

MAKING CONNECTIONS

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2018

AB SPORTS SCHOLARSHIP WINNER



My name is Pete and I come from a small town in Somerset. I am 37 years old and have been hard of hearing since birth. I have been wearing hearing aids since I was very young and often struggled in many situations, as it made me uncertain and nervous about the conversation. I've never really had the courage to go and do new things. I had looked into cochlear implants over the last fifteen years or so but didn't think it was something that I needed but it was something that I kept an open mind about.

I started playing badminton at a young age, around 14 or so as my dad played for a club. He created a juniors club so that I would have somewhere to play. This was the start of my relationship with badminton!

I have mainly played socially until I was about 26 and then I joined a competitive club that plays in a league.

I have only played at hearing clubs so I was unaware of any deaf badminton. My friend Debra sent me an email about the GB Deaf Badminton team. I joined the GB Deaf Badminton team about four years ago and have been attending training sessions with them since then. It was from being in this environment and seeing how other players really benefited from a cochlear implant that made me rethink looking into it again.

My hearing had been getting worse over the years and I was struggling to hear my two young children, as well as struggling to listen to music properly. My hearing aids were giving out the maximum amount they could manage so I knew at this point that I needed to look at other options. I think the best thing for me was the timing, as it just felt like the right time to get it.

I went to USAIS and after scoring 0% on one of the listening tests, it hit home exactly how much I was struggling. USAIS then said that I was able to have a CI and was given the choice of cochlear implant manufacturers. I chose to go with Advanced Bionics, mainly because of the options they were able to offer, as well as being linked with Phonak which I was used to.

Since the operation, I managed to get 56% in the same hearing test I previously got 0%. And my results have got better on each check-up. I have been very fortunate that the CI has worked so well for me as you never know what the outcome will be as everyone is completely different.

I can also hear music so much better now, I am going through my whole music collection and music that I didn't get on well with before is now easier to listen to, it's a whole new experience.

The 8th European Deaf Badminton Championships were coming up, but as in previous years, I was not planning on going due to not being able to afford it. I found out that Advanced Bionics run a scholarship scheme so I decided to put my name forward. I was rather shocked when I won as it is not normally something that happens to me!

So since then, I have been playing twice as much badminton! I know the standard will be high and I am really looking forward to the challenge. I am entering Badminton England Bronze tournaments and the annual deaf badminton tournament held in York. I wouldn't really be able to afford to play at another club, so to be able to do all these things with the scholarship it has been brilliant. And I haven't even gone to the main event yet! The only downside is the lack of family time, but they are very supportive of me.

Being the sort of person that does not normally have these opportunities, it's fantastic that I am able to experience all this. Having a cochlear implant has been a real life changer. I am not finding it so difficult in situations that I would have struggled with before. I am also able to interact with my children better, which was one of the main reasons for getting an implant. It's been great not to feel left out of a conversation and makes conversations much easier.

Everyone at USAIS has been really helpful, from the surgeon to the receptionist. I couldn't have planned this journey better. Credit must go to everyone who has been part of my journey.

I am looking forward to my 12-month check-up!

NAVY CADETS

Natalie has had her cochlear implant for 12 years and is keen on sailing. Hear how her deafness has not stopped her pursuing her passion with a little help from her Aqua accessory.



Hello, my name is Natalie and I am 15 years old. I go to the most amazing club called Sea Cadets. We do lots of wonderful things at Cadets, such as sailing, studying the history of the Navy, we attend Parades with the war Veterans and we do lots of classroom based courses such as Seamanship, Catering, First Aid and many more. When we pass these modules we move up ranks. At the moment I am a Cadet First Class, but am hoping to be an Ordinary Cadet soon.

Last Easter I had the most spectacular adventure when I undertook an offshore voyage on board the TS Jack Petchey, a Sea Cadet Training Ship.

We boarded the vessel on Saturday 15th April 2017 at Weymouth Harbour, we were given a brief and shown round the ship, after unpacking our things into our lockers we had a lovely dinner and played card games for the rest of the evening.



