

BETTER HEARING TODAY

Members' Newsletter



CHRISTMAS WELCOME

A warm welcome to all our readers for the Christmas edition of Better Hearing Today. We are committed to bringing you the latest on industry updates, community meetings, business developments and government initiatives that will be of interest to all members and the larger community.

Enjoy the newsletter,

The Better Hearing Australia (VIC) Team



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is with great joy and delight that I write my first Christmas message to our members, partners, stakeholders and digital community who receive our newsletter.

As Christmas approaches I have reflected on a professional development session I attended recently called “Quit busy”. It focused on the fact that we all have the same amount of time in our day 1440 minutes and how we can be more effective if we manage our energy rather than our time. It was an interesting and challenging concept and one I reflected on in my role as President of Better Hearing Australia (VIC).

As the President, I wish to acknowledge the gifts of “time and energy” of the Board, staff, volunteers and members. The gifts of “time and energy” extend throughout the year and I have seen in 2018 how harnessing these gifts has enabled the organisation to move forward ready for the future.

As ready as we are though we know we need more people with “time and energy”, our member and volunteer base has diminished over the years and as an organisation we are very keen to build these important bases, we need more people to offer these gifts and we will be focusing on this in 2019.

Christmas and the holiday season is a time for giving, it is wonderful time to come together as families, communities and a society to share joy, goodwill and happiness. Our organisation also reflects these elements, the work of the organisation brings people together, providing important services and support within communities in metro and regional areas, of which we look forward to continuing in the new year.

I would like to thank each and every one of you for the gifts of “time and energy” you have provided Better Hearing Australia (VIC), whether recently or in the past, you have all contributed to its success today.

I wish to thank Athina Georgiou for the work she has undertaken as Chief Executive Officer over the last 18 months, I know she is looking forward to spending time with family. Athina has developed exciting initiatives and strategic partnerships during her time, and we will continue that work and evolve further.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2019 as we welcome our new Chief Executive Officer, Dr Caitlin Barr, for an exciting and dynamic year.

Kim Turudia



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

As 2018 draws to a close and we reflect on a groundbreaking and innovative year for Better Hearing Australia (VIC), I am happy to share further exciting developments from the last quarter.

We have been settling in well at our new office, enjoying the interactions with other health and medical professionals in the building, and meeting new & diverse clients. As always, we are only an email or phone call away if you need a hearing assessment or require assistance for a family member or friend.

In November, we had our Annual General Meeting at the *Eye and Ear on the Park*. An important event that ensures the membership are kept up to date about finances, changes to policy & learn about new developments in the organisation. I would also like to congratulate this year's winner of the annual *Bib Trumble Award*, Sharon Giblett. Sharon has been instrumental in helping plan fundraising activities, editing our content & providing advice on digital engagement.

Our team had the opportunity to showcase the organisation at the *SMR Alliance Expo*. Promoting our organisation at these events ensures that we create strategic partnerships with like-minded organisations, and work with assessors to provide better support for older people.

In November we also had a fundraising stall at *Bunnings Warehouse* in Hawthorn, in which we raised an incredible \$1,200. These funds will go towards providing refugees and asylum seekers with reconditioned hearing aids.

Moving to December, I presented a series of hearing health seminars across the state. Through a collaboration with *Hearing Life* in Newhaven, I spoke with 20 senior citizens at the *Phillip Island Bowls Club*. These regional seminars are imperative as often there are limited services available, and we will seek to get out to these areas more frequently in 2019.

It has been a pleasure being the CEO of Better Hearing Australia (VIC) for the past 18 months. The new CEO, Dr Caitlin Barr, will lead the organisation into an exciting and innovative future, bringing her wealth of knowledge and experience in hearing loss, health and disability.

I am very proud of where the organisation is heading and the dedicated efforts of the board, staff & volunteers will ensure that people with hearing loss know that we are available to provide advice, advocacy and information services.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Athina Georgiou



WELCOME, DR CAITLIN BARR- NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

It is with great pleasure that we welcome the new Chief Executive Officer of Better Hearing Australia (VIC), Dr Caitlin Barr.

Caitlin will bring her expertise, energy and passion to the role and is excited at the opportunity to lead the organisation into the future. Caitlin is passionate about facilitating participation and connectedness, particularly in ageing and disability sectors, and does this through bringing together innovation in health services research, education and community engagement.

An experienced lecturer and Board director, Caitlin is an advocate for change in hearing care. A senior lecturer in Audiology within the School of Health Sciences at the *University of Melbourne*, her research focuses on how hearing disability plays a pivotal role in older adults' well-being with a specific focus on the role of health professionals in providing health care that is in keeping with principals of person-centred care.

Caitlin will commence as Chief Executive Officer in January 2019.



