us all who is where and what services they offer. So far I have only received Western NSW (Thanks Bel and Amy)and I will put that in next newsletter when I can put it all together. Feel free to send in any information that I can share with all our members. Also photos.

Thanks,

Lee

Welcome to new members of our association.

Full member:

Lucy Thurlow ,Mid North Coast

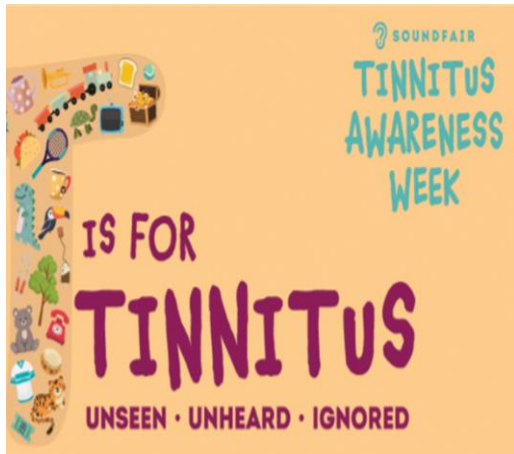
Associate members :

Prue Hancock ,Orange

Emily Aliberti , Mt Druitt

Rebecca Jordan , Forster





February was the time for Tinnitus Awareness week. Tinnitus Australia is now called Tinnitus Awareness.

TINNITUS?

Tinnitus, often called ringing in the ears, is a hearing condition where people hear noises, hisses or hums that are not present in the real world.

Tinnitus can be constant or occasional, loud or soft, mild or severe, and can be heard in one or both ears or in the head. Tinnitus can happen to people of any age or background. Approx 1 in 3 people in Australia have experienced tinnitus at some point in their life and about 1 in 6 live with constant tinnitus. About 2% of Australians (or 500,000 people) find their tinnitus very distressing.

From TINNITUS AWARENESS Brochure

New Resource for Tinnitus;

Soundfair have launched a resource to find Tinnitus Professional.

[Link to Soundfair](#)

Trivia Time:

What animals are Deaf?

We all know butterflies are deaf and there are many other insects that are also deaf such as most beetles, ants and dragonflies. Spiders are deaf and snakes can only feel vibrations through the earth. The other deaf “animals” are salamanders, armadillos, naked mole rats (native to Africa) and cephalopods (octopus, squid etc).

Source: Internet trawling.

P.S it also explains why Huntsman spiders don’t run away when you scream at them. :)





Photo op :Did any of our members do any Hearing Awareness or Tinnitus Health Promotion? Send your photos to the Editor.

Control Click on WHO for [World Health Organisation Resources for Hearing Health WHO](#).

See QR code at end of Factsheet on link.



Good to see Lego keeping up with hearing technology.

Audiometry Course 2025

Australian College of Nursing are again offering the course Audiometry Nursing in Practice. Intakes for 2025 in January and July.

<https://www.acn.edu.au/education/non-award/audiometry-nursing-in-practice>



Congratulations to the recipients of the Audiometry Nursing Study Scholarships awarded from the Association this round.

Rebecca Jordan from Forster and Kylie Watson from Taree.

We all wish you all the best in your studies and in your clinical placements and look forward to you joining our group of audiometry nurses. See you at the conference!



Hearing Glasses

Eyewear company Essilor Luxottica has announced that its ‘hearing glasses’ – spectacles that include hearing aids – have received approval from the FDA and EU certifications enabling them to be sold in America and Europe.

The company is marketing its [Nuance Audio Glasses](#), which it states audiology practices can access, as a “breakthrough in hearing technology” and an “over-the-counter (OTC) hearing aid integrated into smart glasses for perceived mild to moderate hearing loss in adults aged 18 and over”.

The audio component is invisible as it is embedded within the spectacle frames. Optional lens upgrades, which are not required for use, include customising the glasses with the client’s preferred optical lenses, whether they need a prescription, Transitions lenses or blue light filtering. The product includes a wireless charging pad.

Research

A brief search of latest literature on hearing loss in children showed the following articles which may be of interest to you.:



Intelligence quotient testing in children with hearing loss: A systematic review. Bouzaher M.H.^[4], Wu S.^[2], Ramanathan D.^[1], et al. *American journal of otolaryngology* volume 45 issue 3 pages 104219 2024

[Yale Physicists Unveil Hidden “Modes” in the Human Ear, Redefining How We Hear](#)

[Kolling Institute gene mutation find means inherited Ménière’s may be more common - Hearing Practitioner Australia](#)

[Hearing against background noises](#)

Newsletters

There are some really interesting newsletters around that we often borrow articles from for this newsletter. Here are 2 of them if you’re wanting to subscribe.

