

# Hear It!

Quadrimester  
Newsletter from the  
Audiology Committee

## VISION:

**Audiology Committee  
has a global vision to  
facilitate better  
understanding,  
knowledge and care  
of the auditory  
system and its  
disorders.**



Ms Kamini Gadhok MBE  
*President Elect*

The Audiology Committee newsletter in November 2025, highlighted the global vision of the committee to facilitate better understanding, knowledge and care of the auditory system and its disorders. An opportunity to support the realisation of this vision is through IALP's status as a non-state actor with the World Health Organisation. Areas of work led by the Audiology Committee are included in our joint collaboration plan and we are in the process of reviewing progress against this.

The IALP President Tamer Abou-Elsaad, CEO Vanessa Ebejer and myself met with the WHO rehabilitation lead recently and there will be opportunities to continue to build on our collaboration through the updated plan with WHO which is in the process of being finalised.

Of course, members of the IALP Audiology Committee will be able to play a key role along with IALP Affiliated Societies to support delivery of the plan which includes:

- Supporting advocacy and awareness-raising on ear and hearing care by engaging in World Hearing Day and the World Hearing Forum
- Providing information to support the development of the WHO Global Status Report on Hearing
- At WHO's request and guidance, providing support to the review of ICF and ICD-11 classification of hearing loss

This work also links to the IALP scoping study on the needs of professionals in low and middle resourced countries. This was disseminated via IALP networks and partners, and we had 140 respondents from 38 countries but only 5% of respondents were either jointly qualified SLPs/SLTs and audiologists or audiologists.

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This highlights the need for us to support the work of the WHO by:

- Mobilising and facilitating local (in country) advocacy efforts to help gather information from governments (including data on our professions) to inform the Global status report on hearing
- Build relationships with WHO regional offices

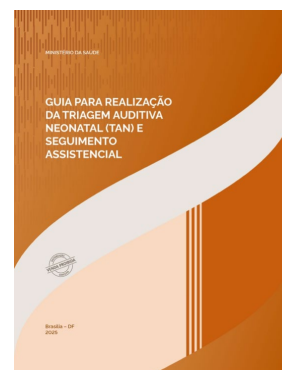
The report of the scoping study will be published on the IALP website and shared with all IALP committees and Affiliated Societies to enable them to consider how we can collaborate through our global connections to respond to the issues raised. Whilst the number of audiologists who responded was small, I am sure that many of the issues raised will resonate with them. These included 4 key themes:

- Advocacy- global awareness of communication
- Support standardisation of the development of the profession including approaches to professional training and development e.g. curriculum guidelines, codes of ethics
- collaboration on research and training
- equitable partnership based global collaboration rather than the historic 'western expert 'models.

## Reports

### *Brazilian guide for newborn hearing screening and follow-up*

**Professor Doris Ruthy Lewis**  
**Pontificia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, Brazil**



Universal newborn hearing screening is a strategy for early detection and intervention in infants with hearing loss. For this reason, newborns should be screened in the first days of life, and at most in the first month after birth. According to the Ministry of Health, UNHS screens approximately 46% of newborns in Brazil.

In 2012, a guideline was published by the Ministry of Health, to provide references to maternity departments and hearing health care services about Newborn Hearing Screening (NHS). In November 2025, an update was published and announced during the Brazilian Society of Speech Pathology and Audiology (SBFa) congress (CBF 2025).

This document update was a joint action of several key departments (the General Coordination for People with Disabilities (CGSPD) from the Department of Specialized Health Care from Ministry of Health (DAET/SAES/MS), General Coordination of Specialized Care (CGAE), Department of Primary Health Care for Indigenous People (DAPSI/SESAI), Coordination of Health Care for the Black

Population, Interprofessional Actions and Access and Equity of the Coordination of Family and Community Health, of the Department of Strategies and Policies of Community Health of the Secretary of primary Health Care (CGESCO/DESCO/SAPS/MS), and general Coordination of Health Care for Children, Adolescents and Young People (CGCRIA) from the Department of management of Comprehensive Care of the Secretary of Primary Health Care from the Ministry of Health (DGCI/SAPS/MS)). In addition, scientific societies gave full collaboration and included Brazilian Academy of Audiology, Brazilian Society of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, Federal Council of Speech-Pathology and Audiology, Brazilian Society of Pediatrics, São Paulo Pediatrics Society, Brazilian Association of Otorhinolaryngology and Cervicofacial Surgery, Brazilian Society of Otology and representants from Health Secretaries. Scientific evidence and practical experiences in the management of NHS supported the recommendations presented in the document.