NEW BOARD MEMBERS

WELCOME, PAUL CENTOFANTI

Paul was appointed as member of the board in September 2018. Being born with a hearing loss, and having used various hearing aid devices throughout his life; he has a true appreciation for the challenges and uniqueness of what is experienced for those with a hearing health related issues.

Paul's own experience drives his personal and professional motivations; that hearing loss is no barrier, and couples this with actively promoting community resilience, empowerment and engagement. Paul holds a number of tertiary and postgraduate qualifications across health, education and disaster management. His professional experience as a clinician and senior manager expands across pre-hospital care, clinical governance and operational management sectors.

Paul brings a wealth of experience and knowledge in service delivery, organisational accountability and performance, and change management.



WELCOME, SUZETTE DELA CRUZ REGALO

Suzette Dela Cruz-Regalo was appointed to the Board in October 2018. She is a Registered Nurse and Health Information Manager with over 20 years' experience working in public and private health services in Victoria and Queensland in Australia, and in New Zealand. Suzette is currently the Manager of the Private Hospitals Unit and an Authorised Regulatory Officer at the *Department of Health and Human Services Victoria*.

Suzette holds a Master of Health Information Management (MHIM) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Community Development and International Development. She is passionate about the provision of quality and safe care, and in enhancing overall patient experience.

As a member of Better Hearing Australia (VIC), she brings to the Board a strong understanding of clinical governance, performance monitoring and risk management.



RETIRING BOARD AND STAFF MEMBERS

VICTORIA DIDENKO- BOARD MEMBER

After four years with Better Hearing Australia (VIC), Board Member Victoria Didenko will be stepping down from her position. A strong advocate for tinnitus services Victoria has been a driving force behind various raffles, fundraising events and chaired the Tinnitus Australia Alliance and fundraising sub-committee during her time.

In 2015, together with Australian jewellery designer Jan Logan, Victoria was instrumental in launching *My Earrings for Peace*, a campaign to raise awareness and funds to improve the care and services for Australians with tinnitus. Experiencing tinnitus herself, Victoria understands the urgent need for timely, multi-disciplinary care for those who struggle to live with this auditory symptom.

In February 2016, together with members, staff and volunteers, she helped create and launch the Tinnitus Australia website. The launch included a morning tea, that coincided with Tinnitus Awareness Week, the theme being 'Together for Tinnitus'. This also involved working with the British and American Tinnitus Associations.

Victoria will continue to support the organisation and advocate for all people with hearing loss and tinnitus. We wish Victoria every success.



JENNY SMITH- STAFF

Senior consultant audiologist, Jenny Smith, will be finishing up with our organisation at the end of the year.

Jenny has been pivotal in planning and presenting community education sessions across the state, provided specialist support on tinnitus relief and hearing-aid management. She has also spent significant time working with refugees and asylum seekers.

Jenny enjoyed working with the dynamic team and solving challenges head on. She has always been passionate about improving standards of audiological care and ensuring high quality service provision for hearing-impaired people of all ages.

We wish Jenny all the best in her future endeavours.



PARKINSON'S GROUP SEMINAR

We held a community education seminar for the Parkinson's Group at *St Vincent's Care* in Eltham.

Our CEO spoke with 40 people, including clients and carers, about the importance of hearing function in maintaining good social and communication behaviours. Reducing hearing effort and cognitive load were also discussed. Complimentary ear plugs were handed out to all participants, a great reminder to protect one's hearing in noisy environments.

We look forward to another talk with the group in 2019.



HEARING LIFE COLLABORATION AT PHILLIP ISLAND

In partnership with the team from *Hearing Life Newhaven*, we presented a community education seminar to the local seniors at *Phillip Island Bowls Club*.

It was great to spread the word about hearing health strategies, and especially important to interact with groups in regional areas, who often have limited options available.

Thank you to the bowls club for providing a great lunch and to clinician, Jenny Denehy, for helping organise such a successful event.



SENIORS FESTIVAL PRESENTATION

To celebrate the *2018 Victorian Seniors Festival*, we met with the Prahran locals at the *Chris Gahan Centre*. We spoke about easy access to hearing loop services in public spaces, general health & wellness tips and the importance of persevering with hearing aids.

Thank you to *Stonnington City Council* for putting on a range of activities during the month and celebrating our senior citizens.



SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY- RESEARCH GRANT DISCUSSION

Based on recent published medical findings, Better Hearing Australia (VIC) recognises that hearing loss carries the great high risk for dementia, lack of physical activity and depression in mid-life adults.

We have been invited by Denny Meyer and Matthew Hughes from *Swinburne University* research office to support their efforts in applying for a grant to help address these important health issues, and look forward to bringing you further updates about this in the new year.