Next day we were up bright and early at 7.30 am. We had some classes in rope work, and we were put into groups and told our duties for that day. We sailed out of harbour at 1 pm, (can you believe my family were eating chips on the harbour side watching to wave us out) and sailed to Durdle Door, we all had our first chance at being at the helm of the boat, it was great fun. We stayed overnight in Portland Harbour, and the showers there were top notch!!

On Monday morning we headed out of harbour to Brixham Harbour. We took turns at being Helmsman, Lookout and Navigator. The groups kept swapping and we had 2 hours each up on the bridge. It was a long trip to Brixham and on arriving we were given shore leave, we ate so much ice cream we had no room for our dinner back on board.

On Tuesday we headed towards Torquay Harbour first thing as we had to be there for 11.30 as we were to start the race and transport some photographers, we met up with the TS John Jerwood, our other Sea Cadet Training Ship, we watched the Tall Ships arriving for their race and saw them practising for the race..

On Wednesday I was asked to be the Hornblower for the start of the Tall ships race, the Director of the Tall Ships Race counted down and then we pressed the horn for the start of the race. The Tall Ships were beautiful my favourite was the Portuguese, it looked so dashing and beautiful against the sunset. We were out all day at the Tall Ships Race, and

didn't come back into harbour until 7.10 pm. As we were the photo ship our bridge was full of photographers taking pictures of the Tall Ships. Wednesday evening we went to Sailing Club with the entrants for the Tall Ships and enjoyed a buffet and joined in games with them. A good time was had by all!

On Thursday we set sail for Weymouth, and arrived back at lunchtime, thankfully no one was sea sick this time. We enjoyed a lunch of jacket potatoes and curry, before coming back into Weymouth Harbour, where my family were waiting on the pier to wave us back in. We had a lovely Portuguese meal!

The staff on board the Jack Petchey were very warm and welcoming, they taught us lots of different things, but my favourite part was learning how to drive the boat. They even told us we were the best crew they had had on board!! At the end of the week we had to show the crew what we had learnt (a bit of a test) and I am pleased to say I achieved my OH1 P which stands for Offshore Hand 1 Power. I can thoroughly recommend Sea Cadets to any other deaf people who are looking for an after school activity, they have been brilliant in dealing with my deafness, they have asked advice from the Teachers of the Deaf and I have to say I feel so happy when I am there, like we are all one big family looking out for each other. I cannot thank the Weymouth Unit enough for giving all the opportunities they have given me.

Cadet First Class Natalie Coleman

PATIENT NEWS



My name is Susan Kingsley and I am 58. I first noticed that my hearing was deteriorating when I was 38. I tried to ignore it at first but eventually sought help and was prescribed hearing aids.

Due to a number of infections my left ear became progressively worse and eventually I stopped trying to use a hearing aid, relying solely on the right ear. I have

sensori-neural hearing loss which was progressive and life became increasingly more difficult as my hearing declined. I had been a legal secretary, but as things worsened I had to give that up and try to find employment that didn't rely on me being able to audio type or use the telephone. I found that I was increasingly withdrawing from social situations and would walk studying the ground, avoiding eye contact. I became adept at avoiding conversations except with people I knew very well.

As time went by I have realised the insidious nature of hearing loss. Initially I found I was asking people to repeat occasionally, then missing more and more till I either gave up trying or, or pretended I had heard. Deafness is a very isolating disability, and I found that every sigh, eyeroll or "don't worry" chipped away at my confidence.

By October 2016 I was deaf in one ear and profoundly deaf in the other. I was told by the hospital that hearing aids were no longer a viable solution for me and that either I could accept this and live as a deaf person or investigate my suitability as a cochlear implant recipient. I opted for a referral to Southampton Auditory Implant Centre and it was probably one of the best decisions I have ever made. From prior to my acceptance on to the programme the administration staff helped in tracking my referral. Nothing was ever too much trouble. I had my first round of appointments in February 2017. Due to other non-implant related issues I had a delay of 3 months before rejoining the assessment process. In September I was told that the team had agreed I was a suitable candidate for surgery.

Throughout the process everything has been explained thoroughly, the information given both verbal and written is exemplary.