[Subscribe to Hearing Practitioner Australia - Hearing Practitioner Australia](#)

hello@deafnessforum.org.au for One in Six newsletter

Our conference was featured in the Hearing Practitioners newsletter : Looking good!

CONFERENCE



40 years of audiometry nurse education

The Audiometry Nurses Association of Australia celebrated its 40th annual conference in October 2024. *HPA* covers the event's key takeouts and gains an insight into the association itself and the profession it advocates for.

Audiometry nurses began as a profession in New South Wales stemming from a need for hearing services in community health. Annual conferences and workshops started in the early 1980s to provide ongoing education for the nurses, and in 1990 the Audiometry Nurses Association of Australia (ANAA) formed.

This year about 50 delegates gathered at the Royal Hotel Queanbeyan, NSW, from 23 to 25 October for the ruby anniversary conference.

Audiometry nurses are registered or enrolled nurses who have done a post graduate qualification in audiometry, explains new ANAA president Ms Kate Norton.

Norton is an audiometry nurse of 24 years' experience who works for Northern NSW Local Health District at Grafton Community Health and Goonellabah Child and Family Health Service.

"Audiometry nurses mainly assess children and can work anywhere in Australia but are concentrated in NSW in community health," she says. "We have a shortage due to older workers retiring and people not entering the profession.

"There's a lot of autonomy as most of us work as sole practitioners. We do everything from assessments to referrals including referring those with permanent hearing loss to Hearing Australia. It's a rewarding career especially when you see the results of children with hearing loss who you've helped."

Most of the association's full members are from NSW but some are from the ACT and associate members include other hearing practitioners such as audiologists and audiometrists.

Conference highlights

During the recent 40th annual conference, outgoing president Ms Tracy Hawes welcomed members and Aunty Matilda welcomed them to country.

Audiometry nurses Ms Kirsten Biddle from Inverell and Ms Lucy Rindo from Tamworth spoke about a two-day workshop they organise for audiometry nurses from the upper Hunter New England Local Health District. They arrange educational sessions which coincide with a technician coming to Tamworth to calibrate all audiometry equipment for the area. This allows for minimal downtime in conducting audiometry clinics.

Delegates mapped where all audiometry nurses are based and perform clinics, serving as an opportunity for nurses to meet colleagues who work in their own or neighbouring local health districts.

Conference convenor, Ms Sharyn Wilkinson, a community health audiometry nurse for NSW Health at Queanbeyan and ACT Health in Canberra, gave an overview of tympanometry.

"We have new and older audiometry nurses who benefit from expanding their knowledge on the basic processes of audiometry," Norton explains.

Otoacoustic emissions added

Otoacoustic emissions (OAEs) is a fairly new area that has been added to the audiometry nurse's battery of testing.

Audiologist Ms Jan Pollard, chief audiologist at Sonic, gave an overview of OAEs and explained the difference between transient evoked otoacoustic emissions (TEOAEs) and distortion product otoacoustic emissions (DPOAEs).

Delegates also participated in an otoacoustic emissions workshop, learning about different equipment used for OAE testing and otoscopy, practising on each other.

Sonic equipment, Auditdata, Welch Allyn (Baxter) and Natus exhibited at a trade expo and presented on their companies and products.

This included audiologist and clinical sales specialist from Sonic Equipment, Ms Michelle Wallace, discussing play audiometry and providing tips for assessment of children.

With a multidisciplinary approach common in audiometry nursing, speech pathologist Ms Vanessa Howden helped nurses determine when to refer children to a speech pathologist. Howden, from Queanbeyan Community Health, reiterated speech development at certain ages.

Audiologist Ms Brooke McIntosh discussed the HAPEE program (Hearing assessment program early ears) run by Hearing Australia to provide hearing assessments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from birth until school commencement.

Ms Sharyn Wilkinson presented on assessing children with difficult behaviours, and the use of the PA5 free field audiometer for testing young children.



Otitis media was a popular topic and Wilkinson also presented on the UK National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) review of otitis media guidelines for children under age 12 on behalf of Ms Kate Newall, nurse audiologist.

Lessons learnt treating otitis media in the Top End was the presentation given by audiologist Ms Kris Tregenza from Apunipima Cape York Health Council, while audiometry nurse Ms Gisella Laughton from Springwood NSW gave an overview of OMOZ 2024 conference in Newcastle.

