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Exciting Updates to the Beltone HearMax App and Beltone Solus Max 2.1

Presenter: Laura Schachtel, AuD, FAAA

And welcome everyone to today's course presented by Beltone. Today's course is exciting updates to the Beltone HearMax app and Beltone Solus Max 2.1. We are so pleased to welcome a wonderful friend to Audiology Online, Dr. Laura Schachtel. And Laura, I'm going to hand things over to you.

Thank you, Kimberly. Hi everyone and welcome again for like the third time this week. I'm Dr. Laura Schachtel, the product training development manager for Beltone. As Kimberly said today I get to talk about the exciting updates into the hearamax app and some of the good kind of quality updates that I think will help you in your office to Beltone Solus Max.

That version number is 2.1. So actually going to start the session talking about the app, which is usually unusual. Usually I start with the fitting software, but we have two big kind of new updates in our app. So the first update is that we have an AuraCast assistant in our app. And so if you've been looking on social media lately, you might have seen the big announcement that Google so kind of owns the platform for all the Android phones, said they are adding in like a native app or some type of assistant into their newer OS system, their operating system for their Google branded phones.

And I think it's Samsung also said for their newer phones they're doing this as well. They've kind of started to, but I think diving more into it. So it's exciting that the phone companies are finally coming around here. We implemented this way before we knew that the phone companies were coming out. And then I think it was just the day or two ago Apple finally said something about Bluetooth low energy audio because they are not on it yet.

But they finally said Hey, AuraCast seems like it's the future so we're looking into how to implementing this along with what we have. So it's great that now our two big phone manufacturers are finally kind of catching up to the technology that we've had in our hearing aids for probably two or so years now. The other exciting update is something called auto streaming in our app and that helps stream the audio sound directly from the accessory right away without the patient having to go through steps or and then

we'll wrap up the session with a few kind of enhancements again to Solus Max 2.1 to hopefully help make your fitting flow a little bit easier and more convenient. Just like Kimberly said, there's lots of handouts. Hopefully you've downloaded them throughout the week, but if not, this is kind of your last opportunity to take them all in one chunk.

Otherwise, these handouts plus data sheets and some other handouts can be found on belltonuniversity.com so our learning outcomes for today hopefully after this course you'll be able to explain how to connect and disconnect from an AuraCast broadcast using our in app oracast assistant. Be able to identify the different types of AuraCast icons so kind of what they mean when they pop up in the app. Be able to explain the process of completing an accessory firmware update in the Hearmax app and that latest app version is 1.39. It did update about three weeks ago, so patients probably have already updated to this version. Also be able to describe how auto streaming functions for each of our accessory types and then lastly list three updates to the Beltone Solus Max version 2.1.

Again, as always, these are the risks and limitations of this course, so you can review those in the notes if needed. So as many of you have heard earlier this week, both Beltone Envision and Beltone Commence Hearing aids are equipped with Bluetooth Low energy audio and AuraCast technology. Now this feature is available across our entire new product range. So from a Beltone Invision 17 all the way down to a Beltone Commence 2. And we I think as Kathy even said on Wednesday, we deliberately made this choice to put Bluetooth Low Energy Audio and auracast into our lower tier products because we wanted to ensure that all patients have access to this inclusive and innovative technology.

And so by doing this we're committed to enhancing the listening experience for everyone regardless of their specific needs or their budget. Now this integration of advanced technology not only enhances the functionality of our hearing aids, but it also empowers your patients to engage more fully in their

surrounding. So whether that's enjoying music, participating in conversations, accessing media, your patients can now do so with greater ease and clarity. So I know many of you have seen this slide several times over the last few years. Hopefully this is one of the last few you will have to see this but the next advancement in Bluetooth is Bluetooth Low Energy Audio.

This step forward allows for higher audio quality, streaming over classic Bluetooth and something called Bluetooth Low Energy that came out several years ago while still using less battery consumption. And it allows for some other capabilities for wireless audio streaming and Bluetooth Low Energy Audio allows for hands free streaming with compatible Android phones. So kind of not just Apple products, but now more Android phones can have the hands free option and it allows for devices like our hearing aids to be connected simultaneously to multiple devices. Caveat though, I will state that our hearing aids are not there yet, but we are a step closer to this and I'll explain a little bit more when we talk about Solus max 2.1. And then the final enhancement to Bluetooth low energy audio is AuraCast.