The document was introduced with evidence and literature about Pediatrics Hearing Health Care, and included flowcharts, tables, and descriptions of recommended protocols for NHS with Otoacoustic Emissions and Automated Auditory Brainstem Response, and the need of integrated health care network. Workforce and equipment needs were presented, and documentation of results and need of follow-up with comprehensive diagnostic and rehabilitation. A special item was developed about school age children screening, assessment and follow-up.

The document can help to improve the coverage for early detection and intervention in newborns and infants, as well as in young children in Brazil and around the world.

#### Reference

[https://bvsmms.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/guia\\_triagem\\_auditiva\\_neonatal.pdf](https://bvsmms.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/guia_triagem_auditiva_neonatal.pdf)

## *The Gift of Sound: Humanitarian Cochlear Implant Missions of the Saudi Hearing Program*



**Dr. Shaza M. Saleh**  
**King Faisal Specialist Hospital & Research Center (KFSH&RC)**

With a firm belief in the importance of hearing for human connection, brain health, language development, and personal safety, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) launched the Saudi Hearing Program (SHP). The SHP began in 2024 and addresses hearing loss through humanitarian initiatives. Operating based on humanitarian needs, the program includes missions that provide cochlear implantation (CI) and hearing aid fitting services to different populations in different countries.

The first mission was launched to address the needs of Syrian refugees and displaced Syrians who lacked access to hearing rehabilitation services, particularly cochlear implantation. Due to logistical and safety considerations, the first mission was conducted in Gaziantep, Turkey. To overcome entry restrictions and other challenges faced by refugee children and displaced Syrians, several measures were implemented. A multidisciplinary team of volunteers reviewed audiological assessments, radiological evaluations, medical reports, and videos of recorded speech and communication samples in advance. The healthcare volunteers included ENT surgeons, audiologists, speech-language pathologists, anaesthesiologists, nurses including a scrub nurse who is a CI recipient herself, and other coordinators and collaborators.

A Cochlear Implant Committee, consisting of volunteer ENT surgeons, audiologists, and speech-language pathologists (SLPs), assessed beforehand the candidacy of the individuals with hearing loss who had been nominated for cochlear implantation by local services through a local charity. When additional hearing, speech-language, or medical evaluations were deemed necessary, they were completed within 24 hours to accommodate the entry restrictions faced by Syrians traveling to Turkey for cochlear implantation.

Additionally, pre-cochlear implant counselling was conducted within the first 24 hours. Initial activation of the cochlear implant (CI) was performed on the second day following surgery, as a necessity dictated by entry restrictions to Turkey. This approach has been evaluated and proven to be both effective and safe (e.g., Aldhafeeri et al., 2020). As it happens, it is standard practice at King Abdullah Ear Specialist Center (KAESC), which supported KS relief during this mission and subsequently became a collaborator in future missions.

This mission, conducted in April 2024, was the first of 19 cochlear implant missions completed to date. These missions have been carried out across seven countries (see Fig. 1), providing 1,108 individuals with the precious gift of sound through cochlear implantation (see Fig. 2 for details).

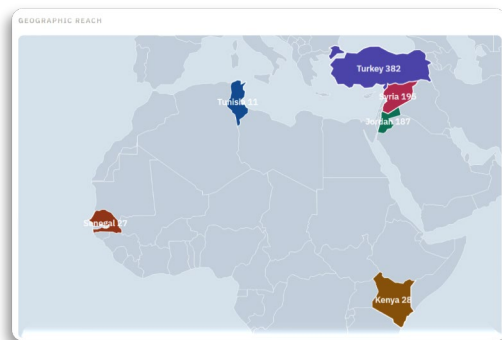


Fig. 1. Countries visited by the humanitarian missions



Fig. 2. Summary of mission sites and populations served

Recognizing that cochlear implantation is not merely a surgical procedure and that long-term support is essential to ensure successful outcomes, humanitarian services did not end with surgery or device activation. Continued evaluations, follow-up visits, and collaborations were undertaken to support recipients. This included a minimum of three structured follow-up appointments, with close monitoring conducted in collaboration with local service providers. Furthermore, if any case required revision surgery, these services were facilitated through an established incident reporting pathway for serious adverse events. Standards and pre-mission checklists were also developed to ensure the success and continuity of services.

