

This unedited transcript of a continued webinar is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility for the viewer and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This transcript may contain errors. Copying or distributing this transcript without the express written consent of continued is strictly prohibited. For any questions, please contact customerservice@continued.com

Beltone Serene Wireless ITC

Presenter: Laura Schachtel, AuD, FAAA

Welcome, everyone, to today's webinar Beltone series, Serene Wireless ITC. We are so pleased to welcome with us one of our favorite people, Doctor Laura Schechter. And Laura, I will hand things over to you. Thanks, Kimberly. Hi, everyone.

Good afternoon again. I'm Doctor Laura Schechter, the product training development manager for Belton. And you kind of are joining me on a series of Belton serene webinars for this week. So today's webinar is going to be very quickly highlighting our Beltone serene wireless ITC. Because we know a lot of our patients really do want smaller custom products and they don't want to give up all of the technology, especially connectivity, by going to a smaller size.

So we now have our wireless ITC for that patient population that wants a more current hearing. Aidan they do want a more cosmetic looking hearing aid, but they don't want to give up on their connectivity. As Kimberly said, there are lots of handouts, kind of is covering all topics for the whole week, so please feel free to download those. Otherwise, the same handouts, plus probably a few more can be found on our homepage, www.beltoneuniversity.com. so what will we talk about today?

So we'll just have you learn so that later on when you take the quiz, you can describe the main feature set of our Belton serene wireless ITC hearing aids. That you can list three patient benefits of this new product and that you'll be able to describe the patient population that could benefit from this new product that we have to offer. But before I get into the hardware, if you will, of this product, I want to step back and just talk about how this product now fits into our product portfolio. I'm just going to turn my camera off so I don't distract you as we talk about this. So we know that cosmetics is really a primary concern for a lot of our users, especially those first time users, because they're just hesitant.

I don't want anyone to see or know that I have a hearing aid in. So with this in mind, we have our Beltone Serene Clc. And this product uses the ten, a zinc air battery, but it doesn't have any wireless capabilities. As again, size is that primary concern for a patient with this product. And then there are no

directional microphones on this product.

It is just the one microphone. But because that microphone is tucked into the concha, you do get natural pinna for some directional benefit and some localization cues. Then on the other end of the spectrum, we have our custom rechargeable hearing aid. And this hearing aid is for a patient that wants connectivity. They want rechargeability, they want all of our top of the line features.

And they're okay with the fact that this hearing aid is a little bit bigger, because in order to get all of those great features, chargeability, connectivity, into the hearing aid, it just has to be a little bit larger. And for the past few years, these were those two options on our custom continuum that you had. So smaller size but less features, or larger size that had the room for more features, until now, because we're filling that gap with our wireless ITC. So this product is cosmetically smaller than our customer chargeables, but has more technology than our CIC does. So some of you might be thinking, how can we have a wireless, how can we add in wireless capabilities and not make the size of the ITC larger?

And this really is true to the size of the ITC that most of our patients want. So to keep the size right, if you will, we had to remove a few elements. And so the first being rechargeability. And that's because a size 312 zinc air battery takes up a lot less space in the hearing aid than a lithium ion rechargeable one. We also needed to remove our near field magnetic induction radio or antenna, which controlled most of our ear to ear communication capabilities.

And then we also had to remove our hands free call feature. So, not picking up the call, but where the hearing aid microphones picked up the patient's voice, we had to remove that component. All of those just took up space that we were kind of figuring out is it really needed to get the patient what they wanted, which was a wireless connect to a smartphone hearing aid. But what we did do is we were able to upgrade this and add in our new hybrid coyote six chip, which is significantly smaller than our legacy coyote five chip. And we also redesigned our antenna layout for better component placement.

And I'm going to show you this new chip layout and how we laid out the wireless antennas. So, if you remember back a year ago when we talked about how we made our micro rie smaller by layering the components, well, we did something similar with our wireless ITC. So with our coyote six chip, we were able to optimize how we stacked our components. This makes the chip in our wireless ITC about 40% smaller than our Beltone. Amaze ITC that, again, use that older coyote five chip.