I accepted a short notice operation slot and was implanted on 4th October 2017 by Mr Tim Mitchell of the West Team. After one night in hospital I was discharged. For the next four weeks I was deaf. On the 2nd November my implant was activated by Roberta Buhagiar. It was truly fantastic! I could hear! and have gone on from strength to strength. I am hearing with my implant sounds long forgotten, its quite strange to hear something then have to track it down to identify it. I found myself confused by a quiet sound which turned out to be the tick of the second hand of a watch on a shelf. I have had a few post implant sessions now, with Anna Lyford who, like her colleagues is a fantastic support and advisor. I am currently working through the telephone use manual which I am sure will be helpful with some of the finer points of phone use. I have made telephone calls to people I know well, yes, I may have to ask them to repeat occasionally but so do most people I think at some point. I am using the phone in the palm of my hand on speaker.

At the moment I am working at hearing as well as I can. It is important to realise that no one can guarantee the outcome in respect of hearing ability and for some things take longer than for others. Also, like most things you get out of it what you put in, the implant gives you the sound, you have to work to identify it and each day becomes easier.

I would say I feel that I am now back in the world. From avoiding asking questions I am now happy to try to find things out for myself. I was lucky in that my family especially my husband and daughters were very supportive and have always helped me with telephone calls, etc. It's a funny thing but from asking people to repeat themselves I am now asking them to stop shouting. Conversely, as you are more aware of your own voice (as its closer to the microphone), people keep telling me to speak up, quite the role reversal.

I love my new implant and look forward to whatever innovations come with the development in the cochlear implant world.

POET'S CORNER

Dragon's Breath

A leaf shimmers and stirs
twists upwards
and tumbles
to join the hustling, bustling, rustling torrent.
beech leaves flame across the glade,
scorching breath joining the tumult
as waves of sound cascade overhead
then come
simmering
to a stop.

Poem written by an adult cochlear implant user at a pop-up autumn workshop in Kew Gardens on a very windy day

Dinner

I made us omelettes tonight
With beautiful large eggs from the market.
Quickly seasoned, a dash of water and a turn of the fork
They hit the pan hissing and sizzling as they met the butter.
I marvelled at the sounds
Long forgotten.

Quickly to the table with crispy potatoes
Rustling and crackling onto the plate.
Cutlery clinking metal on metal, metal on china
Glasses clinking in toasts of happiness.
I marvelled at the sounds
Long forgotten.

Afterwards a crispy salad, crunchy and noisy to eat,
The servers rattling in the glass dish.
And to finish came chocolates in crinkly paper,
What bliss. As
I marvelled at the sounds
Long forgotten.

Poem written by Carol Irby, an adult cochlear implant user.

SOUTHERN COUNTIES COCHLEAR IMPLANT SUPPORT GROUP

Are you looking to meet others with cochlear implants?

Facebook brought Sandra from North Hampshire and Caroline from Brighton together..... following our implants, we were excited and desperate to make contact with others! We recognised a need for a social group; for people who have cochlear implants, or who were thinking about having one.

We discovered we had a joint passion to bring together a community for anyone and everyone in the Southampton and surrounding Southern Counties.

In September 2017, the Southern Counties Cochlear Implant Support Group (SoCo) was born. A month later our first social gathering was held, and we met for the first time, with just two other new members! In February 2018, our amazing third social was held in Portsmouth where 35 and three hearing dogs attended!

SoCo is mostly active via our Facebook group;

to make contact via email or find further information on our website.

Most of our members have a connection to either the Southampton Auditory Implant Service (AIS), or live in the Southampton and surrounding areas including; West Sussex, Hampshire, Dorset, and Wiltshire.

Our Facebook group currently has around 95 members, and is flourishing. The group is a closed group, which means only members can read the chats (not open to the general public). This is a safe place to share experiences, difficulties and laughs.

Typically, members' Facebook posts discuss cochlear implants and equipment, how to work/set up things, discovering music, how we cope with noisy environments, how we are progressing with our implant surgery, "switch ons" and subsequent tunings and how we manage with our family/work situations etc. But it isn't all work and no play! We are a friendly and fun group who are loving life with

our amazing implants!

Our members range in age from children to octogenarians, families, individuals and couples. Some users have more than one CI, many wear one CI and one hearing aid. All brands are welcome. No brand is promoted over any others. Some of us sign, some lipread, some don't; we are a good mixed lively bunch!

