



He who has ears to hear, let him hear. Matthew 11:15

Newsletter No. 23—2019

Get involved...

Did you know that there are no paid staff in EARS Inc.? We survive and operate because of a core of volunteers but they are stretched to the limit and we need some help.

We need people to:

- Produce our newsletter.
- Manage our web page content and design.
- Manage the Facebook page and/or other social media.
- Manage EARS membership lists.
- Manage the donors lists.

- Organise our electronic records (Dropbox).
- Write, review and update policies and procedures.
- Join the intercessors team
- Raise funds for our work
- Volunteer on our overseas projects

If you are interested in finding out more about any of these tasks—or have a skillset that is itching to do something that's not listed above - talk to us. We would love to hear from you.

Of course, we always need more funds to resource our projects too!

EARS Inc. is all about people helping people, and often the people helping other people find it is helping themselves.

The rewards are tangible and benefits far reaching.

David Pither,
EARS Inc.
President



The purpose of the COALITION FOR GLOBAL HEARING HEALTH is to advocate for effective hearing health services and policies, to equip and empower hearing healthcare professionals, families, educators, communities and those with hearing loss, and to encourage and perpetuate best practices.

By David Pither

Donna Carkeet and I will represent EARS at the 2019 Conference of the Coalition for Global Hearing Health (CGHH) at Arizona State University, 25-27 October.

This year Miguel Evangelista from the Dominican Republic project we started back in 2001 will join us at the conference. The project is now self-sustaining and Miguel is in charge of the students undergoing training (see p ...).

Donna will be giving a number of presentations as well as two posters and I am again running my one-day workshop in earmould manufacturing as well as a giving a presentation.

This year will see a reorganisation of CGHH Committees. For some years Donna has been serving on the Training

Committee and David on the Technical Committee. It was not possible to physically be on more than one committee which I think will be addressed by the new arrangements. We are looking forward to seeing what the new changes will bring.

The CGHH conference is a great time for networking and finding out about the many and varied organisations and projects in "low- to middle-income countries" around the globe and sharing our successes and failures.

EARS Inc. is proud to be an active member of the Coalition for Global Hearing Health.

Please visit their website for more information. <https://cghh.usu.edu/>

NEW CONTACT DETAILS FOR EARS INC.

Please note that we have a new address and phone number

447 Mont Albert Rd, Box Hill
Victoria 3128 Australia
Phone - (+61) 1300 472 394



EARS Incorporated is an Australian, not-for-profit association dedicated to reducing the incidence and impact of hearing impairment through training and equipping local individuals and agencies in developing countries.

We serve and empower people, irrespective of nationality, race, gender or religion, while showing the love of Jesus through our words and actions.

Our vision is for deaf and hearing impaired people in developing countries to have access to the hearing services they need to help them to reach their potential.

MALAWI UPDATE

By Peter Bartlett

There have been some very exciting developments in our Malawi ministry in recent months. We are grateful for the arrival of Dr Jenna Vallario in August for a two year period of voluntary service. Jenna visited the ABC Hearing Clinic and Training Centre (ABC HCTC) team in October 2018 to investigate the possibility of volunteering, and has recently graduated from the University of South Florida with her doctorate degree in audiology. Jenna is incredibly passionate about sharing her knowledge and skills with the ABC HCTC staff and students and is extremely motivated to work with Malawian audiologists Fletcher Chisalipo and Chikondi Kuthyola to deliver the necessary training units to progress the Bachelor of Science in Audiology program. These Audiology Department staff will be supported by a number of visiting audiologists over the next two years as they also provide teaching and supervision for students.

There are currently eleven students who are on track to graduate in 2021, and another eight students who have just begun the four-year course. Financial support for their tuition will be needed in the near future.

Prior to Jenna's arrival, Australians Ian and Lois Grant also visited Lilongwe in August to teach intensive units and reconnect with ABC HCTC staff. Rebecca Bartlett is visiting in October to provide support to Jenna, liaise with ABC mission staff, and assist with the financial management of the Clinic. Plans are underway for Peter Bartlett to take a second group of students from the University of Melbourne to Malawi, next January, for the purpose of engaging in outreach, and supporting ABC HCTC staff and students. The Malawi ministry continues to be generously supported by Hear The World Foundation, and we are most grateful for their provision of



Malawian audiologist Fletcher Chisalipo with Dr Jenna Vallario.

equipment, devices, and funding for outreach work.

The ABC HCTC team continues to grow in multiple ways! Jenna announced her engagement to fiancé Blake, and they will be married in the USA in December; both will return to Malawi in January 2020. On 2nd October, Chikondi delivered a healthy baby girl, Eliana Katriel Kuthyola.

AUDIOLOGY IN THE D.R.

By MA. Miguel Angel Evangelista
Hearing Aid Specialist, Speech and Language pathologist & Hearing care professional

The CCSM audiology project has been in constant growth from its creation to now. The department has continued the work initiated by EARS Inc. in all its areas.

The audiology program has continued to train students to become audiology technicians: this year eight students graduated and eight more will finish their audiological studies next year.

We have continued the speech therapy services and extended these services to all patients who present speech and language problems. We are currently preparing three employees and three students for the speech therapy area so that our speech therapy service 'Talk' can be expanded in all our branches.

The newborn hearing screening program in the maternity hospitals has been very effective in the early identification of hearing loss. This year we expect to fit 25 children with hearing loss, all of them with hearing aids donated by Hear The World (HTW) Foundation.