Now, on the connectivity side, we were able to improve our wireless antenna placement by making it about 30% more robust than our legacy Beltone Amaze ITC. So this means that your patients can have a more stable streaming experience. So they shouldnt notice as many probably dropouts or interference glitches, if you will, that they had with their Beltone amazed hearing aids. We also know that demands are high for that 312 zinc air battery, especially when your patient is streaming or using the wireless connectivity. So to address this with our coyote six chip, it provides about a 35% longer battery life, again, over that coyote five chip.

So on average, probably without any streaming, a 312 battery provides about five days of use. So if we say we have 30% more or 30% longer battery life, that means again, probably without any streaming, you can give your patient about seven days of use on that 312 battery. Okay, so now that we understand the components that are in the wireless ITC, let's now talk about the hardware of this product. So our Beltone serene ITC is available in our 17, nine, and six technology level. It's offered in three shell sizes.

So the ITC, you can, on the order form, order it as a half shell. You can also order it as a full shell. But please note, and it does state this on the order form, that the battery size will remain a 312. Regardless of the shell size that you select on the order form. This product cannot be built with a 13 battery.

So just please note this as you have conversations with the patients. It will be that 312 battery size. And just like our other bell tone serene custom products, you can order this with a low, medium, high, or ultra power receiver. Again, the larger the receiver, the larger the hearing aid has to be because that receiver just gets larger and larger. It also comes in our six colors.

So again, that's anthracite, light beige, beige, medium brown, brown and dark brown. And just like our other custom products, you can ask for the shell to be red and blue to help the patient differentiate their left and right hearing aid. And then you would pick one of these colors as that face color. And just like all of our other Beltone serene products, the wireless ITC is also IP 68 rated, and it comes standard with a push button. But size permitting, you can request a digital volume control wheel to be added and both of those manual controls so the push button and if wanted, that volume control wheel are synchronized between the hearing aids.

And then I also want to point out that the only way to program our wireless ITC is wirelessly. I tried to use the Speedlink and the flex cables and I was not able to connect. And so I learned through software department that, yes, it is only with the Noah link wireless that you can connect and program this product. So under the manual control options you have several adjustments for the wireless ITC. Now I know flight mode isn't new in our hearing aids, but I just want to spend a moment talking about it as I think a lot of us overlook it.

And we have had a few questions come in as to what is it and how do I use it. So with flight mode, when you check the box to enable it, what you're doing is allowing your patient to then manually turn off their wireless radio so that their hearing aids no longer connect to their wireless access accessories or to their app or have any ear to ear. It's basically like it's the old fashioned hearing aid and it acts that way until the patient then again does something on the hearing aid to then turn that wireless mode back on. The steps for the patient to activate flight mode and deactivate flight mode are in their product user

guide and I just want you to be aware that depending on the product, family and possibly the style, how you get in and out of flight mode might be just a little bit different. So I would say if you're going to activate that for the patient, make sure you know how to get them out of it should they get themselves into it and forget and maybe highlight that page in their user guide.

Now as I stated, most of our ear to ear features are unavailable on the wireless ITC. Again, except for the manual control changes as these are still synchronized between the ears. So this allows the patient to easily change their program, activate wireless streaming to our accessories, or change their volume just by pressing their push button, either with a long or short press. And those push button options are exactly the same for our wireless ITC as they have been for any of our products that have that push button. Now earlier I stated that hands free calls are not available with this product and that is true.

Again, your patients will not have their own voice being picked up from the microphones on their hearing aids, but on iOS devices and Bluetooth audio devices, the patient can, when the phone call rings, push their push button to answer the call. But in order for that caller to hear the hearing aid wearer's voice, they will need to talk into the microphone of their cell phone because again, their voice is not being picked up by the microphones on the hearing aid. And if you remember probably back two years ago when we first launched hands free calls, this is kind of our first step where it said when the call rings, the patient can push the button on their hearing aid to answer the call. They still, at that time, had to talk into the phone. So we're just giving them the ability to answer a call, but they still need to talk into their phone.