BUNNINGS WAREHOUSE-CHRISTMAS HAMPER RAFFLE

Our Christmas Hamper Raffle took place at *Bunnings Warehouse* Hawthorn in November. Sausage sizzle enthusiasts, hardware experts and D.I.Y novices engaged with us by purchasing raffle tickets and speaking about hearing health.

The lucky hamper winner received a mattress voucher, restaurant voucher, artwork, print frame, travel bag, book, wine and hearing consultation voucher.

The generous locals helped us raise an incredible \$1,200. These funds will support refugees and asylum seekers, providing them with consultations, interpreters and reconditioned hearing aids.

A big thank you to *Bunnings Warehouse*, sponsors, donors and volunteers for supporting such a worthy cause.



SMR ALLIANCE EXPO

We had the opportunity to exhibit our organisation at the *SMR Alliance Expo* at the *Southern Golf Club* in Keysborough.

We interacted with Commonwealth Home Support Program assessors and like-minded organisations, ensuring we create strategic partnerships to better service older people.

The expo also allowed for improved understanding and engagement of the *My Aged Care* portal, ensuring that we transition previous and new clients onto the system, for a more robust & client centric user experience.



HEARING ACCESSIBILITY-TIPS AND REVIEWS

Kanopy

Closed Captioning (CC) films and television for everyone

Reviewed by Virtual Sharon

How often have you gone to a film but then struggled to hear? For me, it happened at the new release of *A Star is Born*. Lady Gaga sang her heart out with clarity and passion but I missed a lot of the deep dialogue. Even with my top of the range hearing aids and a cinema headset to further amplify the soundtrack, I couldn't catch the voice range of the male star, Bradley Cooper. I longed for subtitles.

The upside of this unhappy experience is that it made me check out Kanopy at my local library. Now, I'm in Wonderland. Kanopy is a film-streaming service and it's simply brilliant and free with my municipal library card! I have over 30,000 films with subtitles at my fingertips. I can watch timeless films like the original 1937 version of "A Star is Born" in my lounge-room, or my bedroom, or any other room from an internet connected computer. Kanopy also comes with an app so I can use my iPad or iPhone for viewing or even cast to my television. The Kanopy help pages show me how.

One of the many glories of Kanopy is that it supports emerging film-makers, particularly those making documentaries, independent, and sports-based movies. That's not to say that there are no mainstream offerings. Perhaps you missed the releases of "Lion" or "Still Alice" at the cinema? Never mind. Watch them at home on Kanopy without the chatter or chomping distractions that can ruin cinema-going. If you have youngsters in the house, rest assured, there are children's films, too.

This truly remarkable collection is being rolled out in many of Victoria's libraries. Kanopy even offers a way to personalise how films play. Want them to always start with captions on? Kanopy has this covered. So don't miss out on your free screenings. My library gives me five a month. Ask at your library about streaming Kanopy. It's truly a star.

A Star Is Born (2018)

Reviewed by Victoria Didenko- Tinnitus Experiencer

A Star is Born is the fourth incarnation of the Hollywood film, first released in 1937 starring Janet Gaynor and Fredric March. Since then Judy Garland, Barbra Streisand and now Lady Gaga have played the female protagonists in this ever-successful movie.

Their male lead stars have been James Mason, Kris Kristofferson and for the first time, the male protagonist 'Jackson Maine' played by Bradley Cooper has been 'given' hearing loss and tinnitus by the scriptwriters in the latest incarnation.

As someone who experiences disturbing tinnitus, I feel it is a positive thing to see tinnitus and hearing loss discussed on the big screen in this recent version of the film *A Star is Born*. Tinnitus is not considered a major health concern by the medical community in Australia.

This is rather alarming since tinnitus affects approximately 18% of Australians and it's potential to trigger anxiety, depression and worse is potent.

Read the full review [via this clickable link](#)



OFFICE CLOSE FOR HOLIDAY



Our office will be closed for the holiday period from Monday 24th December 2018 - Wednesday 2nd January 2019. We will re-open on Thursday, 3rd January 2019.

KEY DATES

The following key dates are important reminders to raise awareness and understanding about hearing health in the community. If you would like to organise a fundraiser event or have our representatives come down for a community talk, please get in touch with the team.

February 4th - 10th *Tinnitus Awareness Week*

March 3rd *World Hearing Day*

March 3rd - 9th *Hearing Awareness Week*

ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018



The 2017-2018 Annual Report is now ready for viewing. Please download a copy [via this clickable link](#) or visit www.betterhearing.org.au.

If you require a hard copy, please get in touch with the team by calling (03) 9510 1577 or email victoria@betterhearing.org.au



We look forward to updating you on all things hearing health in 2019.

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