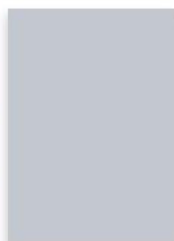
She relayed the disturbing statistic presented at OMOZ that otitis media lasts for about three years in an Aboriginal child versus three months in other children.

Canberra audiologist Ms Anne-Marie Crowe from Hear Life Canberra discussed the cochlear implant journey from newborn hearing screening to diagnosis of hearing loss and implantation. She also brought a cochlear implant to show delegates.

Hearing Australia audiologist Ms Kristen Sutcliffe discussed when the organisation was established, what programs it offers, who is eligible for its services and factors affecting outcomes of children living with hearing loss.

The Systematically Together Overcoming Racism Model (STORM) research project is developing a tool to determine if racism is present in the hearing health workplace and work to decrease it. Mr Luke Halvorsen, senior project officer in the Indigenous Health Unit at the University of Newcastle, presented on the project.

Newborn hearing screening in the ACT was the topic for audiologist Ms Fran Freeman from ACT Health Directorate. She showed the Maico Beraphone easy screen machine used in the ACT for AABR. If a baby has three refer screen results, they also have a cytomegalovirus (CMV) saliva test. CMV and newborn screening were topics also covered by Ms Jenny Bursell, the Newborn Hearing Screening Coordinator in Canberra.



"We have a shortage of audiometry nurses due to older workers retiring and people not entering the profession. It's a rewarding career especially when you see the results of children with hearing loss who you've helped."

Kate Norton
Audiometry Nurses
Association of Australia



Images: Audiometry Nurses Association of Australia

Above, L to R: Delegates at the conference dinner, some dressed in themed '80s gear; ANAA's executive committee Helen Gee (from left), Belinda Wilson, Gisella Laughton, Kate Norton, Kirsty Biddle, Sarah Austin and Lee Lewis; Audiometry nurses enjoying fellowship together; Holding their clinical advisor in audiometry nursing accreditation certificates from ANAA are Lee Lewis (from left), Jennifer Adams, Karen Harris and Helen Gee.

Case studies were detailed by Ms Lee Lewis and Ms Karen Harris, audiometry nurses accredited as clinical advisors enabling them to supervise audiometry nursing students during clinical placement.

University of Newcastle immunology and microbiology researcher, Ms Olivia Carroll, is studying biofilms in the middle ear and said the research team was looking at adding DNA to middle ear fluid to break down biofilm in the hunt for a cure for middle ear disease.

Ms Linlin Ho, Australian College of Nursing course coordinator, discussed a recent revision of the audiometry nursing course, explaining changes.

Association history

In 1982, Sydney audiometry nurse Ms Maggie Thompson started two-day conferences and workshops to provide ongoing education to audiometry nurses after they completed their studies. The events were at Camperdown Children's Hospital with the sponsorship of Paxton-Barrand Hearing Aids in Sydney and Nestle.

Since then, a conference has occurred each year except for two years of the Covid-19 pandemic. The audiometry nurses organised and ran the conferences which have mostly been in NSW but several have also occurred in the ACT and Coolangatta Queensland.

In 1990 a committee was formed with Ms Kathy Stoddart as president, Ms Maggie Thompson (life member) as treasurer and Ms Kathy Challinor OAM (life member) as editor.

At its first annual general meeting in 1991 the group voted to become an incorporated association, the Community Audiometrist Association, but in 1995 the name changed to the Community Nurse Audiometry Association. In 2011 it fell in line with other nursing organisations to become the Audiometry Nurses Association of Australia.

A new committee was elected at the annual general meeting at the 40th conference comprising president Ms Kate Norton, vice president Ms Belinda Wilson, secretary Ms Kirsty Biddle, treasurer Ms Sarah Austin, committee members Ms Helen Gee and Ms Gisella Laughton and editor, Ms Lee Lewis.

Delegates dressed in '80s gear for the conference dinner which had a 1980s theme, keeping with the birth of the event.

"Due to most audiometry nurses working as sole practitioners, a gathering like this creates support networks and long-lasting friendships amongst our peers," Norton says. ●

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A little reminder about our upcoming conference! Another exciting event with a fantastic lineup of speakers and topics ready to enhance our understanding of hearing health.

The 'ladies day at the races' theme adds a delightful touch, offering a wonderful opportunity to dress up and have some fun. Be sure to prepare your best frock and hat or fascinator to fully embrace the theme. Looking forward to a day filled with insightful discussions and stylish ensembles.