So just like our other bell tone serene hearing aids, our wireless ITC will include smart game sound cleaner pro, feedback eraser, two impulse noise reduction silencer, wind noise reduction, mixing point frequency, the tinnitus breaker pro, sound shifter time constants, speech spotter pro, smart beam, and remote care. Plus, we have connectivity to Bluetooth, low energy audio and Auracast. We can connect

to iOS and Android smart devices. We can connect to our wireless accessories. And again, there is still that manual control synchronization for that push button and the digital volume control wheel.

So now let's review the differences between speech spotter Pro and Smartbeam as through our training and not saying everyone on the call, but maybe our newer providers. There seems to be a little confusion as to what the difference is between these two directional options. So speech spotter Pro will be the default directionality for the all around program for our wireless ITC. When using speech spotter, the hearing aids for most of the time will be in an omnidirectional pattern. This is also true with our cross-link directionality.

Any version you want, because most of the time our patients are in an omnidirectional mode. But with SpeechBotterPro, kind of as with cross link directionality, when the signal to noise ratio is poor, the hearing aids will automatically move the patient into an adaptive directional mode. Once this noise has been removed from the environment and the signal to noise ratio improves, then the directional microphones go back into omnidirectional. This ensures that your patient will be able to hear sounds from all around them automatically without having to do anything. Now, with our serene 17, the wireless ITC will have four options for the beam former.

As you can see, you can choose from one of the static narrow, medium and wide levels, or we have smart beam steering. With the beam width set to narrow, you're providing your patient about an 80 degree beam of directionality. So that's kind of like hearing one person across from you. With the beam width set to medium, you're providing your patient about 120 degrees. And this is with a binaural set, about 120 degrees of directional.

So that would be essentially kind of the two people maybe sitting across from you at a table. And then in wide, you're providing about 180 degrees, which to me, it's like you're at a table for four. So you can easily hear the person next to you and the two people across the table. And you don't have to move

your head like you're in a tennis match to be able to enjoy that conversation. Now, with smart beam steering, this setting will automatically change the beam width as needed.

Based on the signal to noise ratio in the environment from wide to medium. So it'll kind of make that adaptive change automatically as needed. And then again, when the noise is gone, it will move back into omnidirectional. So with our serene nine, we will have the options of narrow, medium and wide. So that automatic steering option goes away on the nine.

Then, for our serene six, the beam width is not adjustable. So it's just set in the background in the software as wide. So now, when we talk about smart beam. Smart beam is a more advanced form of adaptive directionality. So when in smart beam, just like adaptive directionality, the patient is always in a directional mode.

This directional option will never go into omni. And this is why this is the default directionality for the hearing noise program. Now, just like with speech spotter pro. You can select different beam widths, if you will, for the patient. So again, the 17 has those three static levels.

Narrow, medium and wide. And then that more automatic smart beam steering option. Again, on a serene nine, you just have those three static, narrow, medium and wide. And then on our serene six, you won't see smart beam as the directionality option. You will actually just see adaptive directionality.

Again, you won't see the line item for beam width. As it's just set to wide automatically. So here's a look at the technology differential. Specifically for the wireless ITC. So this just isn't the ball tone serene family.

It's very specific for the ITC. Because as you can see, those first two rows, we're talking about speech spotter and smart beam. So, kind of just going over what we just reviewed. So you can see the flexibility

in the beam width between the 17, the nine. And how it's not really available in the six.

But you can see all of the other options here. The differential between our technology level stays the same. Then again, continuing on this back page, you can see that the differential is the same. The one thing I want to point out is the personalization with the hearmax app. I know we've said on the training team and probably audiology support for years.

That only the 17s have sound enhancers. And I do realize that in the app on that main tab, there is a button at the bottom that says sound enhancers. And if your patient clicks on that, regardless of technology, whether it's 17, nine or six, they will have the ability to adjust the bass middle and treble, and they will have the ability to adjust the tinnitus manager, should you have turned on the tinnitus breaker pro. But when we say sound enhancer is only available on the 17, the sound enhancers that we are talking about that are only there for the 17 is the patient's ability to adjust their noise reduction, their beam width and their wind noise reduction. So I just wanted to highlight that to clear up any confusion.