OraCast allows audio to be broadcasted from one device to many others and it can be used to share audio with friends, to listen to audio in public spaces, or improve accessibility for people with hearing loss. Again, on social media, there was an event in Australia at their like Opera House and one of the participants said I could hear the nuances of all of the instruments and I don't think I ever would have been able to have heard that because of my hearing loss. It was like I had the best seat in the house. So again, just improving access where they can come back and fully enjoy the life that they maybe thought they couldn't because of their hearing loss. So I know in the past we've talked about how in order to connect to a broadcast, patients either needed to connect through an assistant or like a native app on their phones.

And at that time we said, but we're waiting for the phones, we're waiting on them to catch up to this technology. And as I said, both Android, Google and Apple now have talked about how they seem to be

committed in offering this eventually through their phones. But you know, that announcement came literally this week. We developed this several months ago, if not a year ago, and we put this in our app so that our hearing aid patients can easily connect to any oracast broadcast right from an app that's on their phone that they're used to using that is kind of all inclusive with their hearing aids. They don't have to toggle through several different applic to connect to an audio stream.

So now your patients will be able to scan or search for available oracast broadcasts, both private and public, and access them via the updated app from what we call the oracast Assistant menu. This lets patient using our beltone Envision, Beltone Commence and beltone Serene hearing aids with a compatible smart device just basically means that the phone is compatible with our app. The ability to connect to oracast broadcast no matter if they're using an Apple or an Android phone. So we're taking phone brand off the table now. As long as your phone is compatible with our app, patients can connect to oracast broadcast as long as they have a bell tone and vision Commence or serene.

So as I stated earlier, Apple, sorry, Android is incorporating this into their system. Apple just said they're starting to look into it. But you can help your patients right now because again, it's kind of programmed into our app. So when searching for an oracast broadcast, the broadcast will be displayed in order of discovery. So you can see the first thing we discovered was gate 34.

Then we discovered train station. Both of those two broadcasts have the oracast icon. That's the like capital A that's rounded in the circle. You will be very familiar with this. Now it'll be synonymous, like how it is with the Bluetooth icon or wireless icon.

That's the AuraCast icon. Because we see the auracast icon, it means both of these broadcasts are public. So all you would have to do is tap on that and then it would start streaming directly through the hearing aids. But you can see third on the list, Library room number two has the padlock. So this means that the broadcast is private.

So in order for us to connect to library room number two, if we were to tap on that row, it would pop up with another window asking for the specific password. And then you'll notice that we have the icon for our Multi Mic plus and TV Streamer plus. And that is because I, when I pulled this up, have a Multi Mic plus and a TV streamer plus paired to my hearing aids. If my mom was searching for them and I had both my Multi Mic plus and TV Streamer plus in broadcast mode, she would see them as an aura cast icon because they're not paired to her hearing aids. So kind of similar when you are searching out our accessories, they come are.

Sorry, when you are searching for our accessories, they do come up in order of pairing. So it will be the one that was paired most recently on top. So I had just recently paired my Multi Mic plus. My TV Streamer plus had been paired to my hearing aids for a while. Now we know that this might seem kind of overwhelming to a patient.

So you can easily turn this feature on or offer them. So if this is a little more for than what a patient can handle, immediately out of the gate, you just toggle in the app to the more menu and then you just simply find the oracast assistant and toggle that off. And then once your patient is ready to start broadcast or listening to oracast broadcast, you would just come back and toggle that back on. So I just want to play a quick video to show you how easy it is to search and connect to an auracast broadcast.

In the Beltone Hearmax app, press Find a broadcast in the bottom to search for available private Oracast broadcasts, tap on the AuraCast broadcast you want to listen to. Type in the password and press OK, AuraCast starts streaming.

Press the green sound wave to pause the streaming, Press search in the bottom to search for available public oracast broadcasts, Tap on the oracast broadcast you want to listen to. Oracast starts streaming.

So again, really easy. And I just want to point out that the first broadcast where it was locked, it was with our TV Streamer plus. But again, you saw that Aura cast icon because the hearing aids that the lady was trying to connect with were not actually paired to the TV Streamer Plus. So again, if the accessory isn't physically paired to the hearing aids, you see the AuraCast icon. So when your patient uses the OraCast assistant for that very first time, or they hit the Find a broadcast button, this little pop up comes up just to explain what's going on.

