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2026 Industry Roundtable

Moderator: Christopher Spankovich, AuD, PhD, MPH



Jessica Lawley, BA



John Pumford, AuD



Dr. Edmund Farrar



Lauren Fettig



Dave Fabry, PhD



Brian Taylor, AuD

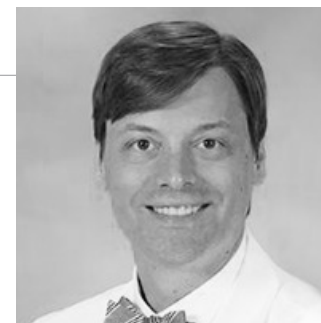


Tammara Stender, AuD

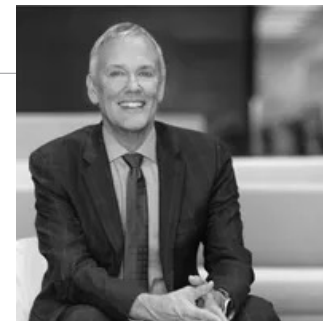
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Christopher Spankovich

AuD, PhD, MPH

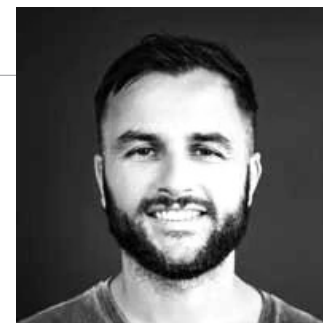


Christopher Spankovich, AuD, PhD, MPH, is a tenured professor and vice chair of research for the Department of Otolaryngology Head Neck Surgery at the University of Mississippi Medical Center. Dr. Spankovich is a clinician-scientist with a translational research program focused on prevention of acquired forms of hearing loss, tinnitus, and sound sensitivity. His research includes clinical trials of otoprotectants, epidemiological studies of determinants (e.g., dietary quality) of hearing loss/tinnitus, basic research in thermal stress for prevention of ototoxicity, and translational research on the effects of noise on auditory physiology/perception. His research has been funded by industry, federal, and professional bodies. He has published over 100 articles and book chapters (>65 in peer-reviewed journals) and has given over 60 national and international presentations. Dr. Spankovich continues to practice clinically with special interest in tinnitus, sound sensitivity, ototoxicity, hearing conservation, and advanced diagnostics. He holds Adjunct faculty status with Salus/Drexel University and serves as an associate editor for the International Journal of Audiology. He is a former board member for the American Academy of Audiology and currently serves on the board of the Accreditation Commission for Audiology Education (ACAE). Dr. Spankovich also provides consultant services for medico-legal cases.



Dave Fabry, PhD

Dave Fabry is Chief Hearing Health Officer for Starkey, where he has worked since 2009. He has previously held both academic and industry roles during his 43-year career as an Audiologist. He is a Past President and Board Member of the American Academy of Audiology and recently completed two terms as a Board Member for the American Auditory Society. He has served in the past as Editor-in-Chief for Audiology Today and the American Journal of Audiology, and as a Section Editor for Ear and Hearing.

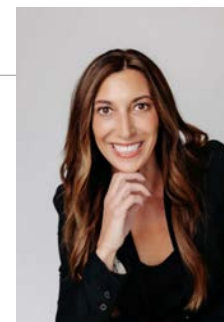


Dr. Edmund Farrar

Dr. Edmund Farrar is a leading figure in modern tinnitus care. A former military and NHS doctor, he saw how little practical support patients received and how few could access effective therapy. His own tinnitus experience pushed him to focus on what actually works. He co-founded Oto with Dr. George Leidig to close the gap between evidence and real-world care.

Ed has built Oto into the only clinically proven digital tinnitus therapeutic with randomized controlled trial evidence, including the large DEFINE trial led by the University of Cambridge. His work helped establish digital CBT as a credible, scalable option for people who cannot access specialist care. Under his leadership, Oto has supported more than 100,000 people and is now advancing reimbursement pathways in major health systems including the NHS.

Ed continues to work with audiology and ENT leaders worldwide, helping shift the field toward accessible, evidence-based habituation and better standards of tinnitus care. He is now recognized as one of the key voices shaping the future of tinnitus treatment.



Lauren Fettig

Lauren Fettig brings over 15 years of hearing health experience to her role as Director of National Accounts at CaptionCall. Previously, she spent six years at Starkey Hearing Technologies working in government sales and practice development, giving her deep insight into the clinical side of hearing care.

Lauren now builds strategic partnerships and leads the CaptionCall's Veteran channel, helping providers treat the "holistic hearing journey" through IPCTS.

Her passion is personal: watching her cousin's life transform after receiving hearing aids—hearing a car seatbelt ding for the first time—cemented her dedication to helping anyone experiencing hearing loss overcome isolation.

Outside of work, Lauren loves traveling, playing in any of Minnesota's 10,000 lakes, and spending time with her family and dog, a black lab named Frankie.



Jessica Lawley, BA

Jessica Lawley, VP, Client Marketing for Synchrony Health and Wellness and Audiology lead. She leads marketing relationships with clients, partners, and associations to develop and implement marketing and communication strategies that align with patient, provider, business, and financial goals. Jessica has 16+ years of marketing experience at companies such as Synchrony, Citibank, and The PGA TOUR. Jessica obtained her BA in Marketing from Auburn University while lettering on Auburn's golf team.

John Pumford, AuD



John Pumford, AuD, is the Director of Audiology, Education and Clinical Research at Audioscan. With over 27 years of experience in the field, Dr. Pumford has served in senior roles in audiology, clinical research, and management for several leading hearing aid companies. He has also held clinical audiology positions in both hospital and private practice settings along with research audiology positions at the National Centre for Audiology in Canada where he contributed to advancements in the DSL fitting formula. Dr. Pumford has presented widely internationally on hearing aid technology and verification procedures and has authored numerous articles, peer-reviewed papers, and book chapters on these topics.



Tammara Stender, AuD

Tammara Stender, AuD, is Director of Global Audiology External Relations for GN Hearing. The Global Audiology groups, located in Copenhagen and Chicago, conduct research and development from the perspectives of the user and the hearing professional. Prior to joining GN ReSound in 2003, Tammy was an Audiologist for Orlando Regional Healthcare in Orlando, Florida, where she provided pediatric diagnostic and amplification services. She earned her Master of Science degree in Audiology from Vanderbilt University, and her Doctor of Audiology degree from the University of Florida. In addition to her position at ReSound, she has held Adjunct Faculty positions at Northern Illinois University and Rush University in Chicago.



Brian Taylor, AuD

Brian Taylor, AuD, is the senior director of audiology for WS Audiology. Dr. Taylor also serves as the editor of Audiology Practices, a quarterly publication of the Academy of Doctors of Audiology, and as an adjunct instructor at the University of Wisconsin. Brian has more than 35 years of clinical, business and teaching experience.

Disclosures

- **Presenter Disclosure:** Financial: Christopher Spankovich is an employee of the University of Mississippi Medical Center. He has participated in research in the area of hearing loss and tinnitus funded by the NIH-NIDCD. Non-financial: Christopher Spankovich has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. Financial: Dave Fabry is an employee of Starkey Hearing. Non-financial: Dave Fabry has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. Financial: Dr. Edmund Farrar is Co-Founder and CEO of OtoHealth, Inc. Non-financial: Dr. Edmund Farrar has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. Financial: Lauren Fetting is an employee of CaptionCall. Non-financial: Lauren Fetting has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. Financial: Jessica Lovell is an employee of CareCredit. Non-financial: Jessica Lovell has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. Financial disclosures: John Pumford is an employee of Audioscan. Non-financial disclosures: John Pumford has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. Financial: Tammara Stender is an employee of GN Hearing. Non-financial: Tammara Stender has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose. Financial: Brian Taylor is an employee of WS Audiology. He receives a stipend from the University of Wisconsin and the Academy of Doctors of Audiology. Non-financial: Brian Taylor has no relevant non-financial relationships to disclose.
- **Content Disclosure:** This course focuses on products and services from the participating companies from an evidence-based and clinical application perspective.
- **Sponsor Disclosure:** There is no external sponsor for this course.

Limitations/Risks

- The applicability and accuracy of the course content may vary by the clinical, geographical, and cultural context; you should evaluate the course accordingly.
- As healthcare is rapidly evolving, new findings may change the validity of the information presented in this course. Providers should always consult the latest research and guidelines from professional associations.
- The interventions discussed in this course may be limited in generalizability, requiring practitioners to consider specific individual and population factors.
- The course may not cover all possible risk factors, diagnostic methods, or treatment options, and complex cases may require additional considerations.
- Healthcare providers should apply cultural competence and sensitivity to ensure effective and respectful care based on their patients' diverse needs.
- Providers should always evaluate the limitations of diagnostic and screening tools, considering their potential for false results as well as any ethical implications.
- It is the responsibility of course participants to critically evaluate the evidence from multiple sources to guide professional practice.

Learning Outcomes

After this course, participants will be able to:

- Describe how recent innovations in products, processes, and partnerships are directly resolving major pain points for both hearing care providers and clients.
- Discuss strategies leading manufacturers are using to simplify their products and services in order to make them more intuitive for providers and clients.
- Explain upcoming industry developments that will expand the ability to meet unique or challenging needs in hearing care.

Holistic Innovation

Innovation isn't just about a new product; it can be a process, a new service, or a unique partnership.

What is one recent innovation at your company that directly addresses a major pain point for audiologists or their patients?

✓ Holistic Innovation

Oto
Dr. Edmund Farrar

oto

What is one recent innovation at your company that directly addresses a major pain point for audiologists or their patients

Apple Hearing Study

“Less than 2.1% of participants had cognitive behavioral therapy for their tinnitus”



Tinnitus CBT: The Access Gap

- CBT is recommended in the tinnitus guidelines
- In practice, most patients never access it
- Audiologists have no practical way to offer CBT



9. Cognitive behavioral therapy

Clinicians should recommend cognitive behavioral therapy to patients with persistent, bothersome tinnitus.

Recommendation

New research



The DEFINE Trial

A randomized controlled trial (RCT) comparing the Oto digital therapeutic to 1-1 CBT.

Trial design

Intervention

- Oto digital therapeutic
- Daily 5-10 minute CBT sessions
- Stress and sleep content
- Materials can be repeated

105 patients

Control group

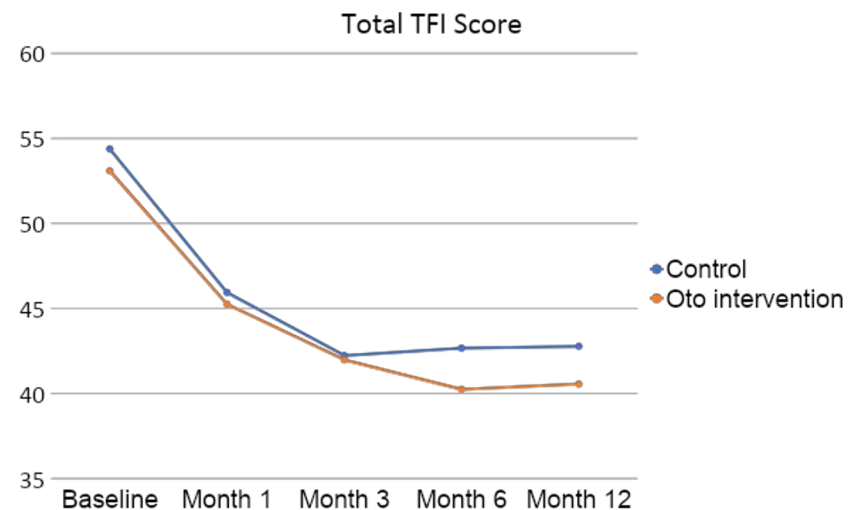
- 1:1 therapist led CBT
- Created personalized tx plan
- CBT, relaxation & education
- Initial 60 min + up to 6 follow ups

105 patients

Results

The Oto digital therapeutic delivers equivalent outcomes to 1-1 CBT

- Median age 58, average TFI of 54, wide range of level of hearing impairment
- Non-inferior at 1, 3, 6 & 12 months
- Average TFI improvement of 15 at 6 months



Outcome

Audiologists can now deliver guideline recommended, best practice CBT to tinnitus patients without the need for an external referral.



Holistic Innovation

Closing Thoughts

Dr. Edmund Farrar

The logo for 'oto' is displayed in a teal color. It features a lowercase 'o', followed by a lowercase 't' with a short vertical bar on its right side, and another lowercase 'o'. The entire logo is centered within a light gray rectangular background.

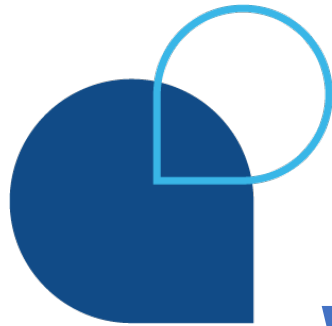


Holistic Innovation

Audioscan

John Pumford, AuD

The Audioscan logo, featuring the word 'audioscan' in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters 'a' and 'n' have a stylized, rounded design with a small gap or notch at the top and bottom respectively. The logo is centered within a light gray rectangular background.



What is one recent innovation at your company that directly addresses a major pain point for audiologists or their patients?