So an additional feature or option you need to select when picking a custom product is the vent size. So looking at the graph, you can see that the larger the vent, the more low frequencies are vented out or allowed to flow out of the ear. This means that the patient is not receiving amplification at some of these lower frequencies. If we look at that red line, and this is a three millimeter vent, so fairly large, it allows for about 28 decibels of reduction. At 200, it doesn't start providing amplification until about 630 Hz.

Now, if we compare that to the purple line, which is a smaller 1 mm vent, it allows for only a seven decibels reduction. At 200. It provides amplification starting at 250 Hz. So vent selection, as you all know, is very dependent on the patient's low frequency thresholds. So at Beltone, what we do to calculate the vent size, because I know on our order form the default is factory select, is we take the average of 501,000, 2000 and 4000.

That helps us determine what vent option to put for that factory select. So here you can see in our graph the average thresholds and then what size vent should correlate to what we have on the hearing aid. So that now you can correlate and pick the correct size within Solus max. So again, it's very important that you pick the right venting in the fitting software. Hopefully the vent sizes, I know they show up on an ear mold.

We're hoping to get that to appear on the paperwork for your custom products as well. So you will know in the fitting software which vent option to select.

Now, also, to help kind of balance venting and cosmetically small hearing aids, the longer the vent, usually we need to have a larger diameter vent. But if we were to ask for a narrower diameter vent and ask it to be shorter, by stepping the vent, we can get the same amount of airflow. But it is cosmetically nicer because the vent diameter is a little bit smaller, and you don't see the vent as much from that faceplate area. So you can have it stepped from the faceplate, I believe on the order form, you can also have it stepped from the receiver end as well. Now, for those of you that are doing real ear measurements, I just want to point out that you should never thread that probe microphone through the vent, as it will not accurately measure those low frequencies.

Never through the vent, always ear. Then put the hearing aid over the probe mic. Even with the best venting, patients still have occlusion issues. Our field trainer for the West, Chris Phoenix, uses this method with patients to help when adjusting for occlusion. It all depends on where the patient hears their voice originating from.

If your patient states that their own voice sounds like it's coming from their chest, that means they have too much gain in the low frequencies. So we would reduce those low frequency gain handles. Now, the rule of thumb is to make changes in three decibels steps. And again, it's okay if that gain goes negative,

because remember, that was a change where now our software will go negative. You just need to uncheck the event corrections under device controls.

I'm sorry. Under display options to then see that negative number. So you will continue decreasing your patient's low frequency gain until they state that their voice seems to be originating from their mouth. And that's what we're looking for. We want their mouth to be.

We want their voice to be coming out of their mouth or sound that way, then we know we have those low frequencies adjusted correctly. Now, on the other hand, if your patient states that their own voice sounds like it's coming from their ears or their nose or anything above their mouth, then in this case, we're not providing our patients with enough low frequency gain. So we'll want to increase the low frequencies again in three decibels steps until the patient states that their mouth, that their voice, sorry, I keep saying it backwards, that their voice seems to be coming from their mouth. And Chris states that this will eliminate occlusion in probably about 90% of patients that have that occlusion issue. So getting the right venting.

But if that still isn't satisfying the patient, here's a little trick into, again, adjusting those low frequencies. And remember, with our new wireless ITC, you can offer your patient the latest in wireless connectivity from Bluetooth, Le Audio and Auracast, and our new wireless accessories. So, remember, with Auracast, you can go to the movies and choose to hear the movie in a different language, hear announcements directly in your hearing aids on public transportation easily hear a speaker at a conference, stream audio directly from gym equipment and other electronic devices, and stream audio and enjoy watching TV with your friends and family. And just another reminder, our Beltone serene wireless ITC can now connect to our new multi mic plus and our TV streamer plus. So using our multi mic plus allows your patients additional benefit for hearing and noise.

