Hearing Matters

Our art deco treasure

Our Courtenay Place office in the heritage Courtenay Chambers building was out of action for over four months (from September to January) while the building owners took the opportunity to earthquake strengthen the building.

Many of you visited us at the Hearing Association rooms on Kent Terrace when we took up temporary residence there. We came back home in January this year but the renovations continued for another six months.

In the process we found out the building we were in was originally planned as two identical towers – and the existing one was built in 1927 to a Llewellyn E. Williams design. The second one was never built. A photo of the building circa 1928 is shown here.

A big thank you to all our clients who coped with the ongoing worksite/obstacle course, the moving and sometimes absent signage and the intermittent mind-numbing drilling noise. The noise and disruption has finally stopped and it has been worth it as the building is looking great! The classic marble staircase has been beautifully preserved and Janet is seen here enjoying the new look décor.

We’re thrilled our lovely old building is now rated 100% of the new earthquake code and much more likely to be around for many more years to come.

Photos at right - Courtenay Chambers building and adjacent buildings, Courtenay Place, Wellington. Photograph taken ca 1920s by Gordon Burt.

Special offer

If you take up one of these offers you will be in the draw to win a big Spring Surprise gift basket.

Choose from ONE of the following free offers... (tick box)

☐ A FREE 5 point hearing aid and ear check (Value $35)

Your name: ____________________________

☐ A FREE hearing screening test and ear check for a friend or family member (Value $65)

Friend or family member’s name: ____________________________

Your name: ____________________________

Call 04 385 9144 or drop this form into Courtenay Hearing Centre to arrange an appointment. Offer expires 15/11/14.
ACC changes for noise-related hearing loss

Of the 365,000 New Zealanders with hearing loss, 85,000 have hearing loss that is noise related, and some 55,000 are eligible for ACC assistance.

At the beginning of July the Government raised the amount it will contribute to hearing aids that are required as a result of noise-related hearing loss, head injury and treatment injury. While not back to previous levels, we are pleased that consumer feedback has been listened to.

The new rates increase the financial assistance you can receive. Now subsidies start at $3,157.90 and rise to a maximum of $4,953.05 meaning you may be able to afford higher quality hearing devices. ACC is also funding the cost of obtaining a second opinion from audiologists.

If you are already an ACC client you are also eligible for increased ongoing support for ACC-funded hearing aids that need service and maintenance outside the warranty period. The repair subsidy now covers multiple repairs over a two-year period at twice the previous rate. ACC is also now contributing toward replacement ear moulds.

Although there are still limitations, the new changes make a good selection of hearing aids more accessible especially if a claimant cannot afford to ‘top-up’.

ACC approval can take 2-3 months, so we encourage anyone who thinks they may have a noise-related hearing loss to come in, check their entitlements, and start the process. Courtenay Hearing can provide you with detailed information on the ACC claim process.

Staff movements

This year has seen a number of staff changes.

Debbie Szalkowski has joined us as our Office Manager, replacing Catherine Hart. Debbie had worked in the construction industry for a number of years and decided she wanted a change and a new challenge. She’s been greatly enjoying the positive and friendly atmosphere at the clinic – “everyone from colleagues, clients and other organisations integral to the business are just so lovely to each other,” she said.

Many of you will have also met Nalisha Hari who joined us at the start of 2013. Her first full time audiology role was a far cry from writing her prize winning Masters thesis on ‘The influence of purinergic signalling on cochlear injury and repair’ but she quickly fitted into our team. Sadly for us, Nalisha moved to an exciting position in paediatrics at Hutt Hospital, a field that she has a particular interest in. We wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

However we were very pleased to welcome Hilary Gardner in June. Hilary has joined us from a stint with hearing aid manufacturer Oticon. She is a fully qualified audiologist with 17 years experience. Hilary is excited to be getting back into clinical practice and looking forward to a much more hands on day-to-day client interaction. “It is great to be back seeing clients every day and seeing how much difference hearing aids make to their lives,” says Hilary.

New phone solution for Phonak hearing aid wearers

Using telephones with hearing aids can be challenging. Whistling, phone placement, accessing the phone programme and lack of telecoil can all hinder performance. The Phonak DECT CP1 portable phone overcomes many of these issues by automatically streaming the phone signal directly into both Phonak wireless hearing aids. The clarity is truly impressive.