John Pumford, AuD

Director of Audiology, Education and Clinical Research

Audioscan

audioscan

Bone Conduction Device (BCD) Verification

- BCDs historically difficult to verify
- Verifit2 evolved to provide objective verification capabilities with BCDs
- Supports best practice guidelines and fitting protocols
- Recent enhancements include addition of DSL-BCD 2.0 and Verifit*LINK*



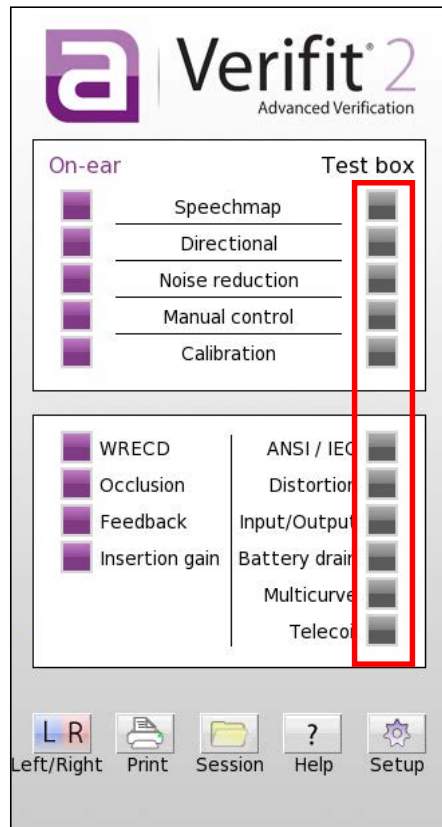
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Verifit Skull Simulator



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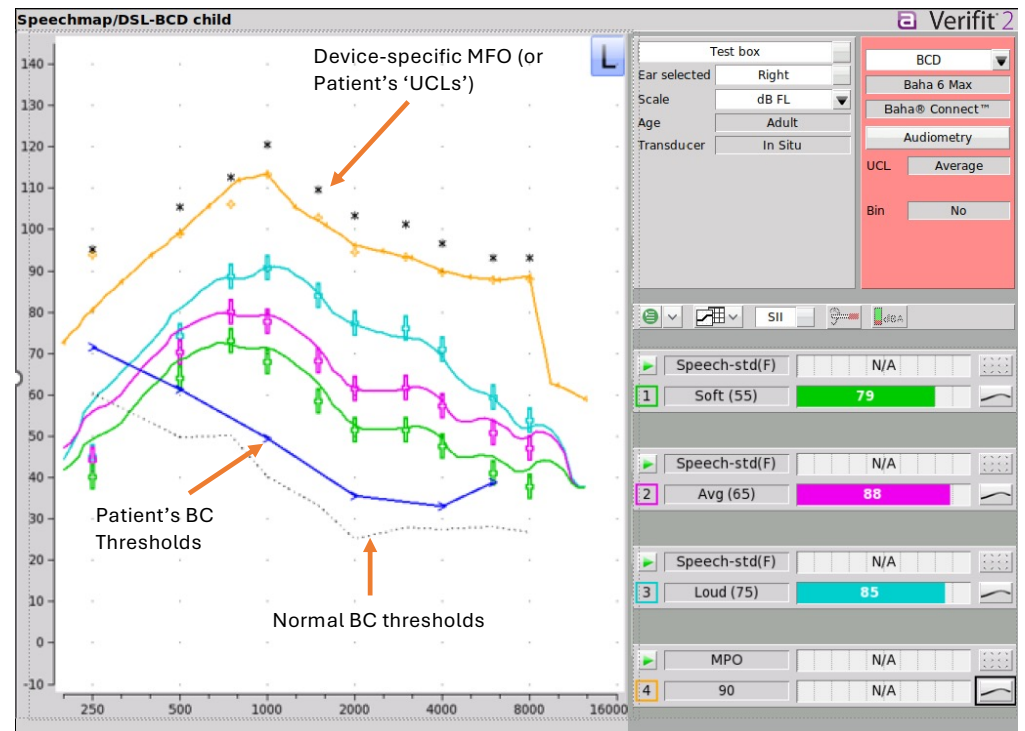
BCD Verification Possibilities



- Speechmap Verification
- Accessory Verification
- Adaptive Feature Verification
- Quality Control

Speechmap Testing for BCDs - FLogram

- Visualizes amplification of speech sounds
- Measures force level (FL) instead of sound pressure level (SPL)
- Confirms match to prescribed targets, output relative to patient's auditory area



DSL-BCD 2.0 Integration: Key Enhancements



Softband
Verification



Standard BC
Oscillator
Thresholds



audioscan

Real Bone Measurement (RBM) Mic

- Industry's first surface microphone for measuring BCD vibration on a patient's head
- Enables verification of devices that cannot attach to skull simulator (e.g. implantable systems)
- Research supports concept as a method for verifying all types of BCDs (Persson et al., 2023; Hodgetts et al. 2018)
- Coming soon!



audioscan



✓ Holistic Innovation

Closing Thoughts

John Pumford, AuD

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The Simplicity Challenge

With technology becoming more complex, "simplicity" can be its own form of innovation.

How is your company working to make your products, software, or services simpler and more intuitive for providers to use and for patients to understand?

✓ Simplicity Challenge

Starkey
Dave Fabry, PhD

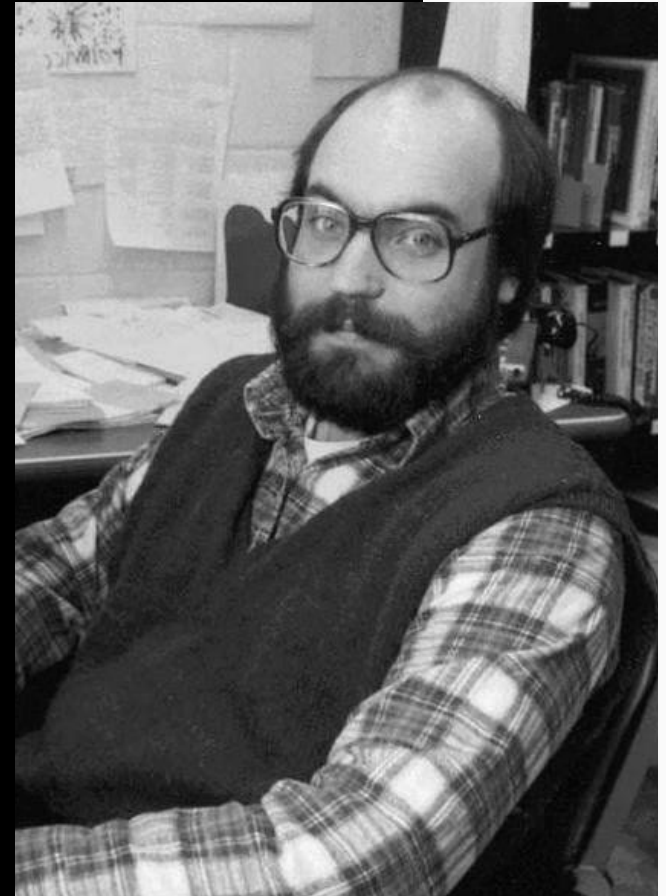


How is your company working to make your products, software, or services simpler and more intuitive for providers to use and for patients to understand?

Dave Fabry, Ph.D., Starkey

*"The most profound technologies
are those that **disappear...**
They weave themselves into the
fabric of everyday life until they
are **indistinguishable from it.**"*

—Mark Weiser

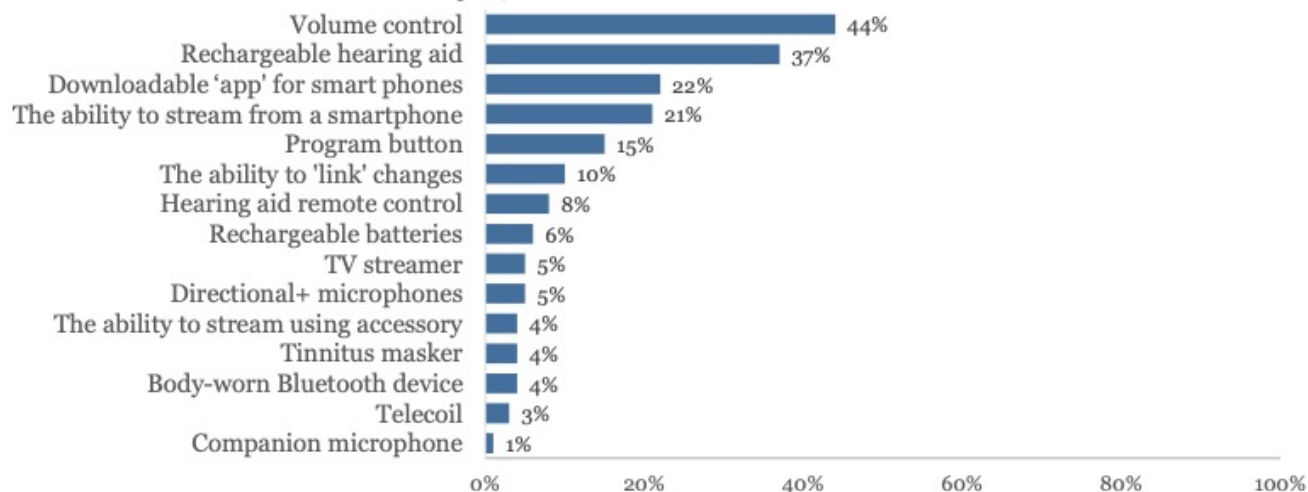


- The top four are the same as last wave.

NOTE: The percentages and ranking are influenced by the proportion of owners who have each item, since the list was customized to their feature set.

Most Impactful Feature, Capability or Accessory

(Items customized to Each Owner's Set
Owners who got HA in **Last 5 Years** (n=887))
- Could select up to 3-



Question:

Which of the following hearing aid features, accessories, or apps have the most positive impact on your listening experience? Select up to 3.

NOTE:

This is based to all who got a hearing aid in the last 5 years and influenced by the incidence of each feature.

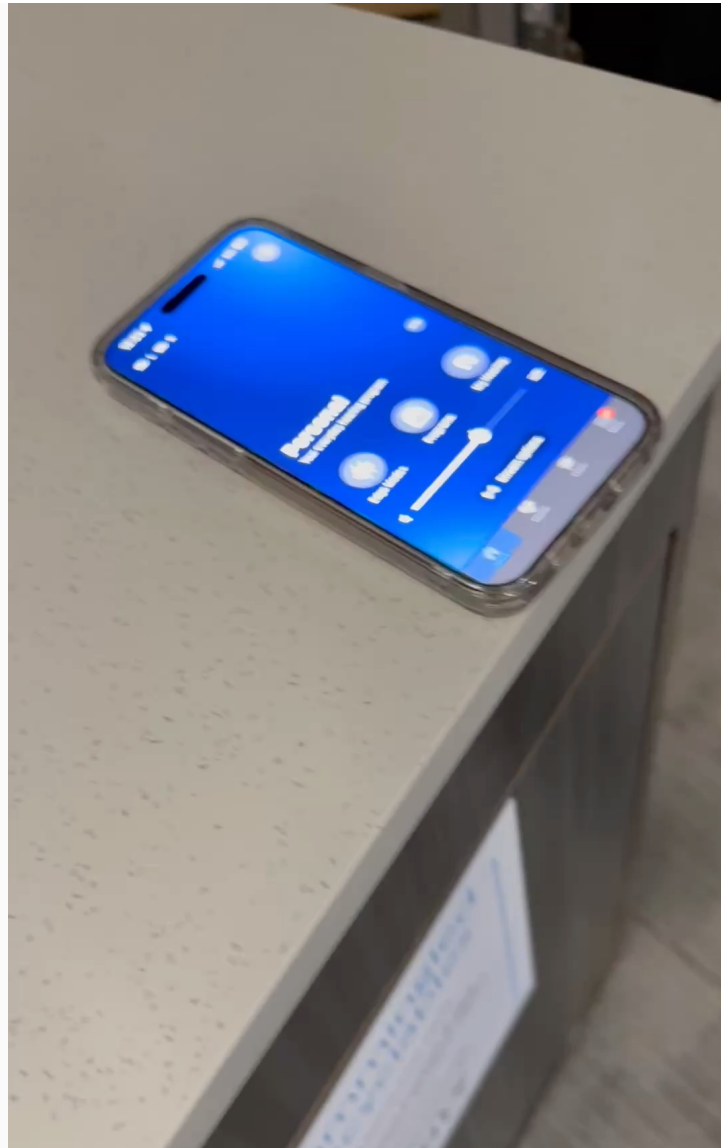
Source: MarkeTrak (2025)



- **Rapid Growth:** The percentage of users with smartphone-compatible hearing aids has grown from nearly 0% in 2015 to roughly 44% of owners who purchased devices in the five years prior to 2022. This number is significantly higher for 2026, driven by Bluetooth LE Audio.









✓ Simplicity Challenge

Closing Thoughts

Dave Fabry, PhD



✓ **Simplicity Challenge**

CaptionCall
Lauren Fetting





How is your company working to make your products, software, or services simpler and more intuitive for providers to use and for patients to understand?

The Simplicity Challenge

CaptionCall Mobile

Turns a mobile phone into a call captioning screen to get captions anywhere.

Connection Solutions

Connect patients through home telephone service, high speed internet, or a smartphone.

Red Carpet Service

Complimentary phone delivery, installation, hands-on training, and continued support

Service & Support

Our operations depend on the efforts of our teams:

- Account Managers
- Trainers and Installers
- Customer Support
- Events Coordination



✓ Simplicity Challenge

Closing Thoughts

Lauren Fettig



✓ Simplicity Challenge

Audioscan
John Pumford, AuD

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How is your company working to make your products, software, or services simpler and more intuitive for providers to use and for patients to understand?

