

# Newsletter

Issue 35 | Winter 2014 | University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service

## Meet Ace

In 2012 the staff at University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service (USAIS) attended a presentation on the work of hearing dogs by the charity Hearing Dogs for Deaf People. The staff were so impressed by the work of the charity they decided to nominate Hearing Dogs for Deaf People as their Charity of the Year for 2013. The aim was to raise £5000 so that USAIS could name a puppy. The Hearing Dogs for Deaf People is a national charity that trains dogs to alert deaf people to important sounds and danger signals in the home, work place and public buildings.



Mrs Betty Nutt at the Hearing Dogs Fete



Local Firefighter, Dave White, and his colleagues greatly helped our fundraising



Abseil Team

Various fundraising events took place around the University, including a bake off competition, a silent auction, a second-hand clothes sale and a summer fete.

Staff members from USAIS and the broader University, as well as family members and associated professionals, took part in an abseil down the 170 metre Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth.

At the end of 2013 it was decided to continue raising money and in September 2014 the team had raised a grand total of £8163.88

A black cocker spaniel puppy born on 10 August 2014 has now been named "Ace"

We are extremely happy to have exceeded our original fundraising target thanks to the generosity of University staff and our patients, colleagues, families and friends and we know the money will go to good use. We look forward to hearing how Ace gets on with his training as he becomes a Hearing Dog.





# We are listening

Many of our parents of Cochlear Implanted children have mentioned that you would really value some information or direct work with Grandparents or other family members to help them understand what is happening when your child has a Cochlear Implant.

A video of the assessment process was produced so that you could share this with your wider family to aid understanding. This is now available on our website, in the Patients' Area/ Assessment Patients. [www.southampton.ac.uk/ais](http://www.southampton.ac.uk/ais)

## “It’s not just Cricket!”

### How to be a good backstop or fielder when a child has Cochlear Implants

A workshop for Grandparents or others who support or care for a child with a Cochlear Implant and/or their parents.

This new workshop will be running on 30 January 2015. Due to the nature of this workshop there are limited places available. We have also limited it to two places per family. We hope to run it again if there is demand. If you haven't booked and are still interested please contact [ais@soton.ac.uk](mailto:ais@soton.ac.uk) to find out if places are still available.

USAIS is now accepting self-funded patients

## Self-Funded Cochlear Implant Service

The University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service is now welcoming enquiries from people considering a self-funded cochlear implant.

Who might be suitable for a self-funded cochlear implant?

Adults and children who have severe to profound bilateral hearing loss (worse than 70 dBHL) in the high frequencies.

Typically they will have difficulty understanding speech with hearing aids and they will be relying on lip reading. They will also have difficulty using the telephone.

Adults and children whose hearing levels fall outside the criteria set by NHS England for funding of cochlear implants (NICE TAG 166).

Adults who have already had one cochlear implant who would like to consider a second cochlear implant in their other ear.

If you would like further information regarding our Self-Funded Cochlear Implant Service and prices, please visit our website or contact us on [ais@soton.ac.uk](mailto:ais@soton.ac.uk)

## Future events for teenagers with cochlear implants

Following the success of our previous Teens' days we are planning to repeat our 'Teenagers, Telephones and Technology day' in March 2015. This day is aimed at teenagers (13-18) who are able to understand some speech without lip-reading who would like to try out different telephones and accessories to see what suits them best. The feedback from these events has always been excellent 'it's a fun experience and you get to try many things, the staff are really nice and easy to talk to'. The invitations will be sent out nearer the time but if you have any queries please contact Rebecca Ricaud, Teen Co-ordinator, at [rag@isvr.soton.ac.uk](mailto:rag@isvr.soton.ac.uk).

Telephone and Technology day





# Save the date

Join the Auditory Implant Service in celebrating our 25th Anniversary and 1000th patient at our Caribbean themed party.

Saturday 25 April 2015 | 11am-2pm  
University of Southampton  
Staff Club (Building 38)

We will be holding a tombola and if you wish to donate any prizes please bring them in to your next appointment or let us have them on the day.