During the first mission in Gaziantep, volunteers endured daily bus journeys of approximately one and a half hours each way to reach the medical facility. These journeys were undertaken every day while volunteers worked under immense pressure to provide healthcare services and perform surgeries for the largest possible number of individuals in need within a limited timeframe. Despite the demanding schedule and sleep deprivation, all volunteers expressed a desire to participate in future missions, and many did. Each of the 219 volunteers who participated across the 19 missions has heartwarming stories that will remain vivid in their memories for the rest of their lives.

These humanitarian missions, led by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre, not only touched the lives of cochlear implant recipients and their families, transforming their futures forever, but also profoundly impacted the volunteers themselves. The experience touched their hearts and changed them forever!



### Reference

Aldhafeeri, A. M., Saleh, S., Almuhawes, F., & Hagr, A. (2020). Feasibility of day surgery for cochlear implantation under conscious sedation with same-day fitting. *The journal of international advanced otology*, 16(3), 303.

# Past Events

## 1. World Hearing Day, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026

The theme this year is **“From communities to classrooms: hearing care for all children  
*Act now so no child is left behind due to ear or hearing problems*”**

<https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-hearing-day/2026>

## Auditory Processing Disorders, Listening Difficulties and Related Challenges in School-Aged Children



Webinar presented on World Hearing Day 2026, available at <https://isa-audiology.org/news/events>

Every year on March 3, the world celebrates World Hearing Day (WHD), organized by the WHO. The theme of World Hearing Day 2026 was *“From Communities to Schools: Hearing Care for All Children.”* Accordingly, the focus was on school-aged children. In its *World Report on Hearing (2021)*, the WHO highlighted that, globally, many school-aged children with hearing loss remain undetected and lack access to necessary services. According to WHO estimates, around 90 million children and adolescents aged 5–19 years are affected by hearing loss across all world regions (*Global Burden of Disease Study, 2021*).

However, many children with normal peripheral hearing also experience auditory processing disorders and other listening difficulties in everyday school life, a topic that has received less attention in WHO initiatives to date. Approximately 3–5% of children present with auditory processing disorders in the classical sense. Others face challenges such as reading and spelling disorders, attention deficits, developmental language disorder, hyperacusis, misophonia, learning difficulties, or autism spectrum disorders. When listening difficulties co-occur with these conditions, the respective challenges may interact and exacerbate one another, making learning considerably more demanding for affected children.

Therefore, in line with the motto of World Hearing Day 2026, audiologists, international researchers, and physicians specialized in phoniatics and pediatric audiology whose work focuses on listening difficulties and effective interventions presented a webinar on March 3, 2026. Hosted by the International Society of Audiology (ISA) and held in cooperation with the IALP, the Union of European Phoniaticians (UEP), and the University of Münster, the webinar was entitled *“Auditory Processing Disorders, Listening Difficulties, and Related Challenges in School-Aged Children.”*

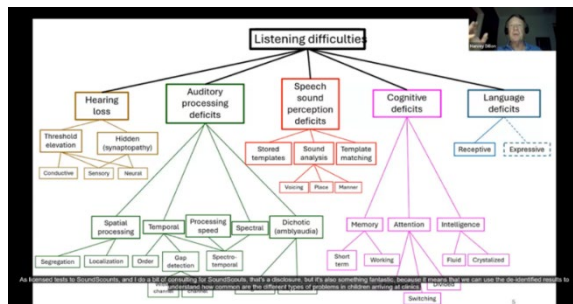
The webinar addressed the identification of such difficulties, their heterogeneous etiologies and relationships to speech and language, indications for intervention, the type and duration of use of

technical assistive devices, and their neuromodulatory effects. The session concluded with a discussion among the speakers. It is available as a recorded webinar at <https://isa-audiology.org/news/events>.

A report on the webinar, together with photographs and personal reflections, has recently been published by the WHO under *Global Effort* and is available at <https://worldhearingday.org/all-activities-recent/>

Program of the Webinar “Auditory processing disorders, listening difficulties, and related challenges in school-aged children”

Prof. Katrin Neumann – Intro to the problem



Dr. Joan Leung: Typical duration of amplification treatment for APD in children and consequent beneficial neuroplastic changes.