I want to thank EARS and HTW for everything they have done and continue to do for our countries in mutual cooperation in the preparation of people who can help others. Every year we evaluate more than 10 thousand students of public schools. We perform more than 4000 auditory screening in maternity hospitals, and hundreds of audiological tests in communities and churches.



Ear and hearing services are difficult to access in the Caribbean nation of the Dominican Republic (DR) due to a lack of trained professionals and surgical tools, distance and cost. One-third of the population in the Dominican Republic live under the poverty line. One of the largest audiology service providers in the country is Centro Cristiano de Servicios Médicos, Inc. (CCSM), which focuses on providing affordable medical care.

Donna Carkeet developed and ran a DR audiology diploma program from 2005 to 2013—a shining example of what is possible with commitment and skill. Miguel Angel Evangelista completed the training program in 2009 and is now CCSM program director. Currently, Hear the World Foundation partially funds the training program, while Donna offers long-distance advice and support.

FIJI UPDATE

Staff Training

Shabina Dean, the audiology department coordinator at Frank Hilton Organisation, is now in her sixth month in the Diploma of Audiometry and is progressing well. We were able to complete many hours of supervision during my most recent trip. This year we have had two new members on the audiology team: one came with experience in hearing screening and the other with no ear or hearing experience. Their training is happening on- the-job. I was grateful to be in the country to begin their training and Fijian audiologist Tukana will be continuing it. Shabina is also assisting with their training. While I was in Fiji I delivered some further audiology team training. We also combined the audiology and speech pathology assistants to teach them how to assess what speech sounds children with hearing aids can detect and hear to determine their communication training needs. Curricula are still under development for local training programs. I had meetings with many key people over three months in Fiji and I am currently drafting outlines for different levels of the audiology training course.



Shabina is making great progress in her distance Audiometry course.

By Donna Carkeet

Listen Up!

One of the things that we realised in the Audiology program in Fiji is that once we fit a hearing aid to a child, the parents are left on their own to figure out how to get their child to use it and how they can learn to communicate. We decided to combine with the speech pathology department to start an early intervention communication rehabilitation group for children 0-5 years recently fitted with hearing aids. We named the group 'Listen Up'.

The aim of this group is to support parents/caregivers in providing language stimulation for their child to develop the child's communication. The pilot program ran for 6 weeks.

The program aims to:

- Increase the number of signs used by family and child.
- Develop listening skills in children and parental understanding of how to do this in the home
- Increase the sound repertoire of the children
- Increase parent's knowledge of how to communicate with their child.
- Increase usage of the hearing aids at home.

All the parents learned some new forms of communication to use in their daily communication with their children, such as sign language and visual symbols. It was wonderful to watch the connection between parents and their children improve over the course of the program. The audiology and speech teams have also joined forces to develop a local program. The children from Listen Up will now be having one to one sessions with a speech pathology assistant and an audiometry clinician each week to continue to work on their communication goals.

My life in the Hostel

Spending almost three months in Fiji recently meant I spent a lot of time with the kids in the FHO hostel where I stay. I was very happy to help with studies, do some crafts, play silly games and watch movies. Every night we have a time when the kids sing a few songs, share a memory verse they know (I confess I had to brush up on a few) and then pray for everyone in the hostel and anything else on their minds. A pastor visits to conduct a church service for them on Sunday.



Donna loves being part of the hostel children's lives during her visits to Fiji.



Parents were taught 30 useful signs during the Listen Up program.



The Australian PLOTT Test is a useful tool to determine what a child can hear with their hearing aid/s.



Tech Star

Once again Nick Kourtis of Auditek generously volunteered his time to assist EARS Inc. and Frank Hilton Organisation. He calibrated our equipment, carried out repairs and trained the staff on the care of equipment. As always he was very busy sorting out our equipment and problem solving. He also had time to provide some expert advice on sound proofing at the local hospital. Thanks Nick for all you do for EARS!

Help us help them hear

If you would like to help, here's some ideas...

- **Donate audiological equipment and hearing aids.**
- **Donate money**—see our website's Donate page.
- **Join our fundraising team.**
- **Become a member of EARS.** (Forms on website.)
- **Volunteer.**
- **Join our prayer support team.** Contact coordinator Jan Bebbington - janbebbington@bigpond.com.



CONTACT US...

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W: www.earsinc.org

T: (+61) 1300 472 394

A: 447 Mont Albert Rd, Box Hill, Victoria 3128 Australia

Volunteers needed

If you are interested in volunteering overseas, let's make a plan! If you would like to be involved but are not able to travel at the moment, please still get in contact with us. We'll let you know about opportunities that arise in the future. Please note that overseas volunteers must fund their own travel. We will assist as much as we can with accommodation and other expenses.



Fiji

- Trainers for audiometry
- Clinical supervisors
- Speech Pathologists, teachers of the deaf and other allied health professionals.

Papua New Guinea

- Trainers for audiometry
- Supervision for Audiometry Diploma students

Malawi, Africa

- Audiologists and audiometrists for short term and long term clinical work and clinical supervision
- Teachers for audiology units in BSc Audiology course
- Speech Pathologists and teachers of the deaf

Australia

- Coordinator of donated equipment and hearing aids
- Assistance with administration tasks
- Online support for audiology/audiometry students
- Opportunities for observation and supervision in Australian clinics for PNG audiometry students.

Enquiries to Judith Francis, EARS Inc. Volunteer Co-ordinator judith@earsinc.org.

MAKING IT EASY TO GIVE

If you would like an EARS Inc. donation box for your clinic or can help us distribute them to waiting rooms of hearing and medical clinics, please contact us.



Keep in touch with latest EARS happenings by becoming a 'friend' on the EARS Inc. Facebook page.