Our socials have been a resounding success, giving perfect opportunities for individuals to find people to chat with and make new friends. Most people have questions along their CI journey, and many of those burning questions are answered.

Many deaf people in our challenging hearing world have experienced the fear that they won't be able to hear the conversation in a social setting and have avoided socialising, but being at our social gatherings, and seeing so many people also Deaf; just somehow coping amongst the happy babble, really shows that we are all masters of our own communication..... Come to a SoCo social -everyone is patient, we have all been there, and no-one gives up. It is a refreshing sea of bliss with likeminded people with no communication barriers. We welcome anybody and everybody!



Our Website:

www.cisoutherncounties.wordpress.com

Our Facebook Group:

www.facebook.com/group/cisoutherncounties/

Our email address:

cisoutherncountiesuk@gmail.com



OTHER SUPPORT GROUPS

Are you based further afield? There are plenty of other cochlear implant support groups available which hold regular social events. See the full list on the NCIUA Website.

CI South West hold regular social events around Bristol, Bath, Weston, Exeter and Taunton.

Contact them at: cisouthwest@yahoo.co.uk

CI High Five Support Group

This support group has planned social events in Oxford, Aylesbury, Milton Keynes, Northampton, High//West Wycombe, Reading, St. Albans, Luton and London.

Contact them at: CIHighFive@gmail.com

Home Counties Cochlear Implant Group

The group is based in North London but members range from as far south as West Sussex to right up into North Hertfordshire and Essex. Contact them at: hccig@hotmail.com

And there is also the CICS (Cochlear Implanted Children's Support Group)

The CICS Group was founded by parents whose children have cochlear implants to share first-hand experience of the issues that surround life with an implanted child.

Contact them at: info@cicsgroup.org.uk

ANNA AND SAM'S TOP TIPS

DO YOU FINGERSPELL?

During a recent patient workshop, the subject of “fingerspelling” came up and one of our participants expressed surprise at how few people in the workshop knew of its existence and how helpful it can be. So, if you’ve never come across fingerspelling before, then this tip is for you!

Fingerspelling is a method of spelling words using hand movements. The fingerspelling alphabet is used in sign language to spell out names of people and places for which there is no sign. It can also be used to spell words that are not known to the signer. British Sign Language (BSL) uses a two handed alphabet, though some sign languages, such as American Sign Language (ASL), use just one hand.