Dr. Amélie Hesping: Extended indications for assistive devices in children with listening difficulties

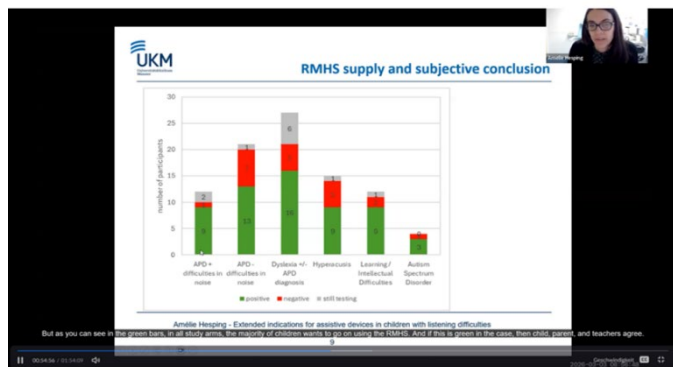


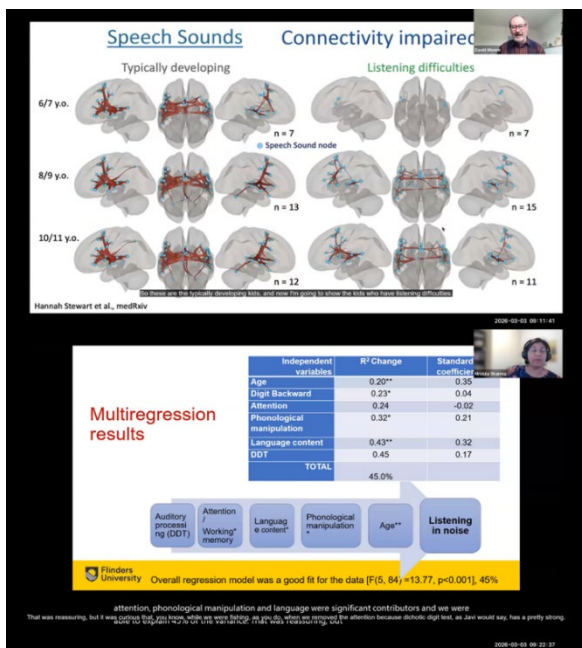
Prof. Harvey Dillon: Separating the causes of listening difficulties in children

Prof. Suzanne Purdy: Recognizing APD in the classroom and amplification solutions

**RMHA system research**  
Assistive and therapeutic benefits

- there is strong evidence that remote microphone hearing aid systems benefit most (if not all) children with APD
- there is a **double benefit** – both assistive (immediately assisting hearing), and therapeutic (permanent improvement in hearing skills over time)





Prof. David Moore: Listening difficulties: are they speech specific?

Prof. Mridula Sharma: Predictors of degraded speech in school aged children with listening difficulties

### Impactful Story

As a physician specializing in phoniatics, pediatric audiology, and otolaryngology, I often prepare expert reports on children, adolescents, and young adults with normal peripheral hearing who experience auditory processing disorders or listening difficulties associated with learning difficulties, dyslexia, or autism spectrum disorders. Many of these individuals are fitted with assistive listening devices or low-gain hearing aids. Through preparing such reports, I have been able to observe and document their progress toward greater social participation and improved academic achievement. These experiences motivated me to pursue research in this field and to advocate for access to appropriate hearing technologies. I also aim to raise public awareness of the needs of these individuals and the benefits of timely intervention.

2. [World Congress of Audiology, 24<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup> of May, 2026 in Seoul, Korea.](https://www.wca2026seoul.com/)

The World Congress of Audiology, WCA2026, was held in the beautiful city of Seoul, Korea, from 24–27 May 2026. The chosen theme was “Broadening the Horizon of Audiology,” reflecting the expanding scope of the audiology profession. The theme served as a reminder to consider audiology beyond traditional clinical services and to recognise developments across hearing assessment, rehabilitation, implantable technologies, tinnitus, vestibular care, paediatric audiology, ageing, public health, hearing technologies, and the emerging role of artificial intelligence.

