



GIPPSLAND

AUDIOLOGY

NEWSLETTER

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Free services for pensioners

In 1996, Gippsland Audiology Services made a difficult decision to discontinue their Office of Hearing Services (OHS) contract, enabling the provision of subsidised services to eligible pensioner and DVA clients. With the introduction of hearing services to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the growing number of existing clients eligible for the pension, Gippsland Audiology has applied and been successful in regaining an OHS contract.

This is very exciting for Gippsland Audiology and its clients. Over the past 20 years, our clients who have transitioned onto a pension have had to seek an alternative hearing care provider in order to use their entitlements. Some have decided to continue to receive services from Gippsland Audiology and forgone their entitlements. We are delighted to be able to continue the care of our clients through all stages, including the use of any eligible entitlements under the pension. Some clients have also been disappointed that their friends and family on a pension have not been able to use their entitlements at Gippsland Audiology - they can now!

If you currently hold a pension card, a DVA Gold Card or a DVA white card for hearing services you are most likely eligible for the OHS program. If you are currently with another provider and wish to receive services from Gippsland Audiology, you are able to transfer your entitlement. Please contact your local Gippsland Audiology office. We will be able to check your eligibility or transfer your services over to Gippsland Audiology.

New clinic in Berwick!

We are excited that Gippsland Audiology are now providing hearing services in Berwick. We will open our doors for the first time on April 7th at Suite 8, 48 Kangan Drive, Berwick.

This is a great opportunity for Gippsland Audiology to expand into this growing area. While we will be offering our full range of services from Berwick, we will also be providing diagnostic audiology for Mr Guillermo Hurtado, Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist, who will be consulting next door.

Laura and Meg are looking forward to seeing you in Berwick, offering our same great services from this new location. We're sure our clients who travel to our other clinics around the Berwick area will be thrilled to cut down their travel time.

If you would like to make an appointment please call the office on 03 5622 3116. In the next newsletter we will have some more exciting news about another new clinic opening soon!

Did you know?

Aviation regulations prohibit those with a hearing loss, requiring hearing aids, from sitting in the exit rows of the aircraft. This is because those in these seats may be required to take instructions, and it is believed those with a hearing loss may slow this process. Please bear this in mind if you are pre-booking your seats for future flights. You should have no issues wearing your hearing aids through security check points.

Staff news

Welcome Julie, Abbi, Lucy & Laura

We were delighted to welcome 4 new staff in the New Year! In Leongatha we have a brand new team. Julie Cato & Abbi Taylor both started at the beginning of the year and now have Leongatha firing on all cylinders. A Melbourne girl, Julie has recently moved to Leongatha to join our clinical team. Abbi is Leongatha through and through and has joined our clerical team after leaving her role as a dental assistant.

Lucy Moore also joined us at the beginning of the year as an intern audiologist and will predominantly be working in Sale. Lucy is originally from Tasmania but has been studying in Melbourne for the past 5 years. Lucy is enjoying getting to know Sale and also the friendly faces in the Sale office.

Laura Wong has recently joined our audiology team and will be working in our Richmond and Berwick clinics. Laura is looking forward to the extra time afforded to our audiologists at Gippsland, and Richmond, Audiology. This time enables our audiologists to get to know their clients and needs so they can be helped appropriately.

Welcome Julie, Abbi, Lucy & Laura!

Goodbye Bianca

After 4 years of travelling from Melbourne nearly every day, Bianca has left. Bianca was disappointed to leave the Gippsland Audiology team/family where she started as an intern. Bianca has taken up her new role in diagnostic audiology at The Alfred Hospital. We wish Bianca all the best in her new role, and hope she enjoys all the extra time not spent in the car!

Laura Wong has transitioned to fill Bianca's Richmond clinical days, and will also be working in Berwick. Meg has resumed clinical work in Warragul, after a quick stint on maternity leave, while Andrew looks after their girls, Lucy and Winnie. Welcome back Meg!