## Schedule

11:00am Arrival (Tea and Coffee)  
Art and Crafts Activities  
11:45am Steel Band  
12:30pm Lunch  
2:00pm Close

Please find further details in the flyer enclosed.

## Training Courses 2015

We continue to offer a variety of training courses at the implant centre. In addition we are now providing some of our courses free of charge in a variety of locations across the South in order to reduce travel time and costs. We hope that this will help local professionals acquire the training they need to feel confident in supporting patients with cochlear implants.

We are holding Device Troubleshooting Workshops in each of our locality areas this year (East, Central and West). This half day course is run for anyone working with patients with cochlear implants who would like to feel more confident using and handling speech processors. Professionals will have time working in small groups handling the processors and accessories, including trouble shooting. All 3 manufacturers offered by USAIS will be covered (MED-EL, Advanced Bionics and Cochlear).

Please recommend the Device Troubleshooting Workshops to any professional working with you or your child who manages the speech processors and accessories.

### Tuesday 24 March 2015

Venue: Brinsbury Campus, North Heath, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 1DL

### Wednesday 20 May 2015

Venue: Rushmoor Borough Council Offices, Farnborough Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 7JU

### Monday 15 June 2015

Venue: Dorchester Library and Learning Centre, South Walks House, Charles Street, Dorchester, DT1 1EE

### Friday 3 July 2015

Venue: Saltway Centre, Pearl Rd, Swindon, SN5 5TD

We also continue to offer the opportunity for tailor made courses presented either at the implant centre in Southampton or at a more convenient local setting. For further information please contact our training coordinator Sue White, sr1@isvr.soton.ac.uk. For further details on the courses available please visit our training programme on our website.



# Make a splash!

There are some exciting developments with processor waterproofing solutions – below is some information about waterproof solutions from each of the companies that have been approved in the UK, including information regarding where the products may be purchased. Please note: to use any of the waterproof accessories below it is not possible to use zinc-air batteries i.e. non-rechargeable batteries.

## MED-EL – WaterWear for the RONDO sound processor

- WaterWear is a plastic cover for the RONDO sound processor. It comes in packs of three, each of which can be used up to three times, for up to ten hours at a time. The cover can be used in chlorinated water as well as fresh and saltwater and has been tested at a water depth of four metres. The thin cover WaterWear will not compromise microphone performance. For additional security, WaterWear can be worn with the MED-EL headband.



- Suitable for use with Alkaline batteries.
- WaterWear packs can be purchased directly from MED-EL.

email: [customerservice@medel.co.uk](mailto:customerservice@medel.co.uk)  
 phone: 01226 242 879  
[www.medel.com](http://www.medel.com)

## Cochlear – Nucleus Aqua Accessory

- Nucleus Aqua Accessory is a reusable plastic enclosure that completely seals the processing unit, cable and coil. Suitable for Freedom, Nucleus 5 or 6 processors it can be re-used up to 20 times. Available in packs of 5. Designed for use in all types of water from soapy bath to sea water and chlorinated swimming pools. There is a hole for a safety line if needed and the Aqua accessory can also float making it easy to recover if necessary.



- Nucleus Aqua+ is the new water accessory from Cochlear designed specifically for the Nucleus 5 and 6 sound processors, it can be used around 50 times. It is a soft and flexible silicone sleeve that carries a waterproof rating of IP 68. Designed for use in all types of water from soapy bath to sea water and chlorinated swimming pools. The Aqua+ must be used with a specified Aqua+ coil.



- Both the Aqua Accessory and the Aqua+ are suitable for use with rechargeable batteries only.

- The Nucleus Aqua Accessory and Aqua+ can be purchased directly from Cochlear;

email: [ukorders@cochlear.com](mailto:ukorders@cochlear.com)  
 phone: 01932 263 610  
[www.cochlear.com](http://www.cochlear.com)



## Advanced Bionics – AquaCase™ for the Naida sound processor

- AquaCase™ is a reusable activity accessory for use with Naida CI sound processors. The AquaCase™ carries an IP 68 rating for protection against water, sweat, dust, and sand. It is designed for use with a waterproof AquaMic™ and cable which is AB's waterproof headpiece with integrated microphone. The AquaCase™ has a number of wear options including a clip, armband and lanyard.