John Pumford, AuD

Director of Audiology, Education and Clinical Research

Audioscan

Simplicity as Clinical Innovation

- Verification is best practice
- Yet adoption remains inconsistent
- Barriers: time, confidence, complexity
- Our focus: remove barriers without compromising accuracy



audioscan

Probe*GUIDE*

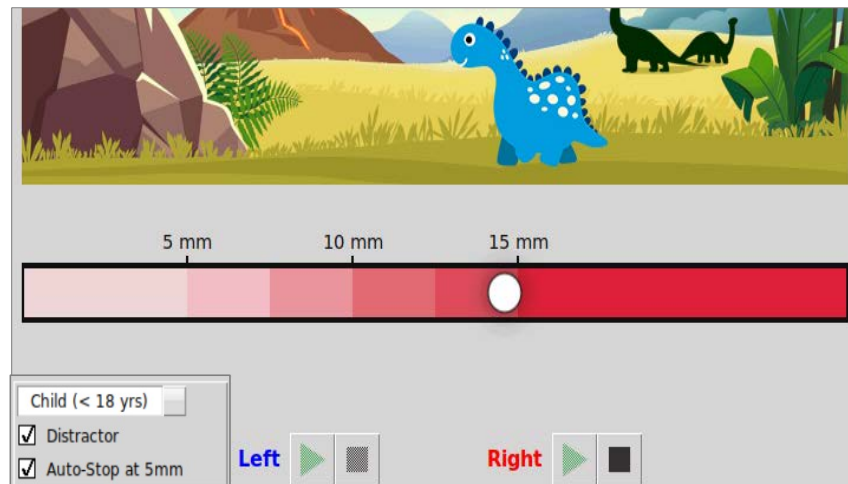
- Real time position of the probe tube in the ear canal
- Guided, efficient workflow
- Precise and confident probe tube placements

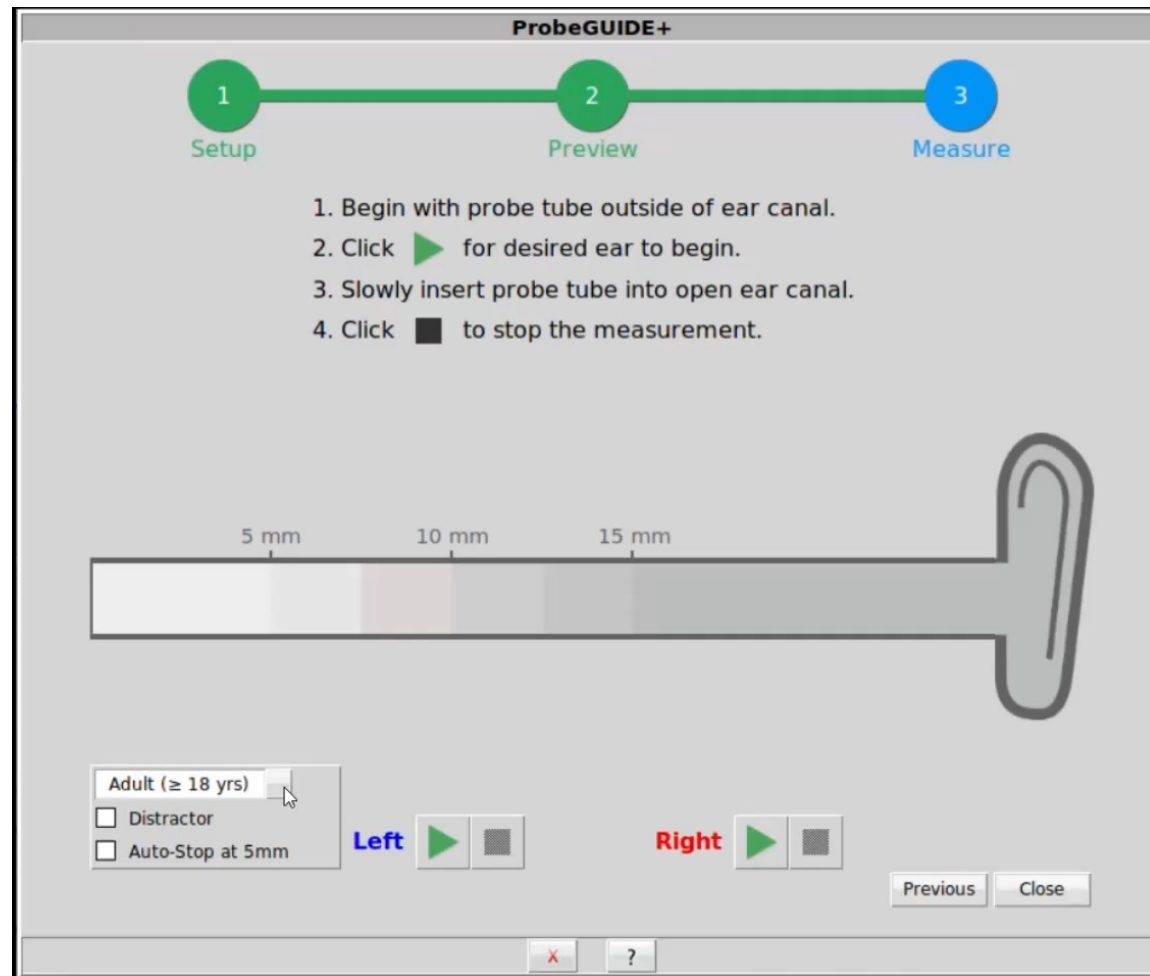


audioscan

Probe*GUIDE*+

- ProbeGUIDE+ expands on ProbeGUIDE, offering software-assisted probe tube placement for pediatric patients, as well as adults





PG+ Evaluation – Western University

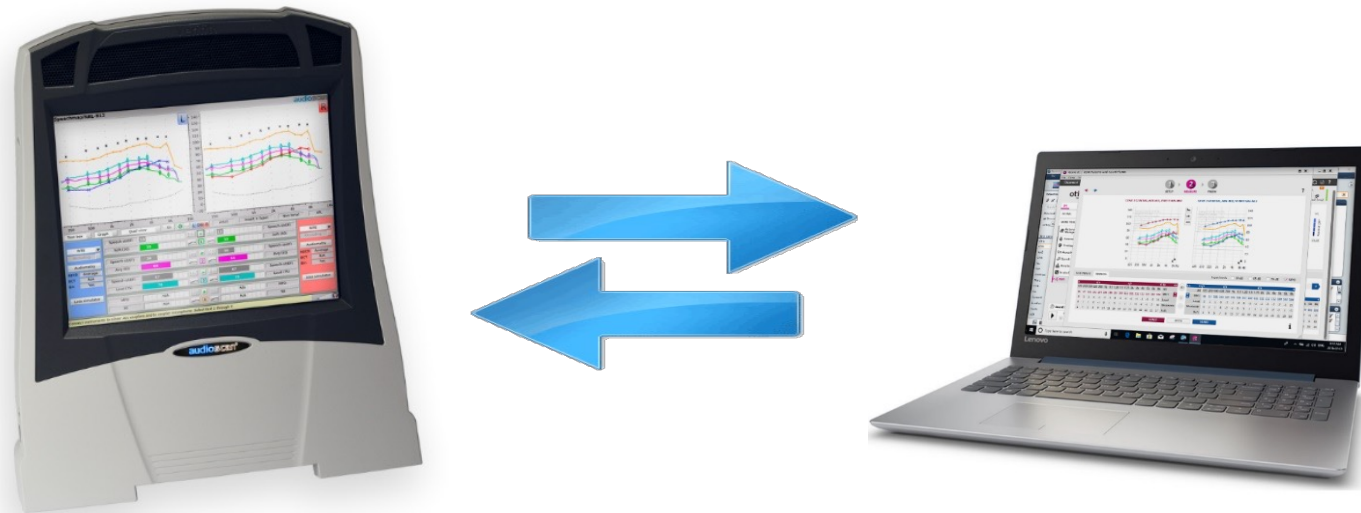
- Supported accuracy, reliability and clinical utility
- Visual method and PG+ matched in 81% of ears (47/58) “confirms strong agreement between methods” for > 1yrs of age
- Test-retest reliability 93.5% demonstrating consistent and reproducible outcomes
- “Highly effective tool”, “Clinician feedback highlighted workflow efficiency”, “Useful cross-check method in older children”

Scollie, S., Beh, K., Venkatesan, B., Folkeard, P., & Bagatto, M. (2025, August 29). Validation of Probe Tube Insertion Tool for Pediatrics – Stage 2 [Unpublished report]. National Centre for Audiology, Western University.



audioscan

Automated Verification - Verifit^{LINK}



- Allows fitting software to directly run tests on the Verifit, obtain targets and results, and *adjust hearing aids without* clinician intervention



audioscan

Verifit*LINK* Benefits

- Supports best practice
- Simplifies verification workflow
- Saves time, fitting efficiency
- Verification accuracy
- REM-associated improvements
 - Audibility, Listening Outcomes, Satisfaction, Fewer Follow-ups, etc.



*See Pumford & Mueller (2022); Denys et al. (2019), Folkeard et al. (2018); Mueller & Ricketts (2018), etc.



audioscan

✓ Simplicity Challenge

Closing Thoughts

John Pumford, AuD

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✓ Simplicity Challenge

CareCredit
Jessica Lawley, BA



AO SUMMIT INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLE



JESSICA LAWLEY, VP CLIENT MARKETING, SYNCHRONY HEALTH AND WELLNESS





QUESTION:

WITH TECHNOLOGY BECOMING MORE COMPLEX, "SIMPLICITY" CAN BE ITS OWN FORM OF INNOVATION. HOW IS YOUR COMPANY WORKING TO MAKE YOUR PRODUCTS, SOFTWARE OR SERVICES SIMPLER AND MORE INTUITIVE FOR PROVIDERS TO USE AND PATIENTS TO UNDERSTAND?

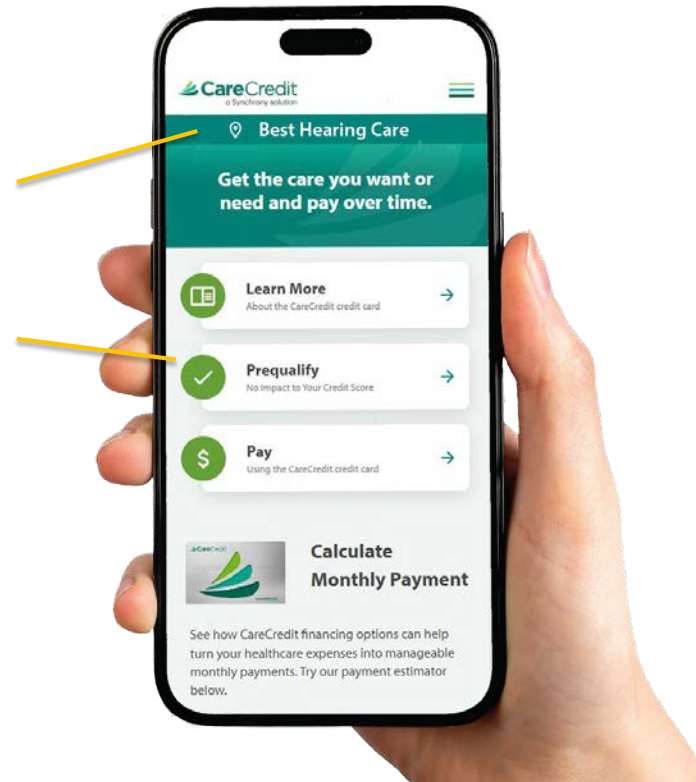
CUSTOM LINK



One link takes patients or clients directly to financing.

Customized with your location's name

Easy navigation for your patients



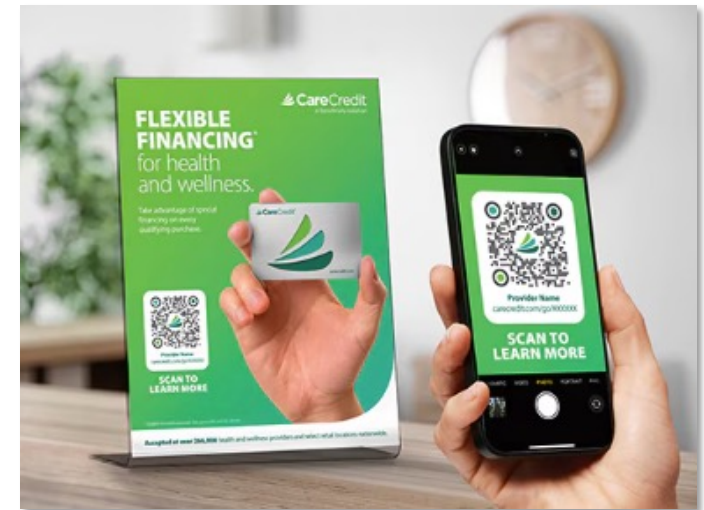
HOW IT WORKS



This simple online solution allows patients to:

- **Learn** how CareCredit can help fit care into their monthly budgets.
- **See if they prequalify** with no impact to their credit score.
- **Apply** for the CareCredit credit card from their own device, get a decision within seconds and, if approved, use their account the same day.*
- **Calculate** monthly payments.
- **Pay** with CareCredit online for services your location provided using their CareCredit credit card.

*The pay option will only appear on your custom link if you have selected to [accept online payments](#).



BENEFITS OF CUSTOM LINK



Access from anywhere. Puts flexible financing at their fingertips wherever they are.



Paperless payment. Delivers a secure, contactless financing experience, with no need to pass paper forms or a card back and forth.



Quick budgeting. Includes a Payment Calculator so they can easily estimate their monthly payments.



Immediate credit decision. If approved, the patient can use their card immediately to pay for care.

✓ Simplicity Challenge

Closing Thoughts

Jessica Lawley, BA



✓ Simplicity Challenge

Oto
Dr. Edmund Farrar

The logo for 'Oto' is displayed in a teal, rounded, sans-serif font. The letters are lowercase, with the 't' having a slightly irregular, hand-drawn feel. The logo is centered within a light gray rectangular background.

How is your company working to make your products, software, or services simpler and more intuitive for providers to use and for patients to understand?

Problem

Getting patient buy in to tinnitus treatment is hard.