Clockwise from top left: Julie Cato, Abbi Taylor, Lucy Moore & Laura Wong

Hearing Loss in the Workplace

Have you been working for at least two years and have hearing loss? Michele Nealon from the University of Newcastle would like to hear from you! Michele is doing her PhD on workplace experiences of employees with hearing loss. Michele is looking for appropriate candidates to complete her online survey. Input from participants will help provide recommendations for the development of support services, policies and guidelines for those with a hearing loss working in Australia.

To complete the survey please head online to www.workplacehearing.info or for more information contact Michele at michele.nealon@uon.edu.au.



Why was Cinderella so lousy at basketball?
Because she had a pumpkin for a coach and was always running away from the ball.

Response to the recent

ACCC investigation

There has been a lot of talk in the media recently about the cost of hearing aids and behavior of hearing care providers. This was sparked by the ABC Radio National's Background Briefing story *Have I got a hearing aid for you?* in late 2015. Our own Neil Clutterbuck, was interviewed and was heard during the story. Many found his insights into the industry valuable. The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) released their report investigating the issues around the sale of hearing aids on March 3rd, 2017.

The report identifies that there are many clinicians receiving commission on the sale of hearing aids and are also under aggressive sales pressures/targets. Consumers are typically unaware of these issues, as until recently there is no duty to disclose. There were also responses to the ACCC survey from clinicians, reporting how they felt they were unable to provide the best and unbiased service to their clients because of the sales pressure imposed.

Gippsland Audiology has always remained very firm on their ethics surrounding the fitting and service delivery of hearing aids. All staff, both audiological and administrative, are paid a wage only and do not receive commission on any hearing aids fitted. Clients can be assured that devices are recommended based on the research of its benefits and the suitability for their needs only, not because of any incentive. We believe this is why Gippsland, and Richmond, Audiology have become an employer of choice for audiologists as others impose increasing sales pressure on their clinicians. We welcome you to view our full ethics statement on our website.

We applaud the release of the ACCC report as we believe it is imperative that all individuals seeking hearing care are fully informed of any preferential arrangements or sales targets.

Tech update

Widex Made-for-iPhone

There is a new made-for-iPhone hearing aid on the market. This one's from Widex, called *Beyond*.

The new Widex Beyond hearing aid is a neat receiver-in-the-canal style with a size 312 battery. Aside from being a high quality hearing aid with excellent sound processing, it is capable of receiving phone calls and streaming audio from your iPhone directly to your hearing aids, without the need for cords. This means you can listen to music or a podcast while your iPhone stays in your pocket or bag. When using your iPhone to make or receive calls you simply hold it near your mouth to speak – you will hear the call directly through your hearing aids. This applies to video calls too, like FaceTime and Skype, and can also work with your iPad. You can also use your iPhone as a microphone and stream it straight to your hearing aids.

An interesting statistic of the Beyond hearing aids is that the left and right hearing aids send information to each other 21 times a second, as they analyse the sounds around you and work out how best to work for you in each situation. They also have high ratings of dust and water resistance.

Unitron rechargeable hearing aids

Unitron has released their rechargeable hearing device in their receiver-in-canal "Fit" model. While using rechargeable batteries you simply put your hearing aids in their docking station at night to charge. If you forget your charger while away you can simply use disposable 312 batteries in its place. Excitingly, this technology is backwards compatible with all Unitron Fit hearing devices!

The possibilities just keep growing for finding your perfect match - a hearing aid that suits your personal needs and lifestyle. We love showing you the latest available! Call us to make an appointment to find out more.




Unitron Moxi Fit-R rechargeable aids


 **The Team** **Audiologists** **Clerical**


Susan Clutterbuck
 Neil Clutterbuck
 Janet Kingman
 Khatija Halabi
 Meg Miklosvary
 Nicole McDonald
 Tamara Owen
 Julie Cato
 Lucy Moore
 Laura Wong

Heidi Devlin
 Bev Milner
 Karin King
 Alex Patterson
 Jade Thompson
 Abbi Taylor
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