- Only suitable for use with rechargeable batteries.
- The AquaCase™ and AquaMic™ and cable can be purchased directly from AB.

email: [info.uk@advancedbionics.com](mailto:info.uk@advancedbionics.com)  
 phone: 01223 847 888  
[www.advancedbionics.com](http://www.advancedbionics.com)

Unfortunately due to the current economic climate and the high cost of sound processor maintenance through the lifetime of a cochlear implant user, USAIS will not be able to provide these items. They can however be purchased directly from the companies.

# Patient news



Linda's fundraising team

## Thank you Linda

We are extremely grateful that Linda Ray has raised £1,610 for USAIS. This will benefit our patients. Linda wrote to us:

“We did the sponsored walk today and in spite of the heat we all completed it. The ages ranged from 6yrs up to 62yrs. The six year old only asked for 2 piggy backs!! and a ten year old didn't ask at all, not that either would have got one!!! We completed 5 miles through the beautiful Sussex downland, which was a real treat. I'm so very proud of my family and friends Lucy, Emma and Louise my daughters, Isabelle and George grandchildren, Brad son-in-law, Janette & Kirsty friends and of course my darling husband Bill. Their support throughout my journey has been unfailing.”

Well done everyone!

## Congratulations



Genevieve Khoury (18 years old) received 3As and an A\* in her A-levels and has been accepted to study Medicine at the University of Liverpool. She was diagnosed with congenital progressive hearing loss

at the age of 7 years. In July 2011 she had a cochlear implant (Nucleus 5 - Cochlear) on the right side whilst continuing to use a hearing aid on the left. She had set her sight on Medicine from an early age and she is pleased to have started her training this autumn!

Well done Genevieve!

## Cate's awesome adventure

Connie Keenan wrote and told us of her daughter Cate's adventure.

“On the 6th of July, Cate had the opportunity to attend a Douglas Bader Foundation, Bader Braves Event at White Waltham Aerodrome. Cate spotted the beautiful Starduster aerobatic bi-plane as soon as she arrived, and couldn't believe her luck when she was offered a flight in it. Cate did a full loop and other acrobatic manoeuvres. She loved it so much that she is now determined to become a stunt pilot.”

That sounds so exciting Cate!



Cate's loop the loop

# Research at the Auditory Implant Service

Here at USAIS, we are very committed to research in order to ultimately benefit you, our patients. We are involved in teaching Audiology BSc, MSc and PhD students, and often they do a cochlear implant research project as their dissertation. Here is a sample of projects going on at the moment.



Mary Grasmeder

## Tuning Cochlear Implants for Improved Pitch

**Mary Grasmeder,**  
PhD student and Clinical Scientist  
M.L.Grasmeder@Southampton.ac.uk

Many of you will know Mary already, but you may not know that she is a part-time PhD student! Mary's project is looking at the allocation of different sounds to different electrodes and how this affects pitch perception for cochlear implant users. Results to date have shown that some cochlear implant users perform better on speech and music tests with a reduced frequency range map. Work is continuing to find a way to predict the best arrangement for each cochlear implant user.

## Inflammatory state as a predictor of hearing preservation

**Andrew Causon,** PhD student  
A.E.Causon@Southampton.ac.uk

Cochlear implants improve the hearing of thousands of people around the world but we still cannot predict exactly how well people will perform with the devices. Inflammation is the body's natural response to insults and injuries and may also be related to how well people perform with cochlear implants. It naturally varies from person to person, as well as with a person's health and sometimes with a person's age, so there may be instances where there is too much or too little inflammation for optimal cochlear implant performance. We have identified multiple factors which influence the preservation of residual hearing; which is related to cochlear health and hearing performance. Identifying whether or not inflammatory state has an effect on outcomes may help in future decisions on patient candidacy, timing of operations and possibly give insight into improving the procedure even further.