So to dismiss this, your patient can either click okay or search. It basically does the same thing and it's just a pop up for the very first time. I don't think this ever kind of pops back up again. So, as previously mentioned, both our Multi Mic plus and TV Streamer plus accessories can function as a personal oracast transmitter. So imagine you're hosting a movie night in your backyard, but you want to keep the audio private so that the entire neighborhood doesn't hear the movie.

So in this case, you can invite your friends and family to bring their AuraCast enabled devices, allowing them to connect to the broadcast and enjoy the movie directly through their hearing aids or other compatible devices. So to ensure that your broadcast remains private, you'll want to follow a few steps. First, you'll navigate to the Accessories page under the My Bell Tone tab. And here you'll find the option to toggle off the public broadcast mode. This step is crucial for maintaining the privacy of your audio stream.

Next, you'll want to set a password for your oracast broadcast. So under oracast password, you'll want to tap on the pencil icon and this will bring up the default password, which you can very easily change to something more memorable or something that you can actually tell your friends what it is without them going what now? And then once you've typed in a password that you like, you can just click on ok and it will then save those changes. Now, when creating a new password, just keep in mind some guidelines. The password must be between 4 and 16 characters and it should consist of numbers and

letters.

The app will give you feedback if the password you chose is too short or too long or doesn't hit certain criteria. And again, this just ensures that you have a good password that's memorable. Something easy you can tell your patients. If you forgot it, you can always go back and tap on that pencil and again it will pop up what your password is. But this just lets your guests kind of come in just like they do with a wi fi and say, what's password?

What's the oracast password? And now they're connected to whatever you might be broadcasting. So another exciting new feature in the updated Hearmax app and something you can adjust in the update to Solus Max is Auto Streaming. And this allows the accessories to automatically start streaming once they are turned on. So imagine a family gathering at a bustling restaurant to celebrate a special occasion.

The atmosphere is lively, with laughter and chatter filling the air, making it difficult for anyone to hear clearly. Among the guests is Grandma Betty, who has hearing loss and often struggles to follow conversations in noisy environments. Fortunately, Grandma Betty has her Multi Mic plus with Auto Streaming activated. So as her family settles in to their seats, Grandma Betty turns on her Multi Mic plus and places it on the table so she can hear all her family members at the further end of the table. The Multimic plus then automatically starts streaming the conversation directly to her hearing aids.

And all of this is occurring without Grandma Betty needing to remember and then find the push button on her hearing aids while she's wearing them, probably with like food on her hands possibly, or something to start that audio stream. So with Auto Streaming, once the Multi Mic plus is turned on, the audio automatically begins to stream for her, making it much more convenient again for Grandma Betty to enjoy her, you know, celebration with her family. So this story highlights an important point that in the past, to begin streaming, your patients needed to activate the Streaming Quote program either from

their app from that streaming bar or ear level with the push button on the hearing aid. Again, they're wearing the hearing aids. That's a difficult step.

So now with Auto Streaming this step, this additional step is no longer necessary, as illustrated by Grandma Betty's story. So by default, the Multi Mic plus has Auto Streaming set on. And this design choice reflects the expectation that when a patient activates their Multimic plus, they kind of intend to utilize it right away and immediately want to hear whoever they've handed the Multimic plus to. In contrast, the default mode for the TV Streamer plus is set to off. This decision is based on the understanding that the TV streamer plus remains continuously powered on.

And we cannot assume that every patient wants to hear the TV audio streamed automatically whenever the television is turned on. Because many of our patients don't live alone, they live with other family members, roommates, whatever it have be. So this means they might not be the only one actively controlling the television. So for instance, a spouse might turn the TV on for their enjoyment, but the patient may not want to listen to it at that moment. But we know that this might not be how everyone would like their settings.

So to address this, we have made configuring auto streaming in the app and it's pretty straightforward for patients to do. They can easily adjust the settings directly from their app, again allowing them to customize their listening preferences according to the situation that they're in. Additionally, you can configure this option in the fitting software during appointments to ensure that you're meeting the needs of your patients. Please note that Auto streaming works with Beltone and Vision, Beltone Commence and Beltone Serene. So in order for patients to change the auto streaming default that accessory.