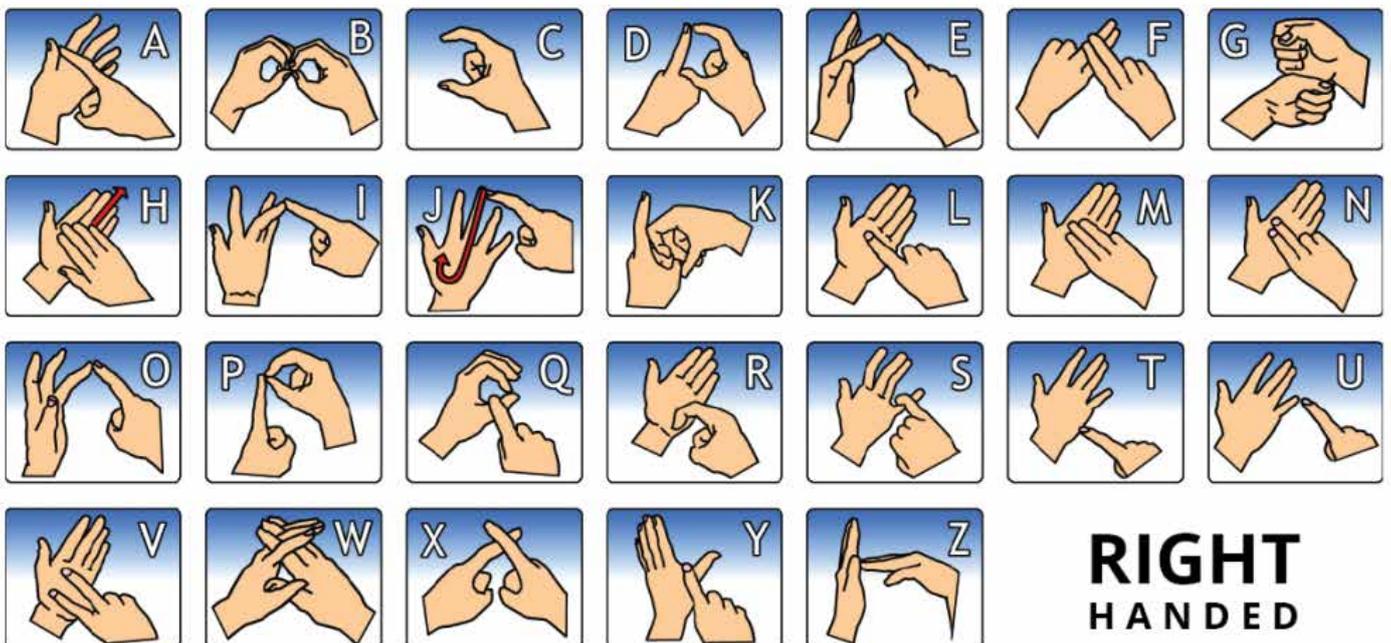
However, fingerspelling can also be a great aid to communication for deaf people who don’t use sign language. It is often taught in lipreading classes as it can help with distinguishing between words that look alike on the lips and again for names and places when there is no context to help the lipreader. If the person you’re trying to listen to can fingerspell words or sounds that you are unable to understand it can make a huge difference. Often you only need the first couple of letters of a tricky word to be spelt out on the hands for you to grasp what is being said. And for “invisible” speech sounds such as “k” or “g”, knowledge of fingerspelling can be invaluable.

Fingerspelling is relatively easy to learn, however there are both right and left handed versions! The chart shows the right handed alphabet.

You can find a copy of the left handed alphabet on the Signature website.

Fingerspelling is increasingly being taught in schools and children love to learn it so if you have children or grandchildren why not get them to learn and practice with you. There are also a number of online games and tools to help you practice fingerspelling.

Anna and Sam recently both celebrated 15 years of hearing with their cochlear implants, and brought a beautiful cake to thank the team at USAIS for their support.



TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

RETURNING FAULTY PROCESSORS

The Spares and Repairs team work very hard to ensure all equipment is performing optimally. If you have a fault with your processor the team are happy to provide you with a replacement so you are not without sound. However it is very important that the faulty processor is returned to the team so they can investigate the issue. In many cases the team can send the processor to be fixed. Even if there is no solution to the issue, the processor remains property of the NHS so must be returned to USAIS. Failure to return faulty processors has a knock on effect that may leave us in a position where we are unable to provide another patient a processor when required. We only have a certain amount of loaner processors, and are heavily reliant on the prompt return of processors from patients. Thank you for your cooperation.

ASSISTIVE LISTENING TECHNOLOGY

Microlink are leaders in the field of Assistive Technology and have enabled over a quarter of a million people with health conditions to succeed in education and employment. They stock the largest range of technology and tools in the UK. Microlink can assess, advise, supply, train and support anyone looking to break down a barrier caused by their hearing loss. They can provide wireless communication devices to overcome barriers to hearing and speech.

 **To find out more get in touch with Michael at:**
Michael.buckfield@microlinkpc.com

ACOUSTIC CLOUD

We are pleased to announce that Sam's Room has got a new fluffy acoustic cloud displayed proudly on the wall which aims to reduce reverberation and provide a better listening environment. The cloud was provided to USAIS by the Woolly Shepherd as a direct result of their success at Henry's nursery. Henry (pictured) has found the clouds have made a huge difference to his experience, improving his confidence as well as communication. The family fundraised for this acoustic treatment with the help of Chloe and Sophie's Special Ears Fund. If you think this could be of benefit in your child's school or nursery please contact the Woolly Shepherd.