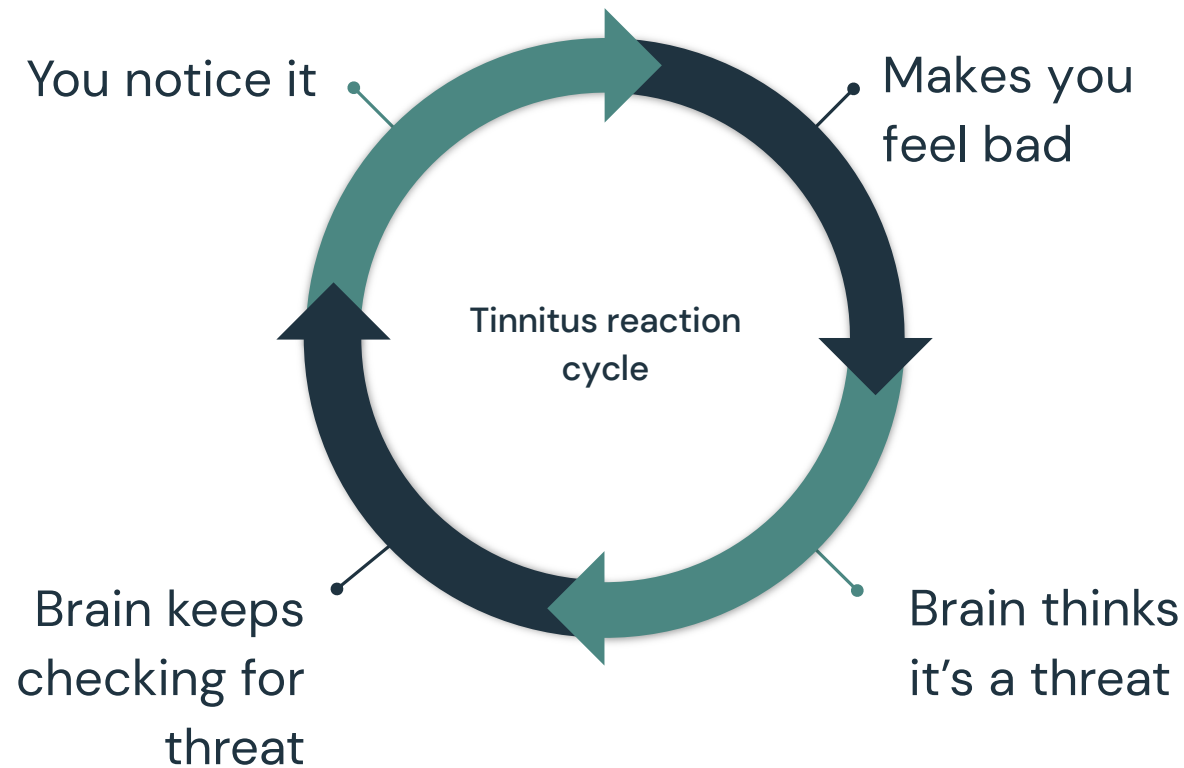
Getting buy in to habituation

- For CBT to be effective, patients need to WANT to habituate
- They need to see it as an amazing outcome
- Buy in results in motivation and a better clinical outcome
- This method is a result of 4 years of experimentation and 1000+ one on one calls with tinnitus patients

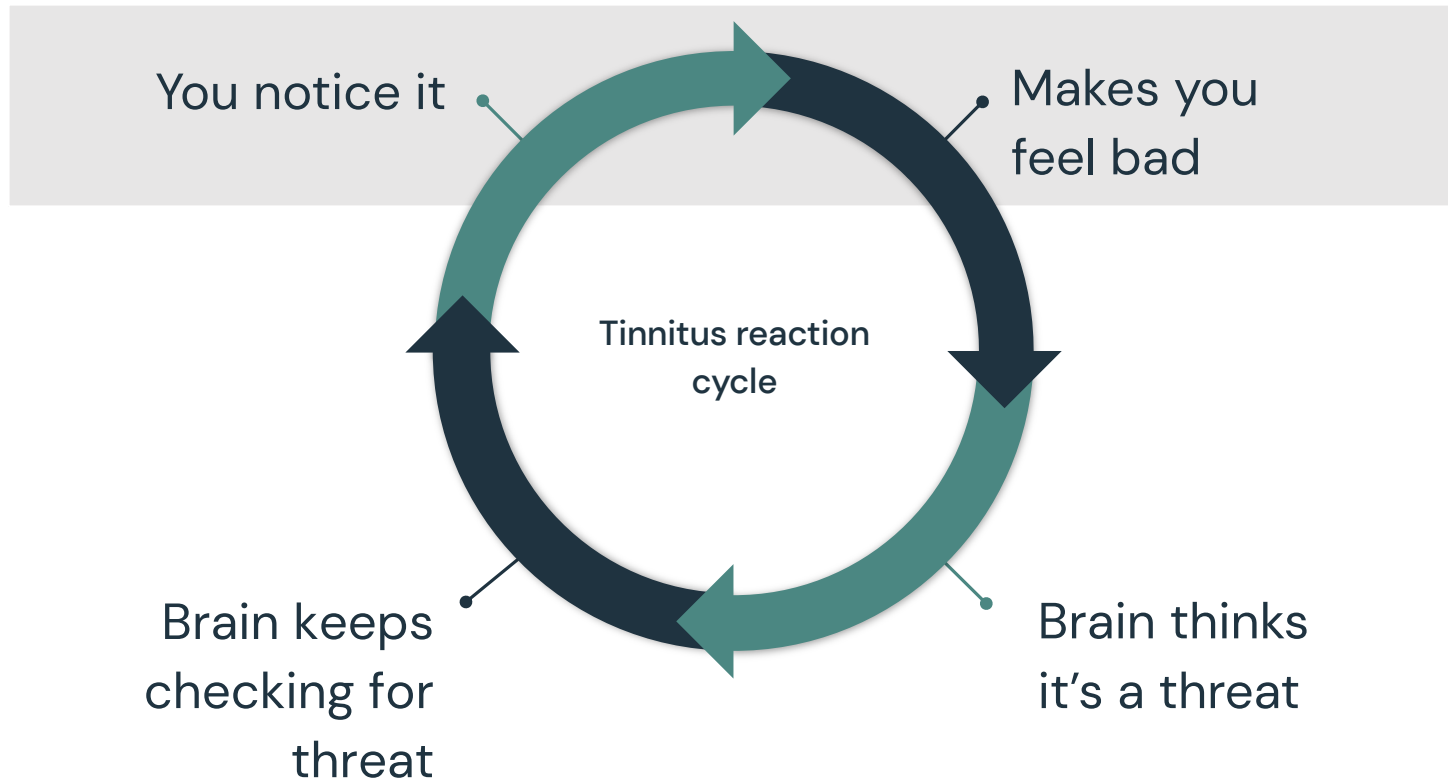
Steps

1. **Identify and label the patient's emotional response to their tinnitus**
2. **Explain why they hear their tinnitus, and how you're going to change this**
3. **Sell the outcome in a clear and relatable way**

Why do we notice tinnitus?



We interrupt the cycle...



Three things then happen...

1. Your tinnitus sounds quieter
2. You stop noticing it
3. It stops bothering you

✓ Simplicity Challenge

Closing Thoughts

Edmund Farrar

The logo for 'oto' is displayed in a dark teal color. It features a lowercase 'o', followed by a lowercase 't' with a short horizontal bar, and another lowercase 'o'. The font is a clean, sans-serif style.

Hidden Gems

What is a feature of your product that is underutilized or misunderstood?

✓ Hidden Gems

ReSound
Tammara Stender, AuD

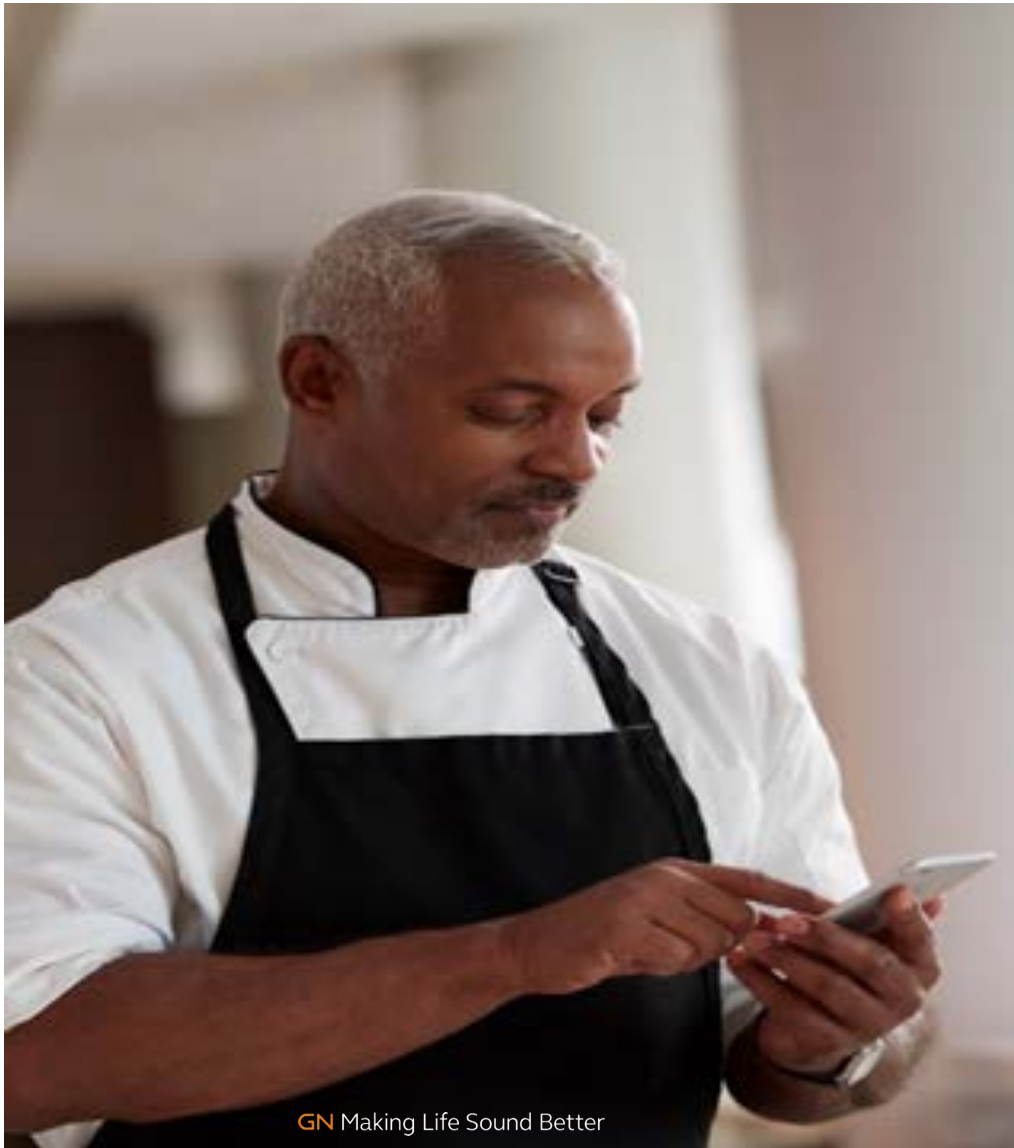
ReSound GN
.....

What is a feature of your product that is underutilized or misunderstood?



ReSound Environmental Optimizer

What Is It, and How To Use It?



GN Making Life Sound Better

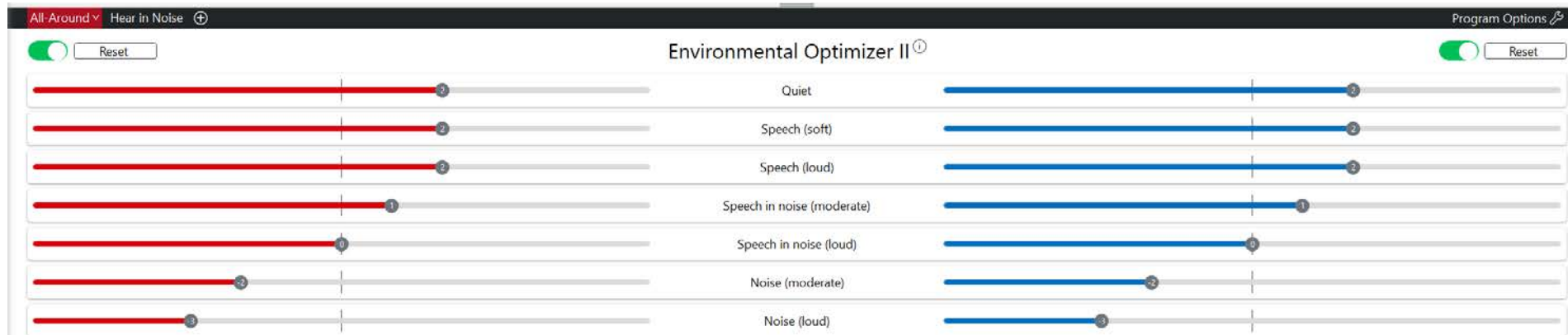
- Hearing aid user who finds himself often in a very noisy listening environment
- Very happy with the sound quality of his hearing aids in most circumstances
- In very noisy listening environments, he says it's too loud

ReSound Environmental Classifier

THE SEVEN ENVIRONMENTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL CLASSIFIER						
						
						
Quiet	Soft Speech	Loud Speech	Speech in moderate noise	Speech in loud noise	Moderate noise	Loud noise
< 54 dB	< 60 dB	> 60 dB	< 75 dB	> 75 dB	< 75 dB	> 75 dB

ReSound Environmental Optimizer

- User volume preferences differ between sound environments
- ReSound Environmental Optimizer acts like an automatic volume control
- Default settings for All-Around program:



ReSound Environmental Optimizer

- It is preferable in many circumstances to change volume per environment
- Without Environmental Optimizer, overall gain changes or specific input gain changes can negatively affect hearing aid use in other environments

All-Around ▾
Hear in Noise ⊕
Program Options ↗

All	250	500	750	1K	1.5K	2K	3K	4K	6K	8K
50	6	9	12	15	17	17	18	14	14	12
65	3	5	7	8	10	10	12	8	8	6
80	1	2	2	3	3	3	5	1	2	1
CR	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6
MPO	98	103	104	107	110	112	113	114	111	112