So the Multi Mic plus the TV streamer plus it must be paired into the Hearmax app. So not only do does the accessory have to be paired to the hearing aids, the hearing aids paired to the app. That third step is that the accessory has to be paired into the app as well. Now, please note if your patient changes

their auto streaming setting in the app, it will be set this way until they go back into their app and change it. And this is regardless of however you've set up auto streaming from the fitting software.

So patients can overrule what the fitting software has done. So in order for your patient to change their auto streaming setting, they would navigate to their My Bell Tone tab and then toggle on or off auto streaming. Now, auto streaming is set by the hearing aids. So if you have two patients that are both using the same let's say Multi mic plus, one patient can have auto streaming set on while the other patient can have it set off. Also, if you have a patient that has auto streaming on, let's say they have two multi mic let's say they have a Multi mic plus and a TV streamer plus and they're both on and they hit search for auto streaming it's going to pick up the audio from the Multi Mic plus over the TV streamer plus so the multi mic plus has what we call the priority.

If you have a patient with two multi mic pluses and again for whatever reason they're both on which has priority which One's going to start streaming. It's going to be the Multi Mic plus that is physically closer to the hearing aids because it probably connected to the hearing aids first. Now, if your patient doesn't have their accessories paired in the app, you can make this change pretty easily. Just navigate to the accessory page, find that accessory, click on the ellipses or that three dot button and then this opens a window and then you would just check or uncheck the auto streaming box. Now, in order to offer this new feature to your patients, you need to run a firmware update on the Multimic plus and or the TV Streamer plus.

Again, your patient can do this from their Hearmax app, as long as the accessory is paired to the app and they have their Bluetooth on. So to run the update, your patient would tap on the accessory, then tap on install the update, then tap on, continue, agree to the instructions and then the update will download and then install. Please note that the accessory will turn off and it will restart itself. And when the update is completed, you get the green check mark and they can close out of the screen. Very

similar to what we all do when we have updates on our phone, right?

We yes, install it, downloads, the phone restarts pretty much exactly what our accessories are doing.

We say it shouldn't take longer than five minutes to run the update. When I did this to obtain the screen grabs on my Multi Mic plus, I think it took me about two minutes. Now one more thing that could pop up specifically with the Multi Mic plus, if the Multi Mic plus does not have enough battery to run the update, your patient might see this again, something similar they probably saw on their phone if there isn't enough battery in their phone to run that update. So very much similar patients probably have experience with this.

Again, if your patient doesn't have their accessory paired, you can do this from the fitting software. So just remember that in order to do a firmware update from the fitting software, you have to have a Noelink wireless connected to the computer. So from the update page you'll tap on the accessory updater and then this extra window pops up. I just want to point out this note here in the bottom. It's directions on how to connect to and get that update going with the accessory.

You're to need to have the accessory on. It will find it like you see it found my TV Streamer plus. But in order for me to actually click on update and have it go to my next window, I had to push the pairing button physically on the TV Streamer plus And then once you do that and tap on update, the next window pops up where it does run the firmware update even when connected to the computer. My TV streamer plus did restart itself. And when the update concludes, you'll get a notice that the firmware was updated and the version number has updated as well.

And again, I believe running this only took me about two minutes as well. So that was the update in the app. So with Solus Max asides from being able to connect to our new products, there's again a few extra changes I think might help you in your workflow. So the first update, and this is the big one, this will be a big time saver, I think specifically on follow up appointments with Beltone Envision and Beltone

commence. Just the two new products.

You no longer need to ask your patient to turn their phone's Bluetooth off in order to be able to connect to the hearing aids. Again only for our new products. And this is that kind of step towards multi device connection that Bluetooth Low energy audio offers us. So now the patient doesn't have to find their phone. Figure out how to turn Bluetooth off.

You can have them come in, everything's fine, search out those new hearing aids and off you go with that follow up appointment under the catalog page you can now filter all of the subcategories on one page. So this just makes it easier if you do use this catalog filtering option when kind of going through the selection process with your patient. So it just kind of streamlines things for you a little bit. We've added two new links to the resources page. One is the phone compatibility so you can quickly look up which phones are compatible with our app.

And the other one is to the GN online service portal. So the phone compatibility button, it really is a QR code. It's active, you could QR code right QR off of that right away. But if that's too small for your phone, when you tap on it it just provides a bigger image of that QR code. For the GN online portal, you will click there and it will take you to the website for you to log in and then you can see if there's any like outages, run your reports, manage your account.