NEW TECHNOLOGY

MED-EL ADHEAR

ADHEAR is a new device that works for people with conductive hearing losses that cannot use conventional hearing aids. A conductive hearing loss means that sound cannot reach the inner ear or cochlea through the ear canal and middle ear in the normal way. This may be because of infections, previous surgery, anatomy or other reasons. There is no surgery with this device. The patient wears an adhesive adaptor behind their ear and the processor clips onto the adaptor. The ADHEAR hearing device converts sound into vibrations and transfers them to the skull bone. These vibrations are conducted to the inner ear or cochlea where the person hears sound. The adhesive adaptor means that the device stays in place well to give consistent sound and is gentle on the skin with high wearing comfort.



USAIS are preparing to offer the ADHEAR device in the near future to patients with suitable hearing losses who are not able to benefit from conventional hearing aids.

CHOICE – COCHLEAR IMPLANT HOME CARE

Many of you may have heard about or been involved in the remote care projects we have already done. We will be ready to offer a remote care pathway choice to adults using implants across the UK at the end of this summer. This means instead of coming to the centre for your review appointment, you could choose to use an app to test your hearing, do listening exercises, practise listening to music, upload a photo of your implant site or order stock from home. Your clinician at the centre would be able to review your results and give you advice if needed, and of course you could come and see us at the centre if you needed to.



Get in touch to find out more:

H.Cullington@Southampton.ac.uk



www.twitter.com/CIRemoteCare



www.ciremotecareblog.wordpress.com



v.ht/Youtube-remotecaree



TRAINING

We are pleased to announce that there is now a free online training resource available for people who support someone listening with a cochlear implant. It is ideal for anyone who would like to feel more confident and effective when supporting a cochlear implant user, whether it be in a classroom setting as a teacher or a learning support assistant, or if you are in another role such as a carer or social worker. Absolutely no prior knowledge about implants is necessary. It is not just for professionals, it's suitable for anyone who would like to know more about cochlear implants.



The course is designed to move through topics in small, step-by-step sections that you can dip in and out of at a time convenient to you. Each section is clearly described with lots of visual material to make the information more accessible and easy to understand. At the end of the course you can print off a certificate to say you have completed it.

We hope that people find the course useful and it supports our other training courses run at the implant centre. If you have any queries or feedback about the course please email us at ais.training@soton.ac.uk. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at the University, the patients and implant company manufacturers who have helped in producing this training package.



Find out more:

www.bit.ly/CI-Basics

INTRODUCING A NEW WORKSHOP – EMPLOYABILITY

Would you like to learn more about what support is available for cochlear implant users in the workplace?

We are running a one day Employability Workshop on Tuesday 18 September 2018, from 10am until 4pm, here at USAIS and will be covering the following areas:

- Access to Work,
- Benefits for job-seekers,
- Using cochlear Implant accessories and assistive equipment in the workplace,
- Communication support,
- Voluntary work,
- CV and interview advice, tips to boost your confidence.

The Employability Workshop is aimed at CI users who are either looking for employment or already in employment – and will be an excellent opportunity to meet other CI users and swap experiences, ideas and inspiration!

To reserve your place, please contact Anna Lyford or Samantha Johnson by 31st August 2018 by emailing ais@soton.ac.uk or sending a text message to 07887 790765. The Workshop will be delivered with speech to text communication support. If you require a BSL interpreter, please let us know in good time so that this can be arranged.

AUDITORY IMPLANT USERS TEACH THE NEXT GENERATION OF PROFESSIONALS

USAIS is unique as it is the only implant service in the UK that is based within a university setting – with an Audiology teaching department in the building next to us.

This offers an invaluable opportunity for student teaching and translational research (i.e. identifying the real needs of implant users and directing research to match these).

At USAIS we are actively involved in student teaching, clinical training and research supervision. Over the years we have developed a strong collaboration with our cochlear implant and bone conduction hearing instrument users, inviting them to come in as co-lecturers on teaching modules.

Implant users deliver a powerful message to students. They share knowledge about technology, assessment, surgery, tuning and rehabilitation. They also offer an invaluable insight into what it is like to go through the process and what professionals can do to improve 'patient' experience, underscoring the importance of individualised 'implant user-led' care. Students develop a greater sensitivity and understanding of deafness and the impact it has on an individual, family and friends, together with greater insight and appreciation of sign language, deaf culture and the Deaf community.