Handles: 6

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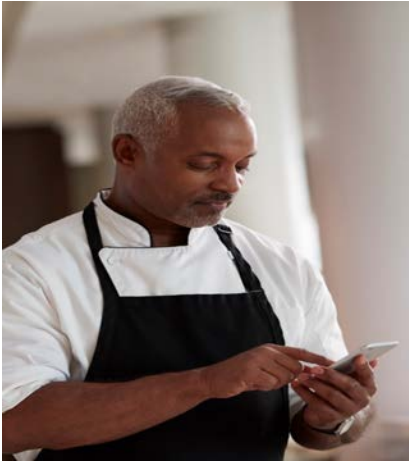
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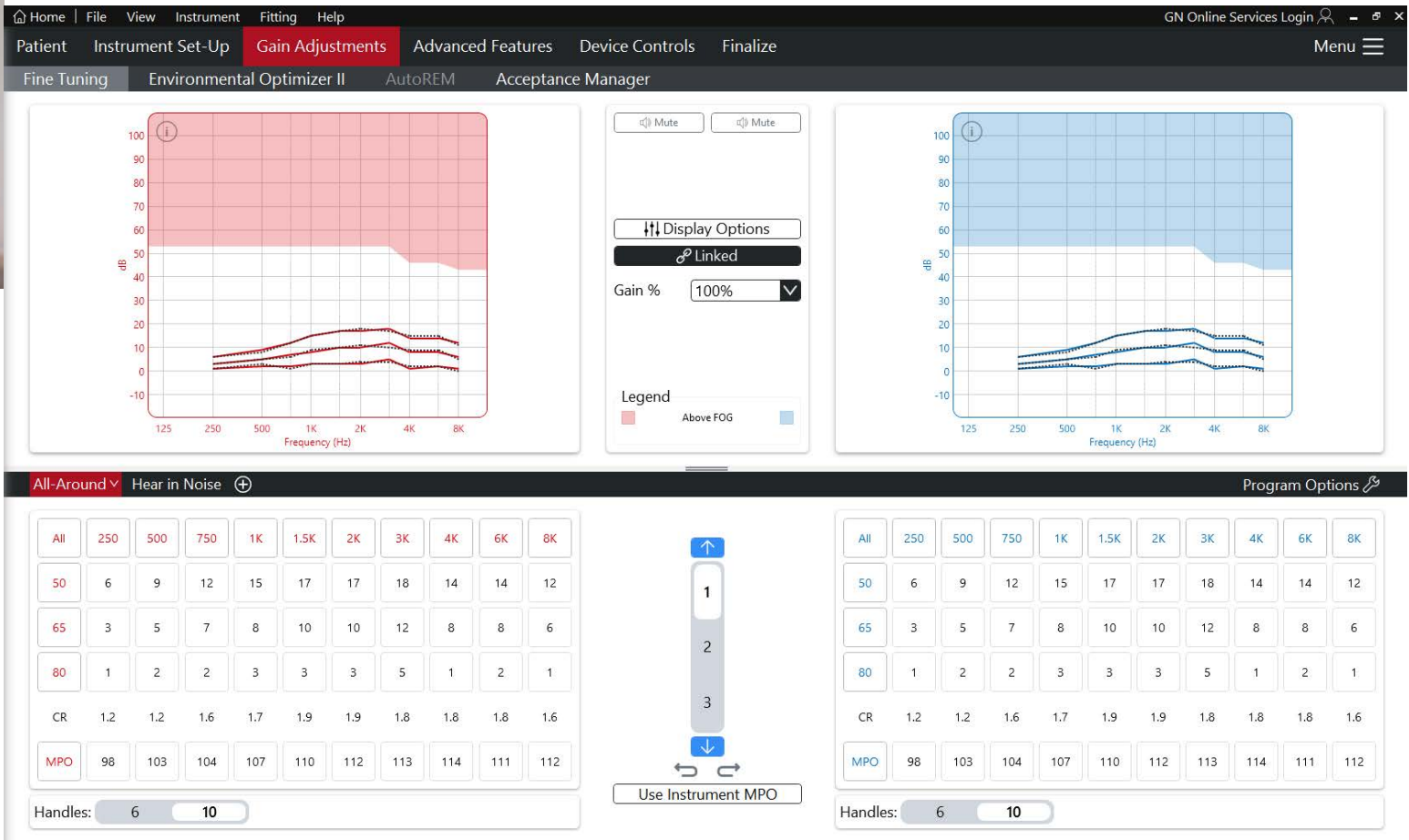
Use Instrument MPO

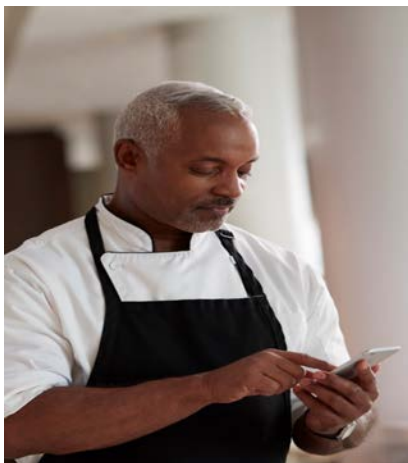
All	250	500	750	1K	1.5K	2K	3K	4K	6K	8K
50	6	9	12	15	17	17	18	14	14	12
65	3	5	7	8	10	10	12	8	8	6
80	1	2	2	3	3	3	5	1	2	1
CR	1.2	1.2	1.6	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.6
MPO	98	103	104	107	110	112	113	114	111	112

Handles: 6

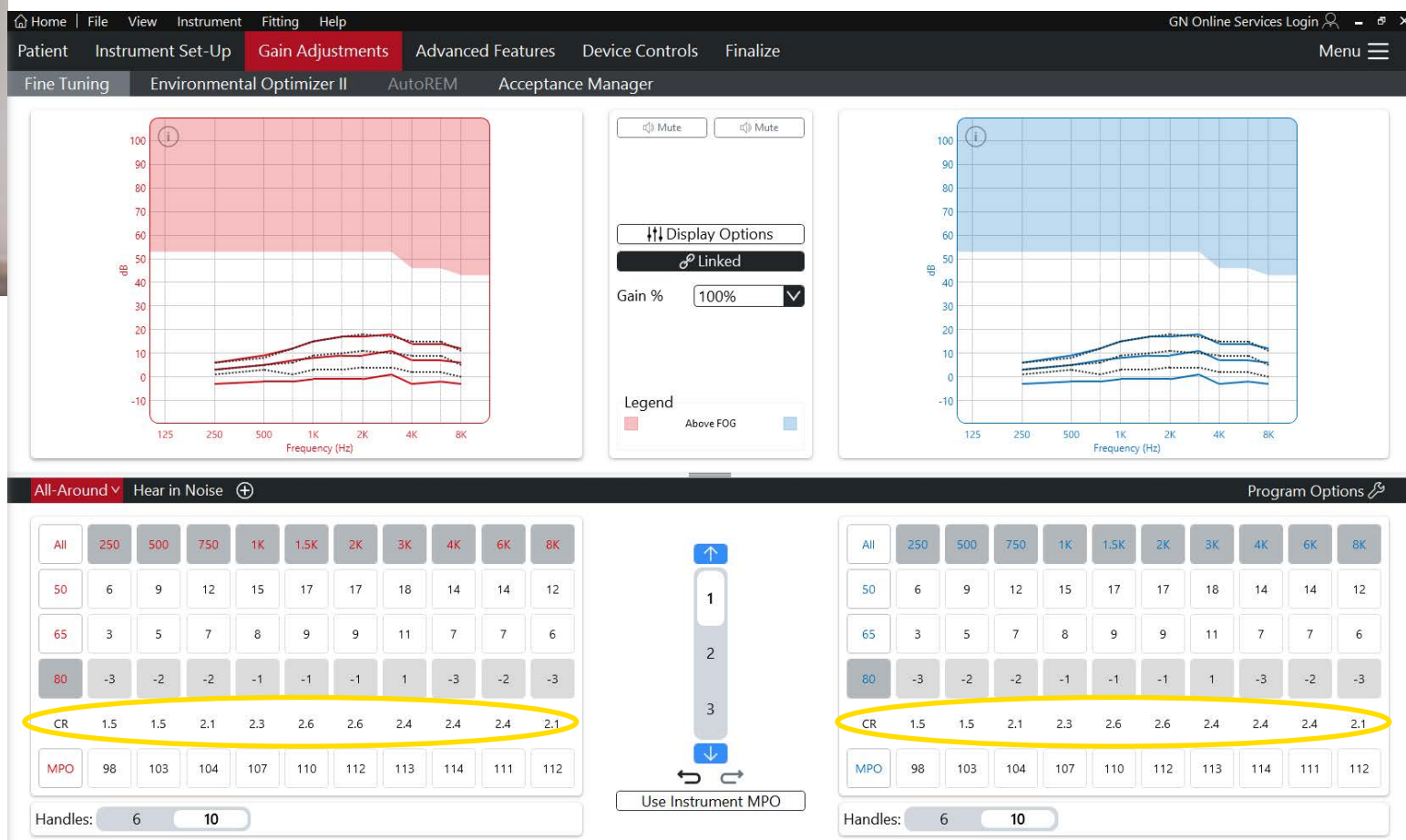


User's Gain Settings

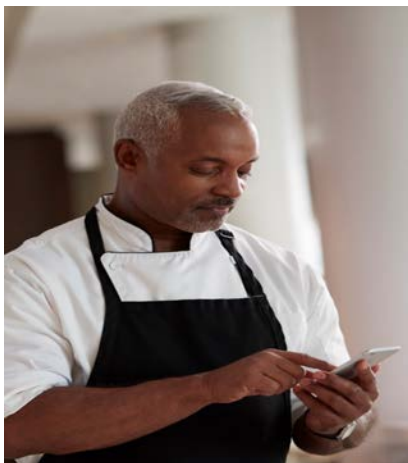




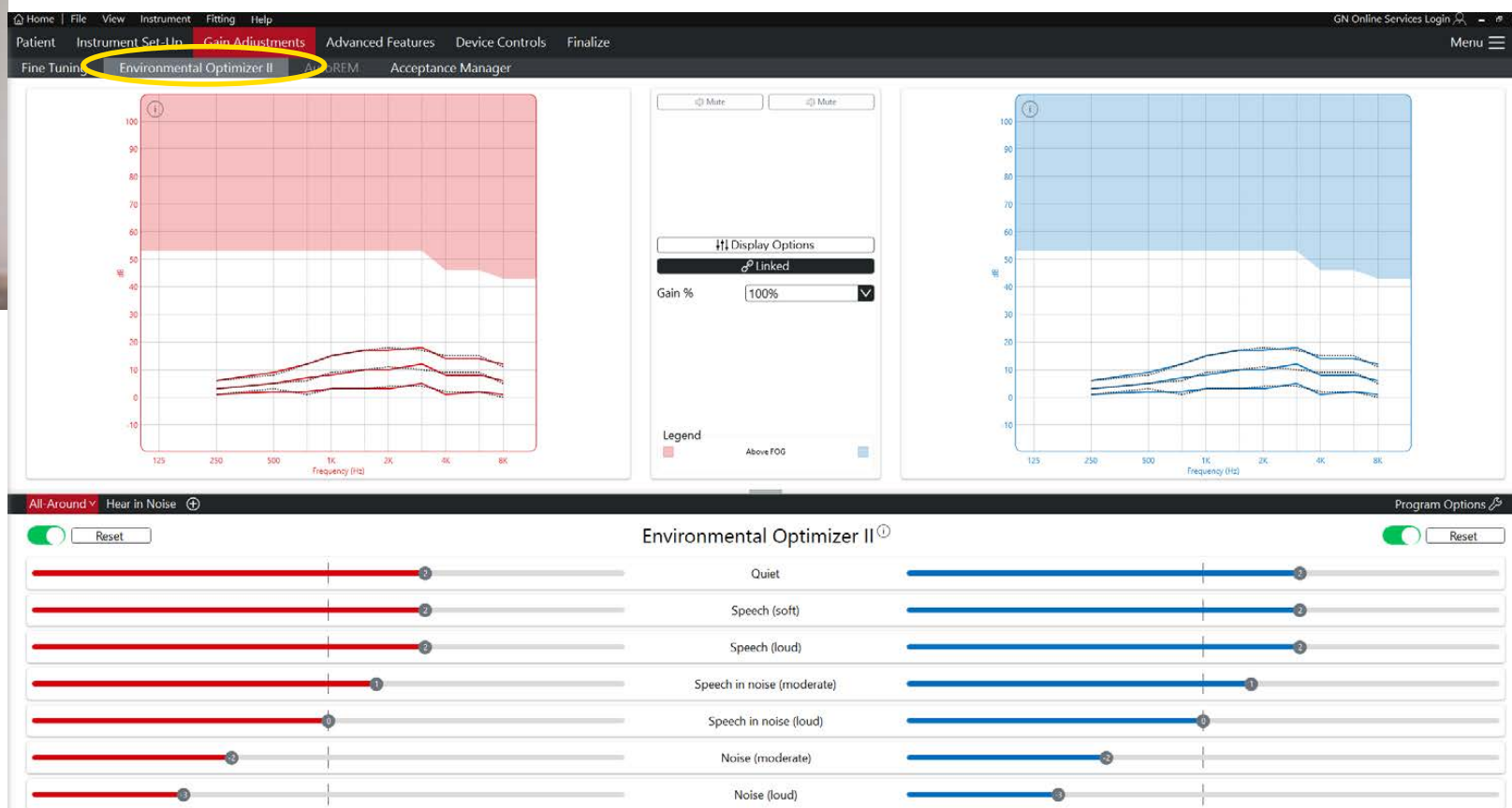
Reducing G80 for User's Gain Settings...Impacts CRs

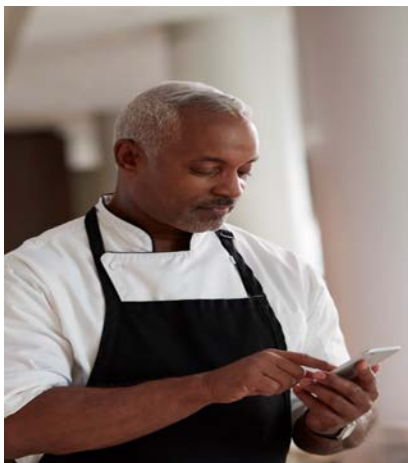


Compression Ratios increased by reducing G80 gains!