And within their hearmax app, they can turn their personal multi mic plus into an aura cast broadcast, meaning that your patient can share their stream with anyone else that happens to have an Auracast device. And also in a pinch, the multi mic plus can be used as a portable TV streamer plus. And I'll talk more about the multi mic plus on Friday. I believe also just reminding you that our TV streamer plus can be used with this product and allows your patients to stream their TV at the volume they prefer without blasting out the rest of their family and possibly bothering the neighbors. And I think many of you know that very first call or that group of patients on your I call list are going to be your Belton amaze ITC users, as this is the upgrade they've been waiting for.

They get the size they want with the same features that they're used to, but with the enhanced performance of an updated chipset, longer battery life, and the ability to connect to the latest Bluetooth technology, including aura cast. Now, I know as well as you that there are still patients out there that want battery operated hearing aids, but a CIC is just too small and limited in features for them. Well, now you can offer them the battery operated hearing aid they want. And since our wireless ITC can be ordered in three shell sizes, those with vision or dexterity issues have options. And I would also like to add in those patients that want a physical volume wheel on their hearing aids now have the option to have that volume control wheel back because not every patient wanted to push the button for the volume options as well as changing their programs.

Now thinking of those first time users who want the smallest hearing aid, and they select that CIC even against your recommendations because you know they need more help and noise than a CIC can allow. So now you have an option to offer them that's just slightly larger than a CICDA, but we'll provide them with a better feature set to help them hear in noise. And last but not least, what about the patient that wants cosmetically small custom hearing aids but must have connectivity? Again, we know our CIC doesn't provide this, and our custom rechargeable hearing aids are just too large for this patient. So now you have something kind of in the middle.

Again, it's smaller, but it still gives them that connectivity that they really want. So again, our Belton serene custom family not only includes our custom rechargeable NCIC, but it now includes our new wireless ITC. Again, it's size to be more cosmetically discreet than our rechargeable customs, but offer your patient better hearing and noise using directional microphones. And let's not forget connectivity that we know is missing from our CIC. Now, our CIC is for a patient that wants the most cosmetically small hearing aid.

This patient needs to have probably better dexterity and doesn't really care much about rechargeability or connectivity. They just want a hearing aid. And they're okay with changing batteries fairly regularly. On the other end, our custom rechargeable is for a patient that wants the easiest to use and handle product. They want rechargeability, they want connectivity.

They want our best directionality for hearing and noise. This patient doesn't care as much about cosmetics. Again, they also might have slightly poorer dexterity. And if this patient has hearing in only one ear, and they'd like to take advantage of one of our cross solutions. This is the only custom style that can be used with our Beltone serene BTE cross transmitter.

So again, our wireless ITC is positioned kind of perfectly right between our two other custom styles. Now, this is just a handout that you can download, just showing the physical characteristic difference between the three custom. So again, you can see the directionality options, you can see the color choices, and again, the battery size. And just pointing out again that you can answer the call with the push of a button on our wireless ITC. But at that bottom feature, hands free call not available on the ITC.

Because again, voice pickup is not on the hearing aid microphones. It's on the cell phone. So, to review, our wireless ITC has essentially the same feature set as our other beltone serene hearing aids. But what's missing are some ear to ear features like cross-link directionality four and UltraFocus.

Two patient benefits include wireless streaming aura cast, and a 35% improvement in battery life because of our coyote six chipset.

And this product is for that patient that felt like our CIC didn't offer enough features, again, like wireless connectivity, but felt that our customer chargeable style was just too big for them. And again, this offers that nice product feature right in the middle.

So with that, there we go. I just want to thank all of you for taking a quick 30 minutes out of your day to learn more about our new Beltone Serene Wireless ITC. If you have any questions, I'll stay on another moment as you type in your question, but just to let you know, none have come through yet, but if you need more information on this product or on our fitting software, please feel free to take one of our belt from university courses on Solus Max 2.0 or on the any other serene products. Again, I haven't seen any questions roll in. So thank you again for spending 30 minutes with me.

I hope to see you tomorrow when we talk about our Beltone serene bte cross transmitter. Bye everyone. Thank you.