A cross section of the centre of a cochlea



## Donations funding research

We are delighted to say that many of our patients, their families and friends raise money for our service through sponsored walks, pub quizzes and many other things. We also often receive donations from patients and their families. Some of this money is used to improve our service (for example play items for children). The rest of this money will be used to fund research projects. USAIS has set up a committee to evaluate research applications to this fund which will meet twice a year. We hope that these donations will support research projects to improve outcomes for you - our patients.

## Your participation in research

You may sometimes receive research invitations; in future these will be on yellow paper so you can tell they are different from other letters from us. It is always your decision whether you take part or not; you are under no obligation at all. Whether you take part or not will not affect your usual treatment or your relationship with staff in any way. Please feel free to throw the invitations in the recycle bin and ignore them! If you'd prefer not to receive invitations in future, please let us know.

If you have any questions or comments about research, please get in touch with Helen Cullington.

**Helen Cullington,** Research Coordinator  
H.Cullington@Southampton.ac.uk

# Would you like to enjoy music more with your cochlear implant?

A computer program called 'Interactive Music Awareness Programme' or 'IMAP' is available to cochlear implant users (and their supporters) to aid appreciation of music. The program allows you to watch and listen to music, explore it, manipulate it and even create it in 24 fun sessions, each lasting about 30 minutes.

## What does it cost?

Nothing. Funding for the program was provided by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

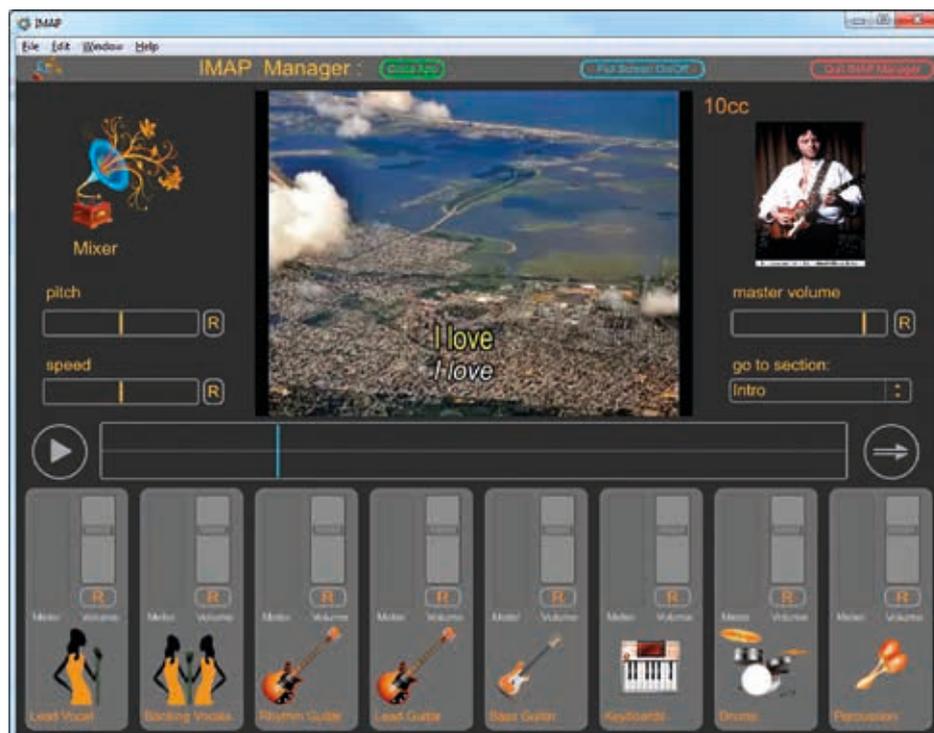
## How can I get hold of it?

The program can be downloaded from the 'morefrommusic' website onto your PC or mac: [www.morefrommusic.org](http://www.morefrommusic.org)

Enjoy!



Arts & Humanities  
Research Council



[www.morefrommusic.org](http://www.morefrommusic.org)

## Reminders

### Advanced Bionics – Partnering Support Changes

From January 2015 all spares/repairs will be dealt with at USAIS for Advanced Bionics devices. If you have any faulty AB equipment it is vital that it is returned to Partnering Support by the end of December 2014 as USAIS is charged for any unreturned items.