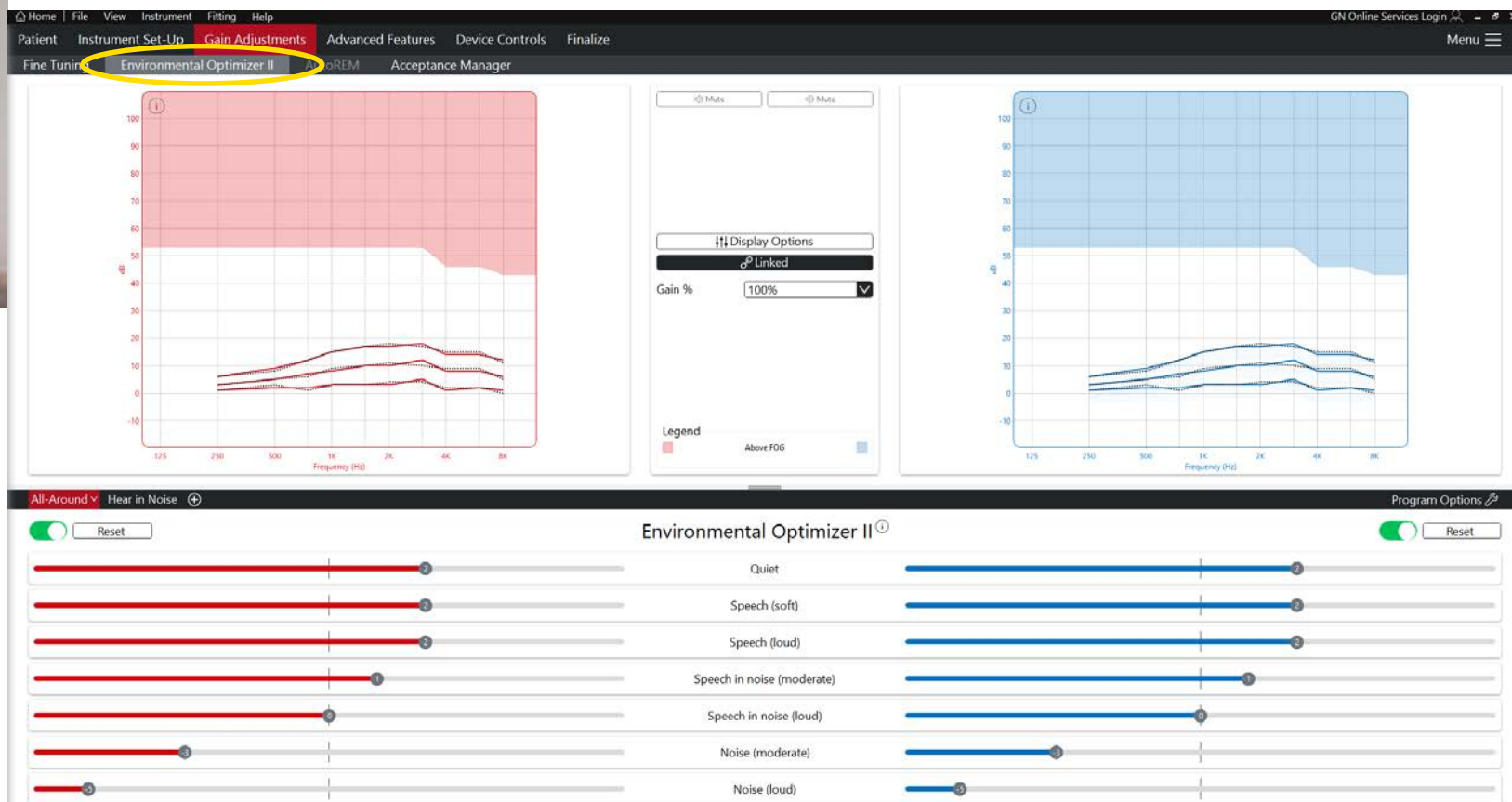


Instead of Changing Gains, Open Environmental Optimizer





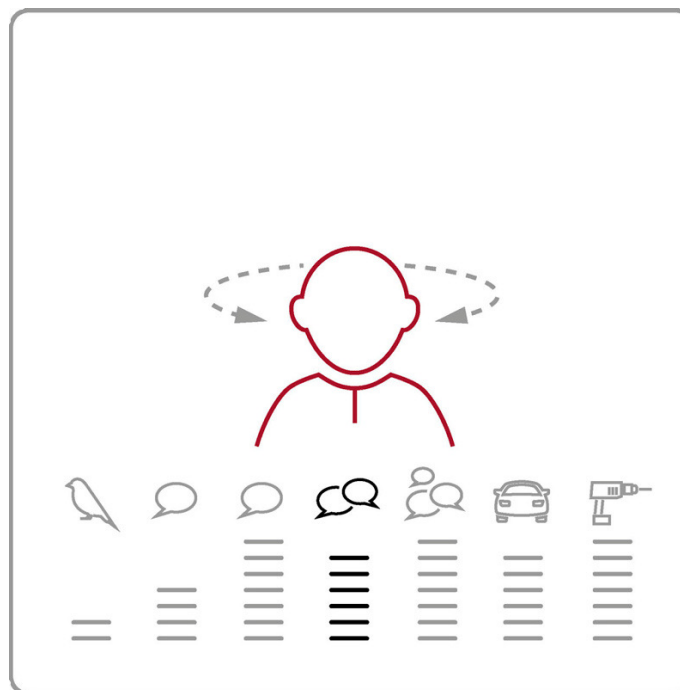
Optimize Gains Only for Specific Environments



Compression Ratios are unaffected by Environmental Optimizer changes

Environmental Optimizer II and Binaural Environmental Optimizer II

- **Environmental Optimizer II** includes volume change per environment as well as noise reduction changes per environment
- **Binaural Environmental Optimizer II** includes both volume and noise reduction changes per environment, which synchronize between the two ears.





Closing Thoughts

Tammara Stender, AuD

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ReSound GN

✓ Hidden Gems

Signia
Brian Taylor, AuD



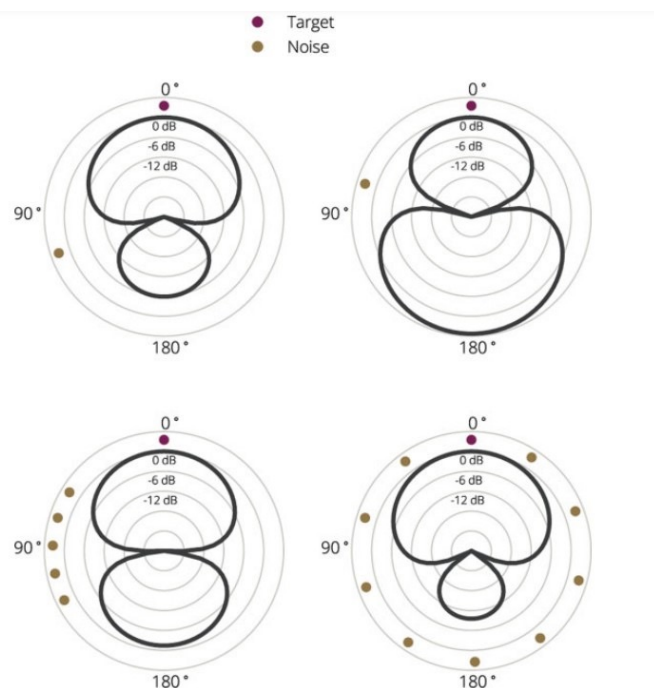
What is a feature of your product that is underutilized or misunderstood?

Real-Time Conversation Enhancement

A novel implementation of adaptive bilateral beamforming

- We have modest evidence that adaptive bilateral beamforming - when compared to unilateral beamformers - provides a small SNR improvement that results in better speech intelligibility in noise.
- Source: Kumar, S., Guruvayurappan, A., Pitchaimuthu, A. N., & Nayak, S. (2023). Efficacy and Effectiveness of Wireless Binaural Beamforming Technology of Hearing Aids in Improving Speech Perception in Noise: A Systematic Review. *Ear and Hearing*, 44(6), 1289–1300.

Modern hearing aids integrate two common approaches



- Using either 2-mic (unilateral) or 4-mics (bilateral) arrays
- They collect statistics about listening environment to create beamforming parameters
- Basic goals of adaptive beamforming systems:
 - Attenuate the total received sound as much as possible, while....
 - Ensuring sounds from the target direction are not attenuated
 - Note where target (T) is located

Real Time Conversation Enhancement

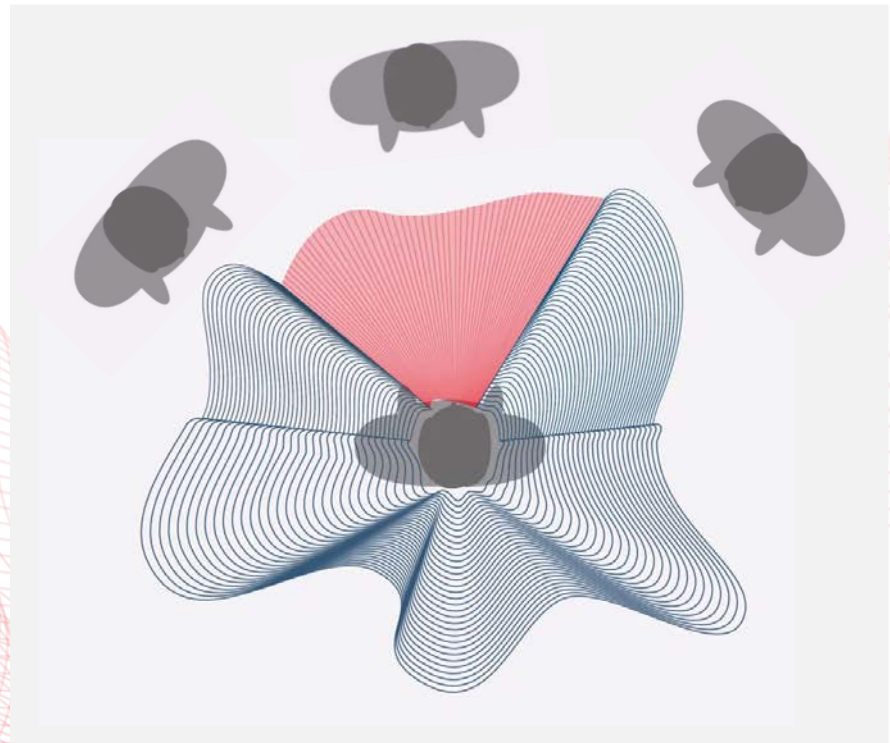
Multiple individual
beams + streams



Support conversations
Strong noise suppression
Preserving background
definition

- Engineered to improve speech intelligibility and listening comfort in conversational situations
- 4-mic array with 3 front facing beams
- Analyzes incoming sounds, determines talker locations (even as they move)
- Enhances conversations (voices of talkers) by deploying appropriate combinations of front-facing bilateral and unilateral beams

- RealTime Conversation Enhancement adds **three additional advanced focus streams**
- Each additional focus stream operates **independently** within a specific region in the front hemisphere.



What's misunderstood?

- RTCE is always active, no manual program is needed
- RTCE actively tracks multiple talkers in real time, dynamically adjusts the sound focus so the wearer can follow conversations in noisy group settings without switching programs
- However.....
- To maximize RTCE's effectiveness, it is important to
 - 1.) closely match gain targets, ensure a smooth broadband response with sufficient headroom
 - 2.) fit the wearer with a more closed coupling system (small parallel venting is best)
 - 3.) activate OVP 2.0

✓ Hidden Gems

Closing Thoughts

Brian Taylor, AuD



✓ Hidden Gems

CaptionCall
Lauren Fetting





What is a feature of your product that is underutilized or misunderstood?

Hidden Gems



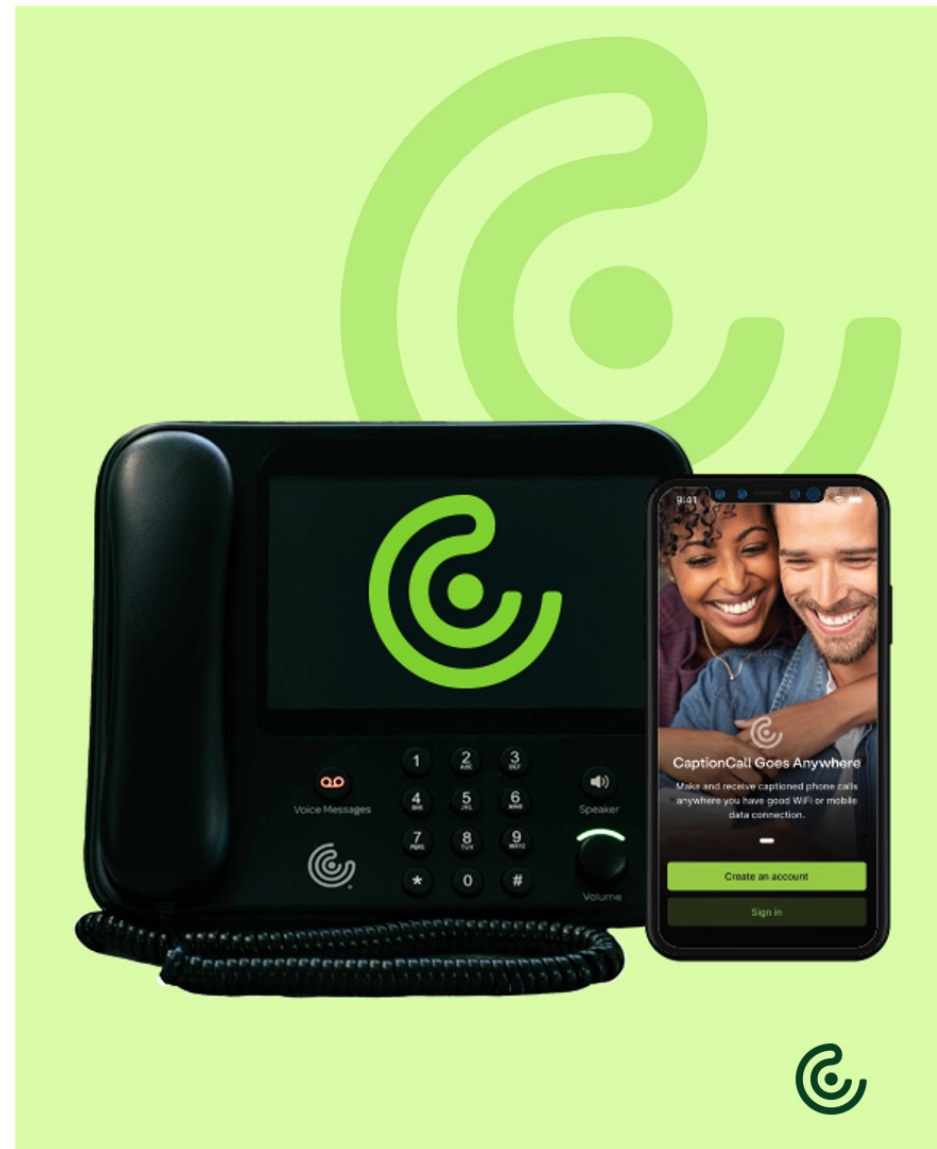
Customized settings



Requirements for service



Saving important call transcripts





Closing Thoughts

Lauren Fettig



Future Horizons

What future developments do you see that might increase the range and scope of meeting unique or challenging needs in the hearing industry?

✓ Future Horizons

CareCredit
Jessica Lawley, BA





QUESTION:

WHAT FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS DO YOU SEE THAT MIGHT INCREASE THE RANGE AND SCOPE OF MEETING UNIQUE OR CHALLENGING NEEDS IN THE HEARING INDUSTRY?

SYNCHRONY PAY MONTHLY LOANS



Synchrony Pay Monthly, together with the CareCredit credit card, brings more financing choices to your patients, empowering them to move forward with recommended care and hearing technology.

- **One-time use loan** that closes automatically when paid in full
- **Fixed APR** and monthly payments
- **No hidden fees** or prepayment penalty



PAY MONTHLY BENEFITS



PATIENT BENEFITS:

- Empowers patients to fit hearing care into their budget through predictable, fixed monthly payments and a specific loan payoff date.
- Patients can see if they prequalify via a single application, providing an instant decision with no impact to their credit score.

PROVIDER BENEFITS:

- Receive payment in 2 business days to help minimize accounts receivable and administrative burden.
- Offer a seamless payment experience for your patients while making financial conversations easier for your staff.