Examples of USAIS teaching includes:

→ **The MSc Auditory implant module:** This intensive 4 week module comprises of lectures covering technology, medical and surgical aspects, assessment, tuning and rehabilitation and the roles of different team members. We invite implant users to come in to explain more about the process and their personal

experience. One session involves a 'live' tuning session with tuning projected onto the bigger screen in the lecture room and also a rehabilitation session. A parent shares his/her experience and also a bone conduction implant user and a middle ear implant user also come in to tell their stories.

- **The BSc Engineering 'Body Parts' module:** This is a module (open to students of different professional backgrounds) that covers different 'body implants' such as hip replacements, artificial limbs, pacemakers, auditory implants etc.
- **12 week clinical placements:** This is open to audiology graduates wishing to be trained in auditory implants. During these popular placements we train and support audiologists in the skills they require to work in the field. Our trainees have gone on to set up and develop implant services in other countries, joined existing implant services/implant companies and also secured substantive research positions.



If you are interested in finding out more and/or becoming involved in student teaching please feel free to contact Nicci Campbell (USAIS Academic coordinator) n.g.campbell@soton.ac.uk

Students rate sessions and lectures with implant users exceptionally highly.

Here are examples from the student feedback:

"Real patients sharing their experiences with CI helped in more understanding of the whole process of implants"

"I thoroughly enjoyed this module. I particularly enjoyed the opportunities to meet individuals who have CI's, BAHA's and ME implants. It was really good to see it from their perspective. It most definitely enhanced the learning of the module"

"I have learnt so much about deafness – it has completely changed my outlook and professional approach"

"I loved this module, it was my favourite. It ran smoothly and bringing in real life patients was a bonus. As a researcher this was really insightful for me"



MSc Audiology students giving the 'thumbs-up' to implant users involved in teaching

STAFF UPDATE



Petrina Butler

We would like to extend a huge welcome to Petrina Butler who has recently taken on the role of Clinic Secretary for the Central team.



Rebecca Ricaud

Congratulations Rebecca for celebrating twenty years of working at the University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service.



Mark Pickering

We would like to welcome Mark Pickering to the team, who is working as Project Manager for the CHOICE research project, working closely with Helen Cullington. Mark will be responsible for collaborating with key stakeholders and helping to ensure operational aspects of the project run smoothly.



Coral Abraham

We are sad to say farewell to Coral Abraham who has been working at USAIS for the past three and a half years as our Public Engagement Officer. We wish Coral the best of luck in her new role as part of the Marketing team at Cochlear.

MATERNITY NEWS

Congratulations to **Nicola Timoney**, Audiologist in the West Team, on the birth of her second child.

Welcome back to **Caroline Gamble**, Clinical Psychologist, who is back at USAIS after her maternity leave.

OUT AND ABOUT

The Victoria and Albert Museum in London was set up in part to show advances in Technology and innovation. From May to November this year there will be an exhibition 'The Future Starts Here' featuring snippets about 100 recent and developing innovations. There is a short film of an implantee's response to the sound of leaves.

From 10 October to early March 2019 there will be a free display at the museum featuring several implantees response to music and their implants. It has been arranged as a joint work from the V&A and Action on Hearing loss and is being set up by Tom Tlalim an artist and musician. It has the title 'Tonotopia' and was introduced in a lunchtime talk last year by Tom Tlalim, a lecturer and artist.

BONE CONDUCTION HEARING IMPLANT NEWS

Children with bone conduction hearing devices may meet rehabilitationists Sam Bealing or Sarah Woods as key workers or when they come to the centre for appointments. Sam is an educational audiologist and Sarah is a teacher of the deaf. Both Sam and Sarah have been working with cochlear implant patients at USAIS for some time and have now joined the bone conduction hearing implant team as well.

Sam Bealing



Sarah-Jane Woods



OUR SERVICE

GDPR

As you may be aware, the EU General Data Protection Regulation (“GDPR”) comes into effect on 25 May. The GDPR is a piece of European legislation that enhances the protection of personal data processed in the EU by setting out requirements that organisations collecting and using personal data need to comply with.