So just an easier way to get to that website. Also just an update so you all hopefully know what the tools button did on the fitting page. And this really was there to help you manage features associated with the programs. It's been called tools forever, I almost feel like. But it was determined that the name Tools didn't adequately describe what it was doing, what those options were under this.

So we've renamed tools to Program Options just to clarify what that button does. But all of the functions under Program Options remain the same. So you can still reorder your programs, recalculate auto

relay, rename a program, copy, paste programs, all of that still there. We just rename the button. You also may notice that we've kind of changed the color scheme a little bit.

Our previous kind of black and white color scheme was a little dated and it was a little hard to tell like for clinician or patient report which one was highlighted and we were actively working in. So hopefully you've noticed now we switched to this like white and gray color scheme where if you are actively in something like for reports it's going to be a white circle with a bold font. So for clinicians is highlighted. Where for patients is the one we're not in because it's gray and the lettering isn't as bold. And then just note that the arrow keys for adjusting the gain we made blue just to highlight those a little bit better as well.

I just want to take a moment if you were with me Monday to talk about that LED light control. Previously this was only available for our btes, but with Beltone and Vision it's in our micro RIE as well. So this is under device controls. This allows someone like a third party who is kind of the one controlling the hearing aids on the patient just to be able to know that the hearing aids are on and functioning and responding to any programming changes. So the default is disabled, meaning you're just going to have the LED flash for charging.

You can set it to flash once, which means that the hearing aid will indicate for charging but also will flash when you're making someone's pushing the button or making a program change. So program one to two to three increase or decreasing volume and then another option is continuous flash. So again, it'll handle everything for the charging for manual controls, but it will the LED light will continuously flash once every five seconds. So just again helps if someone is managing the hearing aids like a third party, a family member, a nurse, just so that they have some response back to what the hearing aid is doing. In Solus Max 2.0, you could view, save or print data logging reports in simulation mode, but you had to be logged into your GNOS account.

So with Solusmax 2.1 you no longer need to be logged into your account in order to view data logging reports in simulation. We've had requests to say I want to go back and see other sessions of data logging stored and you can do this in simulation. But to see these intervals you need to be logged into your online account. And then the last update is that the hearing aid serial numbers are now included on the GNOS notifications system tray. So this will help you make sure that you have the right patient because now you're getting the serial numbers so you you have several like John Smiths or you know, R.

Smiths popping up. You can double check with the serial numbers that you're actually helping the right patient. So to review to connect to an oracast broadcast, just select one from the menu and then disconnect. You would just pause it or search out another broadcast. Public broadcast will show that AuraCast icon and private will also, but it will have that padlock.

Our accessory icons will appear if those accessories are paired physically to those hearing aids. Otherwise to someone else our accessories would appear as the AuraCast icon. To complete a firmware update from our app, just ensure that the phone Bluetooth is on and active, the accessory is paired to the app, and that the app has enough power to run the update and then just follow the on screen prompts to install. Just like they would update their phone. Our Multi Mic plus has auto streaming set to on by default where the TV Streamer plus has it set to off again.

The thinking is most people wouldn't always want to hear the TV audio if they're not the ones actively turning the television on. And In Solus Max 2.1 you can fit our new products Beltone Envision and Beltone Commence and then on follow up appointments. These products your patient doesn't have to turn off their phone's Bluetooth in order for you to connect to and make programming adjustments. And for those that use remote care, the serial numbers will now be displayed in the systems tray notification or that like little orange cloud that would pop up. So with that I just want to thank all of you for taking 30

minutes out of your day to learn more about the enhancements that we put into the Hearmax app and Solus Max.

Again, I really appreciate you taking the time. If you have any questions, please feel free to type them in. I don't see any that have come in just yet, but I'm going to hold my breath because I think Tuesday said oh good and then a whole bunch came in. So if you have questions, please type them in. If you need more information on this product launch, we have Belton University courses for Beltone and Vision Commence the app, the software, so if you need to run again.

I appreciate you spending the time with me today. I appreciate the time spending with the whole training team this whole week. I hope you enjoy the rest of your Friday and that you have a great weekend. Again. Any other questions can always be emailed to any one of us on the training team.

So no questions for this session. So I'll let you guys go. Thanks everyone. Have a great day.