Future Horizons

Closing Thoughts

Jessica Lawley, BA



✓ Future Horizons

Signia
Brian Taylor, AuD

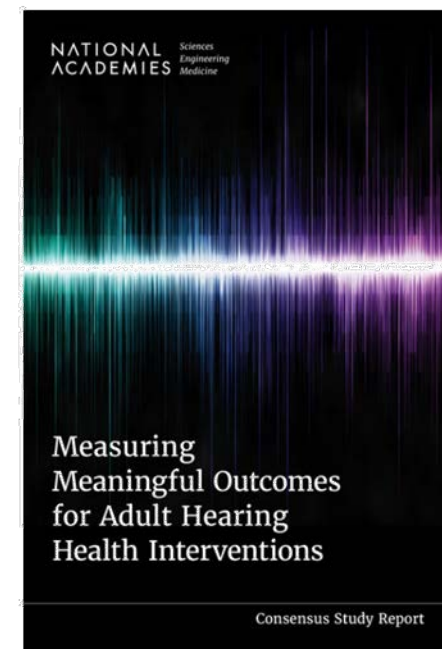


What future developments do you see that might increase the range and scope of meeting unique or challenging needs in the hearing industry?

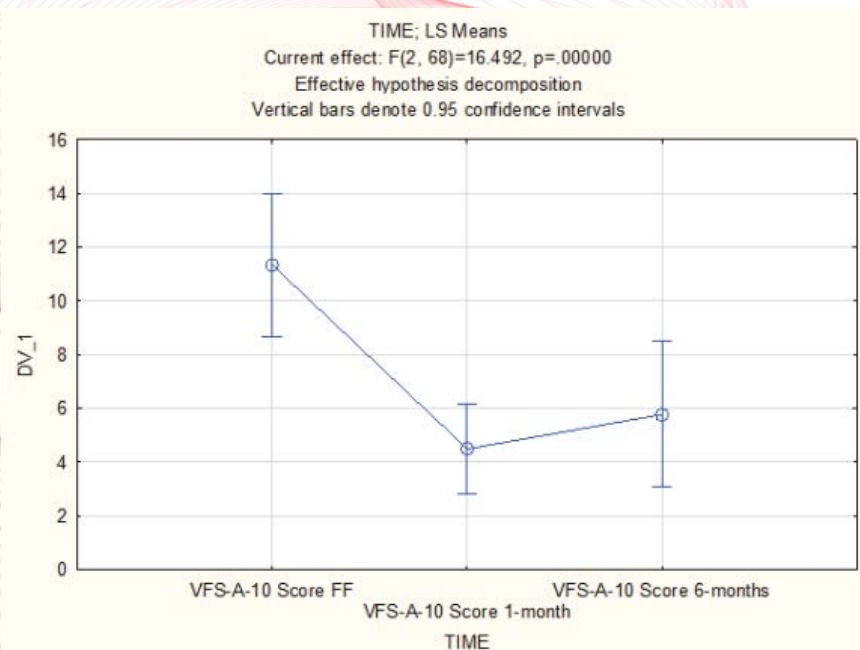
Broader definition of “success” for the individual

Treating hearing as a human experience, not just a problem you can solve with AI-driven solutions

- Social participation
- Confidence and empowerment
- Environmental awareness (sounds of nature)
- Reduced avoidance behaviors
- Fatigue and quality of life



Measuring Fatigue



Vanderbilt Fatigue Scale- Adult version-10 items (VFS-A-10)

Sometimes communicating with others, or just listening, can be physically, mentally, or emotionally tiring. For each item below, select the SINGLE response that best describes how often you experience the following in a typical WEEK.

		Never/ Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always/ Always
1.	I feel worn out from everyday listening.	0	1	2	3	4
2.	Struggling to listen and understand makes me feel tired.	0	1	2	3	4
3.	I get so exhausted from listening that I cannot do the things I enjoy.	0	1	2	3	4
4.	I schedule my day to avoid getting tired from listening.	0	1	2	3	4
5.	I get so tired from listening that I start to miss details in a conversation.	0	1	2	3	4
6.	I get so exhausted from listening that I go to bed early.	0	1	2	3	4
7.	I withdraw when I am unable to follow conversations in noisy places.	0	1	2	3	4
8.	Feeling tired from listening causes strain on my relationships.	0	1	2	3	4
9.	I feel emotionally drained when it is hard for me to listen and understand.	0	1	2	3	4
10.	It takes a lot of energy to listen and understand.	0	1	2	3	4

✓ Future Horizons

Closing Thoughts

Brian Taylor, AuD



✓ Future Horizons

Starkey
Dave Fabry, PhD



What future developments do you see that might increase the range and scope of meeting unique or challenging needs in the hearing industry?

Dave Fabry, Ph.D., Starkey

Transforming Hearing Aids with **Artificial Intelligence**



**Intelligent
Hearing**

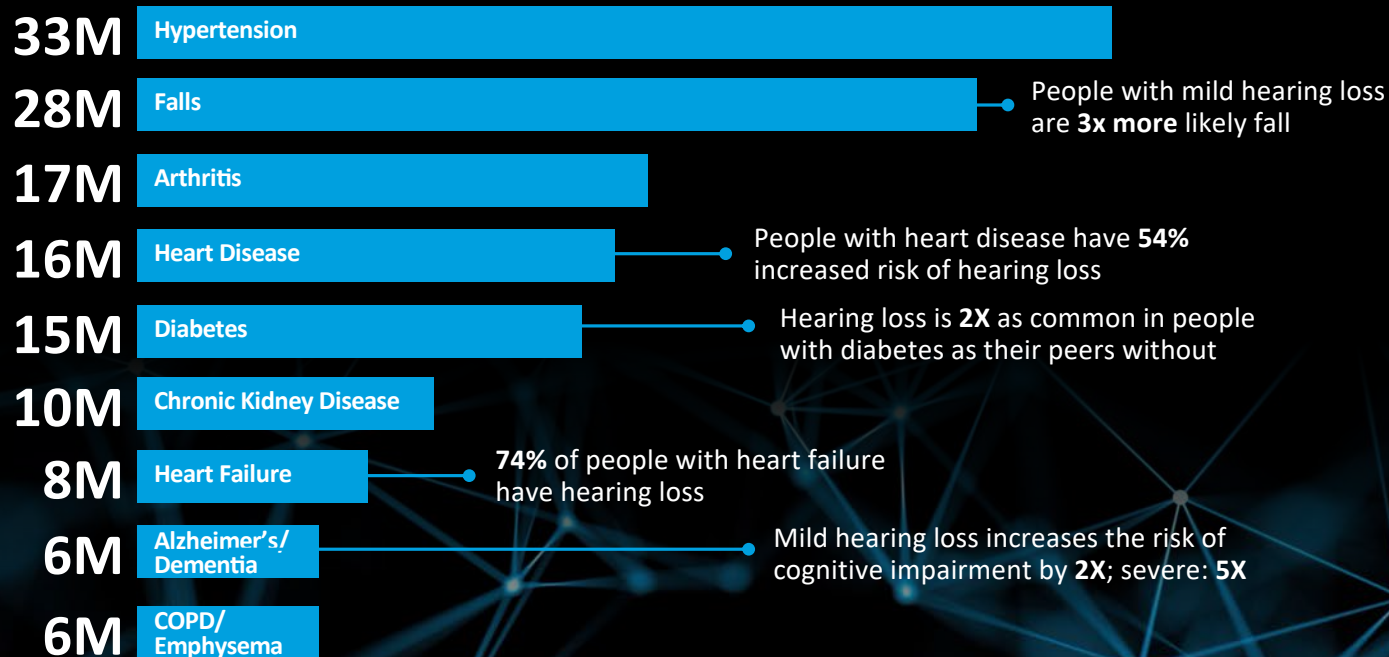


**Health
Monitoring**



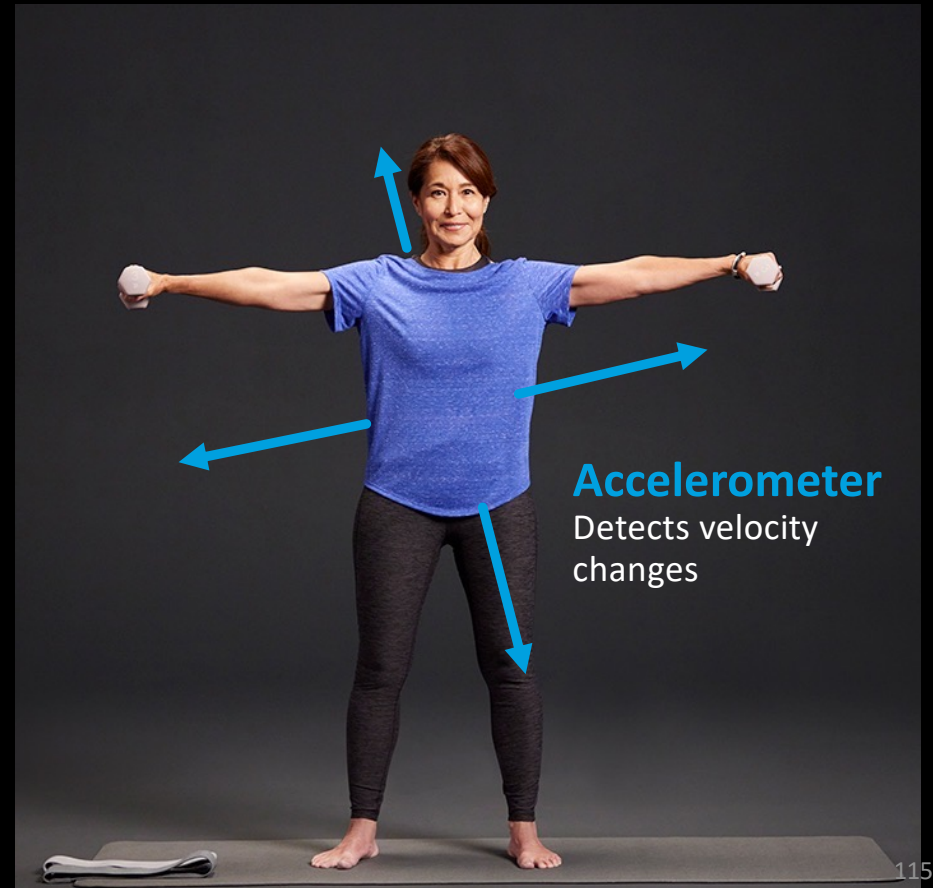
**Personal
Assistant**

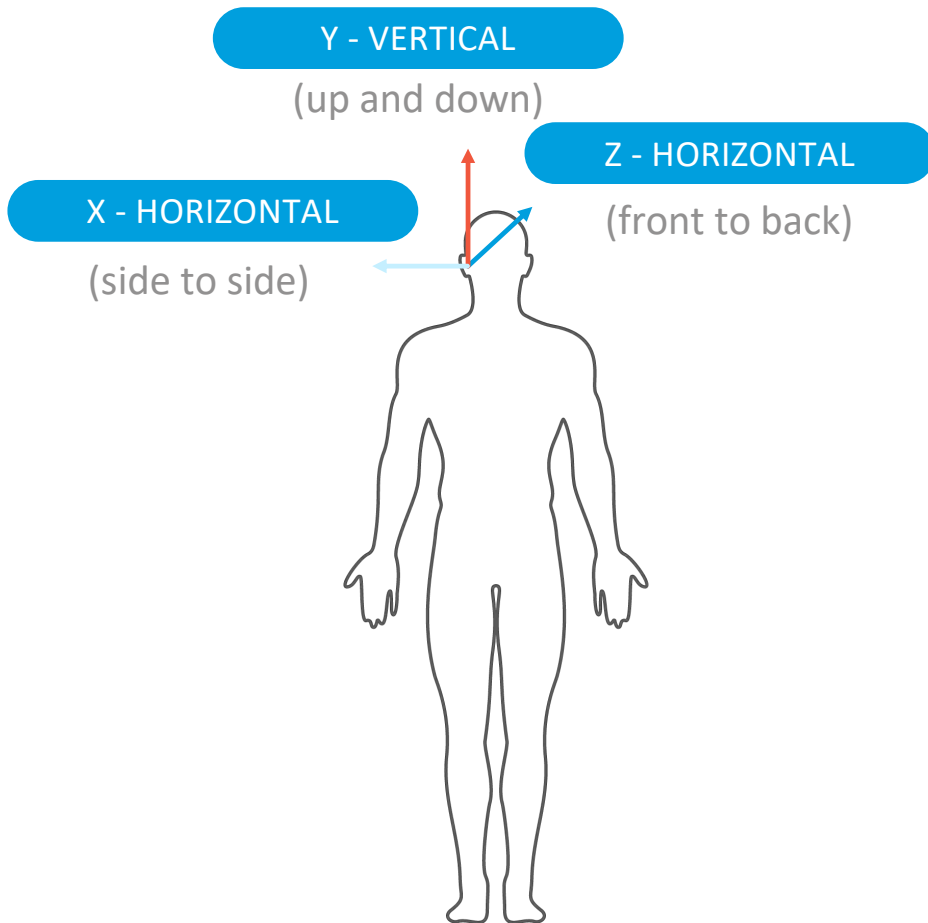
Hearing loss is *correlated* with most common chronic conditions