WCA represents an important international gathering for clinicians, researchers, educators, industry partners, and students working across the field of hearing and balance care. The Congress provides a valuable platform for sharing new knowledge, strengthening professional networks, and considering the future direction of audiology in a rapidly changing global context.



A few moments captured during the WCA2026 conference.

The Congress provided travel scholarships to students (as per previous years) but there was a new initiative where colleagues from low- and middle-income countries could apply for travel grants. WCA due to its international presence and membership creates these unique opportunities for dialogue between researchers, clinicians, educators, students, and industry, which provides broader understanding of how audiological knowledge can be translated into meaningful improvements in practice.

The conference began on 24 May 2026 with 12 workshops covering a wide range of topics, including wideband tympanometry, listening in noise, and the use of robots and avatars in clinical audiology, to name just a few. There were so many awards as well e.g., for best poster; presentations which is always appreciated. From 25–27 May, the scientific sessions commenced, with 10 parallel sessions running across the program. With such a broad and engaging schedule, choosing which sessions to attend was quite a challenge, and it was difficult to keep up with the breadth of excellent work being presented.

The social program was equally fabulous. There was K-pop, a concert, dancing, and, of course, fantastic food. Korea was a wonderful choice to host this international scientific meeting, offering a vibrant setting for both academic exchange and cultural experience.

Overall, WCA2026 was a memorable and inspiring Congress that showcased the strength, diversity, and future potential of audiology. It highlighted the importance of global collaboration, innovation, and inclusive professional engagement in advancing hearing and balance care. The next WCA meeting in Scotland will certainly have a challenge in matching the energy, hospitality, and impact of the Korean WCA but I am sure that the organising team (BSA) are up to that challenge.

# Upcoming Events

## 3. **First Regional Conference of the IALP, 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> June, 2026, Belem, Brazil**

The International Association of Communication Sciences and Disorder (IALP) and Sociedade Brasileira de Fonoaudiologia (SBFa) are pleased to invite you to the First Regional Conference of the IALP which will be held from 22nd June to 25th 2026 in Belém (Pará state, Brazil). The Conference theme is: *Building Connections and Solutions to Global Challenges in Communication Sciences and Disorders*.

An abstract submission system has been set up and is now open for the submission of oral presentations, posters and symposia until 24th February 2026. Approval of abstract submissions will be provided by no later than 2nd March 2026.

Brazil has almost 55 thousand phonoaudiologists (SLPs and audiologists) and the Sociedade Brasileira de Fonoaudiologia (SBFa) is deeply involved in preparing a special scientific and social program that offers exceptional opportunities for networking, knowledge exchange, and collaborative innovation.

Please follow us by visiting the Conference website: <https://www.ialp2026.com/>  
We look forward to seeing many of you in Brazil.

Fernanda Dreux  
IALP, VP for Education



## 4. **IALP World Congress 2028**

The next IALP Congress will be held in Prague, Czech Republic. The Affiliated Society AKL CR from Prague, Czech Republic, will host of the next IALP Congress in 2028.

## Committee

<b>Committee member and email contact</b>	<b>Role in Audiology Committee</b>
<b>Christine Yoshinago Itano</b> (christie.yoshi@colorado.edu)	Scientific Publications
<b>Doris Lewis</b> (drlewis@uol.com.br)	Facilitating Audiological Services
<b>Limor Lavie</b> (llavie@welfare.haifa.ac.il)	Hearing Technology
<b>Owolawi Wahab Oyedele</b> (deleowolawi@yahoo.com)	Facilitating Audiological Services in Mid and Low-income countries in Africa
<b>Shaza Saleh</b> (shazasaleh@googlemail.com)	Cochlear Implant and other Technology applications
<b>Mridula Sharma</b> (mridula.sharma@flinders.edu.au)	Chair Audiology Committee,, Audiology section
<b>Wafaa Sheharta-Dieler</b> (dieler_w@ukw.de)	Academic Membership Enrolment and Guidance
<b>Traci Flynn</b> (Traci.Flynn@newcastle.edu.au)	Deputy Chair Audiology Committee and Scientific Newsletter
<b>Vidya Ramkumar</b> (vidya.ramkumar@sriramachandra.edu.in)	Scientific Queries and Symposium
<b>Wafaa Elkholy</b> (wafaa_elkholy@yahoo.com)	Facilitating Audiological Services

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