### MRI Scans

Are you aware you need to let us know if you/your child is scheduled for an MRI scan? This applies whichever body part is being scanned.

Cochlear implant users need certain safety precautions to be taken before an MRI is carried out.

### Checking the skin under the magnet

The information from the processor is sent across the skin via the coil to the internal implant. The coil has a magnet which holds it in place. The strength of the magnet can be changed if needed. If the coil falls off easily the magnet may not be strong enough. If it is too strong it can cause redness, soreness and skin problems which can become serious if left.

It is a good idea to check that the implant user's skin is healthy under the magnet on a weekly basis.

If any of the following are present please contact the implant service for advice:

- Redness
- Soreness
- Pain
- Swelling

### The following has been added to the British Cochlear Implant Group (BCIG) safety guidelines.

"Advice for patients with pacemakers and other powered implanted medical devices. These devices can be affected (including turned off) if magnets are brought close to them, or if they are near to a neck loop. You should seek advice from the professionals responsible for the device."

Please contact USAIS if you have any queries or wish to talk to a member of staff regarding this advice.

# Using Radio Aids for Swimming Lessons

Since March 2013, children using Cochlear™ processors have been able to use their processors for swimming using the Aqua Accessory thus giving them access to sound in the swimming pool and elsewhere. Last February the AIS commenced a trial using ear level FM receivers within the Aqua Accessory.

Five children took part in the trial aged between 7 years and 10 years. All were regular users of radio hearing aid systems. Swimming lessons were school based and the children were accompanied by their teacher of the deaf or a teaching assistant familiar with radio aid equipment. Only ear level receivers are suitable such as the one shown attached to the processor in the photograph.

The swimming instructors/coaches were not necessarily required to use the transmitter, this was often better used by the accompanying professional. (Having to jump into the water wearing a radio transmitter is not a good idea!)



USAIS commenced a trial using ear level FM receivers within the Aqua Accessory

The results of the trial were generally very positive, most children enjoyed being able to hear in the swimming pool – although they have to be advised about the high level of noise in such places, and they can hear under water when the rest of the class could not.

A swimming hat is advised to hold the processor/headpiece in place and for some a stronger magnet was needed.

## Xmas Repairs Cover

We will be closed on 25 December 2014 until 2 January 2015 inclusive. We will be running a repairs service from 10am until 4pm on the following days ONLY:

**Monday 29 December**

**Tuesday 30 December**

**Wednesday 31 December**

**Friday 2 January**

If you have a problem with your equipment, please contact us or come in for help. We will check messages only on these dates.

[www.southampton.ac.uk/ais](http://www.southampton.ac.uk/ais) and select the Spares and Repairs option on the left hand side.

Email: [ais.repairs@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:ais.repairs@southampton.ac.uk)

Repairs hotline: 023 8058 4068

SMS: 07887 790765

**Important:** If you change your GP for any reason it is essential that you let us know your new GP's details immediately please. If the GP on our records is not the GP that you are currently registered with we may not be able to send you any spares or arrange to see you. Thank you.

## Staff Update



Goodbye to Katherine Vowles our Assistant Administrator

“I am sad to be leaving the wonderful team at USAIS but I am moving on to work for Southampton Mencap. I will be advising parents about their rights in relation to their child's education so I may well speak to some of you again in the future!”



Goodbye to Louise Lee as she takes maternity leave from November 2014. We wish her all the best and look forward to meeting baby Lee!

### Congratulations

We would like to congratulate Srikanth Chundu on the recent birth of his baby daughter.

## Contact us

Auditory Implant Service,  
University of Southampton, Highfield Campus, Southampton SO17 1BJ

Telephone: 023 8059 3522 | Repairs Hotline: 023 8058 4068 | Text: 07887 790765

Email: [ais@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:ais@southampton.ac.uk) | [ais.repairs@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:ais.repairs@southampton.ac.uk)

[www.southampton.ac.uk/ais](http://www.southampton.ac.uk/ais)

Do you have good news stories or events for our next Newsletter?

Please contact Dorothy and Nicola at: [ais@southampton.ac.uk](mailto:ais@southampton.ac.uk)