The aim behind the introduction of this new regime is to give individuals more control of their data so that you can feel more confident that it is being fairly and lawfully used in ways easily understandable. While the GDPR replaces the existing UK Data Protection Act 1998, it builds upon its key principles on data privacy and security, as well as including some additions (such as extending the data rights of individuals) and stricter penalties for non-compliance.

To ensure that we are GDPR compliant, we’ve been working on reviewing and updating where necessary our personal data processing practices. The trust of those who use our services is very important, and we want to make sure you understand what these changes mean. You should have received consent forms via post which detail the information we hold about you. It is important that these forms are read carefully and signed. If you have any questions we would be happy to discuss with you. If you have not received consent forms via post then please get in touch.

We hope this will provide added reassurance that we engage in the proper handling and deletion of personal data in accordance with the GDPR, and in line with the University’s and the NHS’s overarching data protection policies. One of the key things to remember is that GDPR does not stop on 25 May 2018 – it really is just the beginning as good personal data protection becomes part of everyday life for all of us!

 **For more information, please contact:**
M.J.Alarcon@soton.ac.uk

GOVERNANCE BOARD

I have been fortunate over the last few years to represent parents of deaf children with cochlear implants on the USAIS Governance Board. Primarily this has entailed acting as a voice for parents when the quality of the work carried out at USAIS is reviewed internally. The USAIS Governance Board meets twice a year for a few hours in the evening.

It looks at issues such as patient and parent feedback, clinical and non-clinical audit, significant events (very rare thankfully!), Information Governance and issues in regard to the different cochlear implant manufacturers. It is an opportunity to play a small part in the effective running of USAIS and allowing parental input into the continued drive to improve the already high standards at USAIS.

As they say all good things must come to an end so USAIS are keen to find another willing parent representative to take my place. I would encourage anyone to take on this rewarding role helping the wonderful USAIS “family” and would be more than happy to talk through my experiences with those who might be considering helping out.

Dr Christian Chilcott, Parent Representative

Governance Board Meetings take place in May and November on a Tuesday from 5.30-7pm in Building 19 – exact dates to be confirmed.

 **Contact Carl Verschuur if you are interested**
023 8059 3522 or C.A.Verschuur@soton.ac.uk

If you wish to contact Christian Chilcott directly then please email Melanie Alarcon M.J.Alarcon@soton.ac.uk who will put you in touch.



BCIG 2019

USAIS are pleased to announce that they will be hosting the next British Cochlear Implant Group (BCIG) Annual Conference in 2019 at the Solent Conference Centre. The theme will be Connecting for Life and we are very much looking forward to hosting this important meeting.

CHARITY UPDATE

We are fundraising for our Charity of the Year – deafPLUS. We recently held a Purple and Orange day in March where staff wore bright clothes and held a bake sale and raised nearly £1000 on the day.

We would also like to congratulate Ian Grasmeder who ran the London Marathon for deafPLUS for his fantastic fundraising efforts. Ian raised over £2000 and completed the marathon in under four hours. Well done Ian!



IMPORTANT

If you change your GP for any reason it is essential that you let us know your new GP details immediately please. If the GP on our records is not the GP that you are currently registered with we may not be able to send you any spares or arrange to see you.

Thank you

IS THERE SOMETHING YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND?

We're happy to help.

Contact us:
ais@soton.ac.uk

The London Marathon was a very surreal experience having seen it on TV over the years but to do it and to experience it doesn't compare. It was my hardest marathon to date due to the weather but managed to finish it in 3:51:21 and raise £2184 for deafPLUS. Thank you to all who have followed me and supported me in this especially Mary and our boys. Thank you to all who have donated too.

Ian Grasmeder

DO YOU HAVE ANY GOOD NEWS STORIES OR EVENTS FOR OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER?

Contact us:
ais@soton.ac.uk



UNSUBSCRIBE

If you would prefer not to receive this newsletter in future please just let us know and we will update your preferences.

BIKE RIDE

Seven members of the USAIS team cycled 26 miles along the Bath to Bristol Railway path in April 2018 in aid of Meningitis now. Later on in the year, a few brave members of the USAIS team will be skydiving from 12,000 ft also in aid of the charity.



Contact us

www.southampton.ac.uk/ais

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