We have a demonstration unit in the clinic in Wellington so you can check whether your Phonak aids are compatible. If you want a demonstration at the Kapiti or Horowhenua clinics please phone to book an appointment.
Listening to her own medicine

As a hearing aid wearer herself, Dr Rose Dodd is particularly aware of patients who might have a hearing problem. And if they’re older patients who leave their aids in a drawer, she’ll give them a stern talking to about bringing them out again.

Rose became aware of her hearing loss around 8 years ago. Straining to hear patients and friends with quiet voices, she knew she needed to do something about it.

“I was told I had a mid-frequency hearing loss in both ears, probably a genetic issue,” said Rose.

Rose confesses she did think hearing aids might be ‘aging’, but quickly got on with getting them fitted because she knew it would help.

“The difference was quite dramatic. I could suddenly hear the quiet voices. It was really quite overwhelming.”

Because her hearing loss is only moderate, Rose can still use a regular stethoscope, and her hairstyle disguises any sign of the hearing aids.

“But I’m a lot less self-conscious about them now,” she says. “If I’m trying to make the point to my patients about the value better hearing brings, I’ll take one of the aids out and show them.”

Rose is now on her second set of hearing aids and has noticed the big difference better technology gives her.

“I’ve got GN Resound top of the range aids now. They were expensive, but they’ve got a lot more settings for volume control. They can also connect through Bluetooth to other devices so I can listen on a cellphone without putting it up to my ear and listen to music on my iPhone.

“I also have some tinnitus. The aids help with that too, but an hour long session with Janet on other techniques to help was brilliant and I’d really recommend that.”

While she jokes that when her now teenage boys were younger she used to threaten to “turn them off”, Rose wears her aids full time and says they’re essential for her to do her job.

“Look as I say to my patients, if you’ve got problems hearing, don’t muck about. Get on and get it sorted.”

Hearing aid insurance

Lost or broken hearing aids are usually covered by insurance, but insurance companies often suggest their preferred provider when replacing your aids.

Your hearing aid is a medical device which has been tailored to your unique hearing loss. If your insurance company suggests another audiologist, let them know you would prefer to deal with Courtenay Hearing.

We work with all insurance providers and can ensure the replacement aids you receive are the right ones for your needs.

Please let us know if you feel you are not being offered the opportunity to go back to your chosen audiologist.
Technology update – seamless connectivity with all your favourite devices

Since 2007 when Oticon launched Epoq there has been increasing integration between hearing aids and devices. It is now possible to have your phone calls, favourite music, computer video chats, podcasts, TV, live performances and presentations streamed directly into your hearing devices. 2014 has seen a number of hearing aid manufacturers introduce hearing devices that can be controlled by your iPhone.

ReSound LiNX is a small durable hearing aid that connects directly to your iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch turning your hearing aids into wireless stereo headphones. When used with the ReSound Smart™ app you can tailor your hearing experience matching your own preferences.

Captel phones

In some cases hearing loss is so profound, normal telephone amplification devices aren’t enough. But there is a solution.

A CapTel phone is a captioned telephone service. As your caller speaks, a captioning service transcribes everything they say into written text, which appears on the CapTel display screen.

CapTel phones are available for loan through the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. You will need access to broadband internet as the captions are carried over the internet connection and there is an annual cost of several hundred dollars for the service.

The service operates 8am till 9pm daily. For more info visit www.captel.co.nz or freephone 0800 227 835.

Halo by Starkey are advanced feature rich hearing aids engineered to work specifically with iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch. With Halo and Trulink™ Starkey’s personalised hearing control app, phone calls, music, videos and more stream directly into your hearing aids. Halo comes in 3 different models depending on your listening needs.

Oticon’s New Streamer Pro 1.2 and Connectline app can be used with Oticon’s complete range of wireless hearing aids. While Oticon hearing aids are specifically designed for your ears, the new Connectline app for iPhone is designed for your fingertips so you can adjust hearing instrument volume and change programs and select streaming from any external (additional) devices connected to the Streamer Pro 1.2.

More information

You can contact us anytime for information or advice.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Courtenay Hearing Centre

Wellington  Floor 2, 15 Courtenay Place
Paraparaumu  Grylls & Keleher, 8a Ihakara Street
Waikanae  Waikanae Specialist Centre, Marae Lane
Levin  See Hear, 174 Oxford Street

PHONE: 04 385 9144  •  FAX: 04 382 8258

EMAIL: info@courtenayhearing.co.nz  •  www.courtenayhearing.co.nz