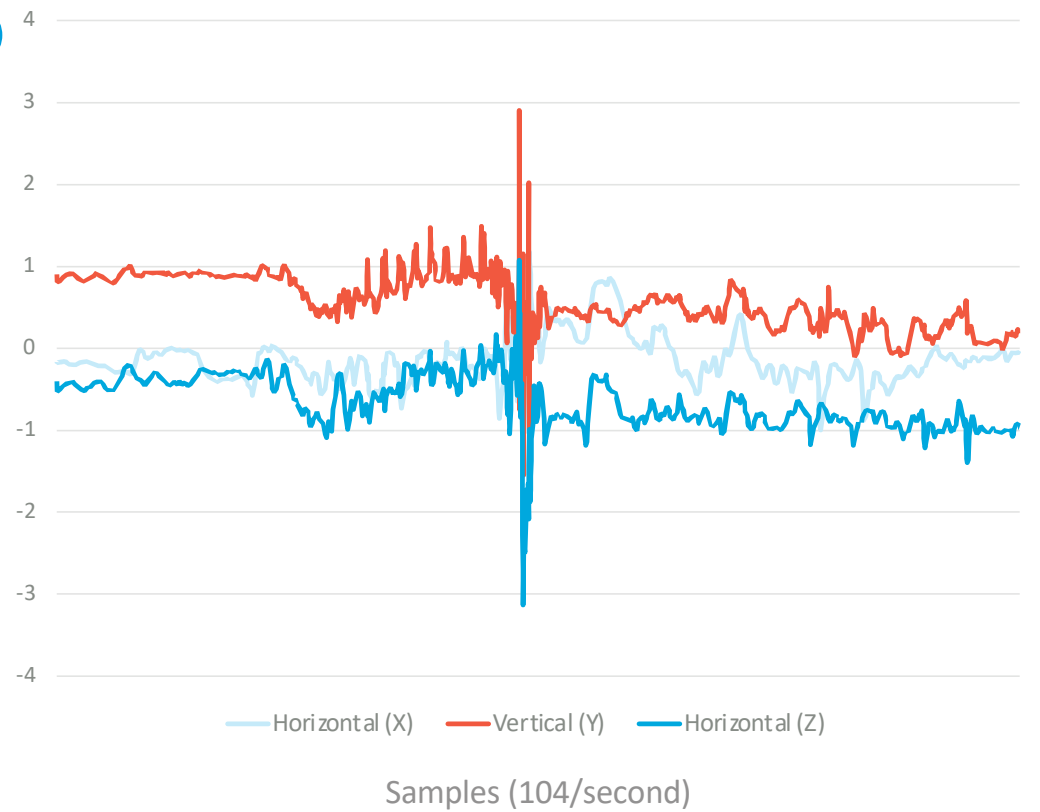
IMU

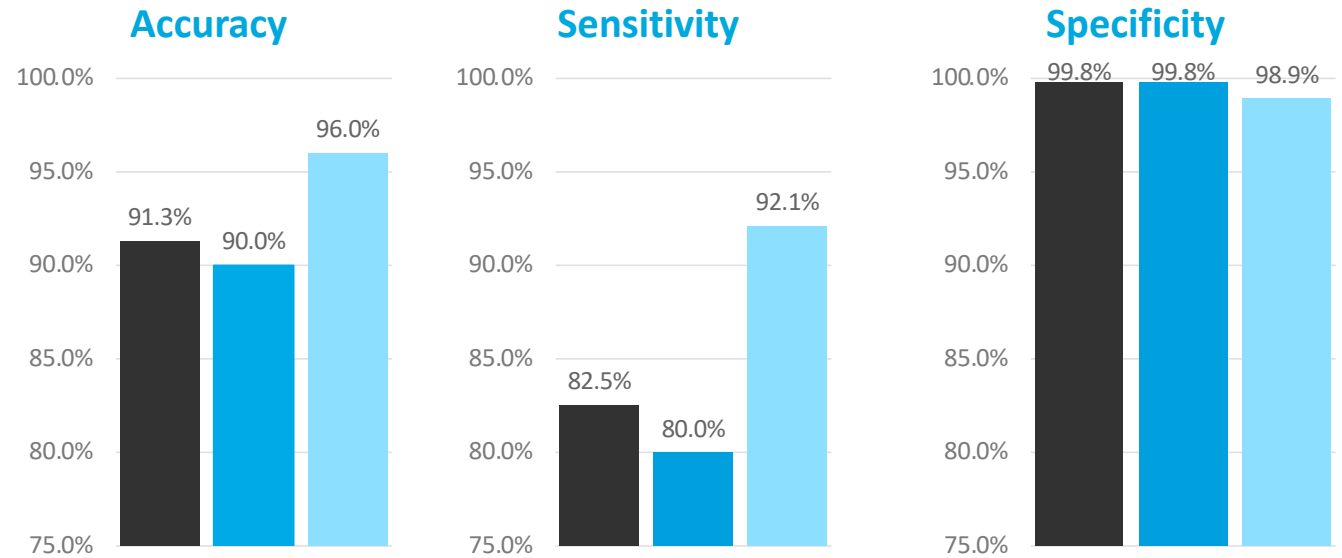
Inertial Measurement Units





FALL





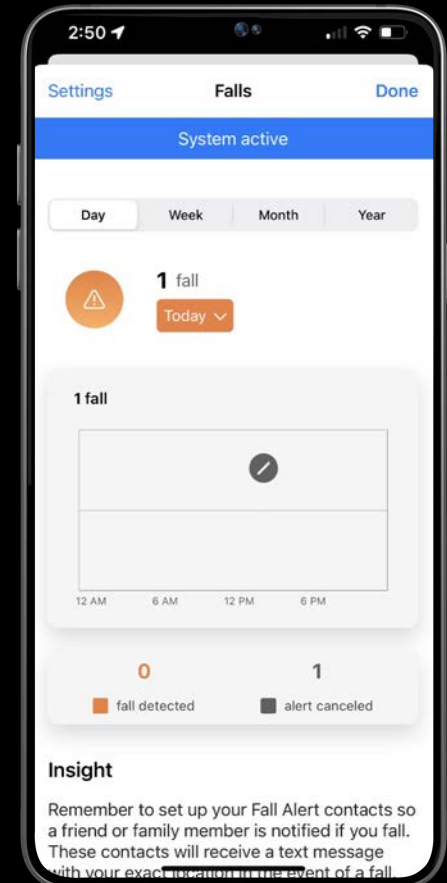
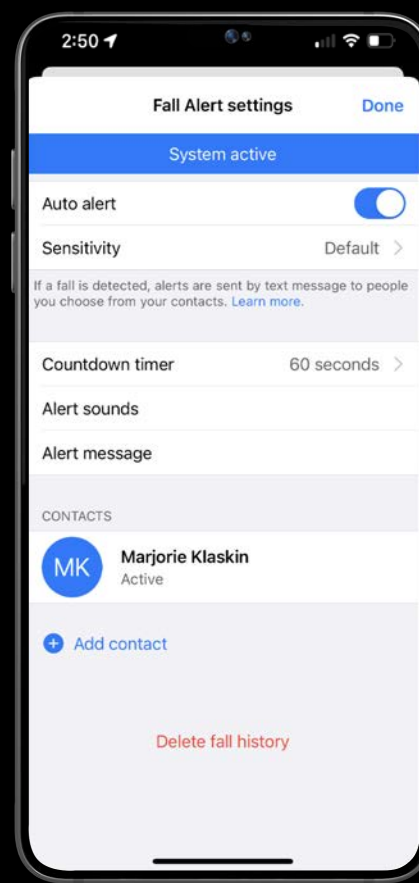
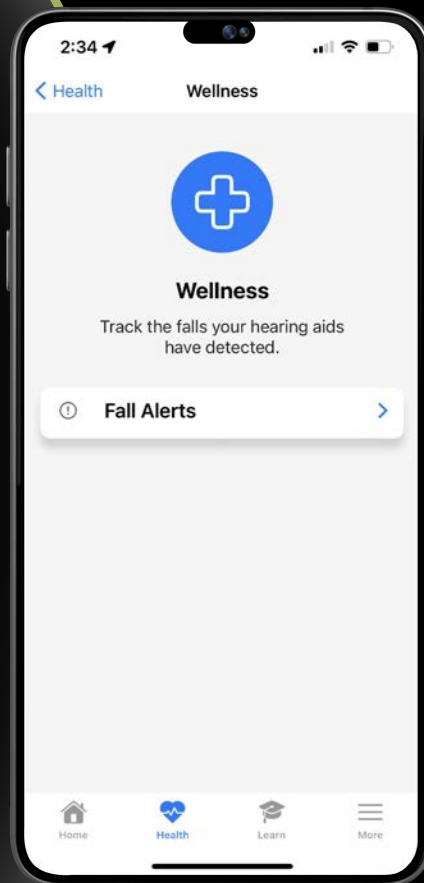
Device	Accuracy (%)	Sensitivity (%)	Specificity (%)
AutoAlert Pendant	91.3	82.5	99.8
Livio Edge AI (Normal Sensitivity)	90.0	80.0	99.8
Livio Edge AI (High Sensitivity)	96.0*	92.1*	98.9

Burwinkel, J.R., Xu, B., Crukley, J. (2020). Preliminary examination of the accuracy of a fall-detection device embedded into hearing instruments. *Journal of the American Academy of Audiology*.



Health

Tap Wellness to track detected falls



NEWS & POLITICS

Minnesota seniors are more likely to die in falls than in almost any other state

As baby boomers age, the number of fatal falls is increasing. Here's how the state could reverse the trend.

By James Walsh

AUG 2, 2025 | 1:00 AM



Cheryl Bakke, center, takes part in a 55+ Fit For Life class July 29 at the Chanhassen Recreation Center. (Anthony Soufflé / The Minnesota Star Tribune)

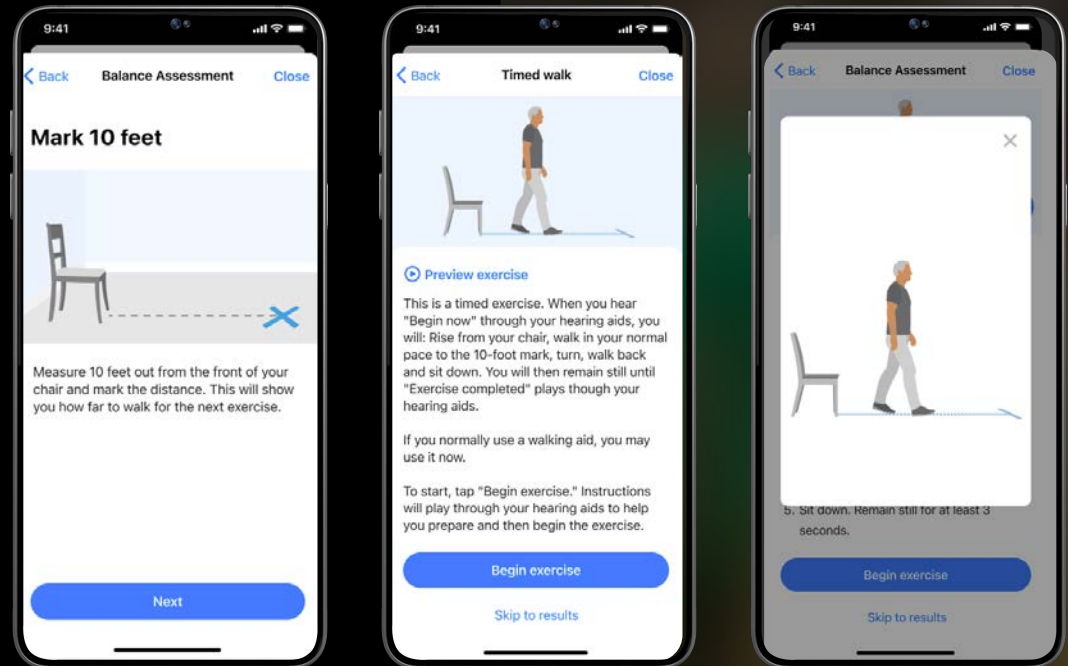
Balance Assessment

Balance Assessment includes the STEADI Screening questions and functional exercises focused on three elements:

Somatosensory balance

Functional lower body strength

Gait



Results

Balance Assessment



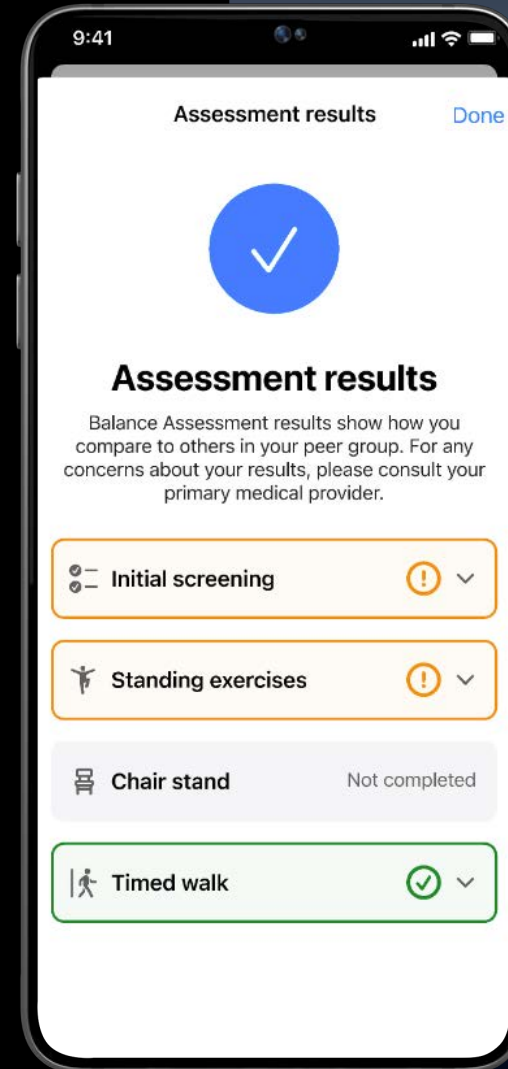
Balance concerns/Inconsistent with peer group



No balance concern/Consistent with peer group

Not completed

Section incomplete or skipped



Overview of Phases

Phase 1

In-office, guided

In-office validation with clinician guidance

Phase 2

Telehealth, guided

Simulated tele-health assessment with clinician guidance

Phase 3

At-home, unguided

At-home assessments done independently

Goal

Fully independent risk assessment and monitoring of fall risk at-home

***Use of Hearing Aids
Embedded with Inertial
Sensors and Artificial
Intelligence to Identify
Patients at Risk for
Falling***



Steenerson et al. Otol & Neuro (2025)

Closing Thoughts

Dave Fabry, PhD



✓ Future Horizons

ReSound
Tammara Stender, AuD

ReSound GN
.....

What future developments do you see that might increase the range and scope of meeting unique or challenging needs in the hearing industry?

What happens
when technology
- **Not You** -
picks the sound

ReSound GN

The Challenge

**Being unable to
ignore or tune out
the conversation you
do not want to hear**

The Challenge

**Being unable to
ignore or tune out
the conversation you
do not want to hear**



ReSound Vivia

You decide what matters

ReSound GN



A photograph of a family celebrating a birthday. In the foreground, a woman with grey hair and a green and white striped shirt is smiling and clapping. To her right, a man in a light blue shirt is also smiling. In the background, a woman in a red dress is holding a young girl in a beige sweater. They are gathered around a table with a birthday cake, candles, and a vase of flowers. A large red abstract graphic is on the left side of the image.

**No more missing the
moments that matter –
because you decide
what matters**

ReSound GN

A Human Approach to AI

DNN Denoising

Take the chaos down
with less listening effort



Directional Beamforming

Just look at who
you want to hear.
They instantly become clear.

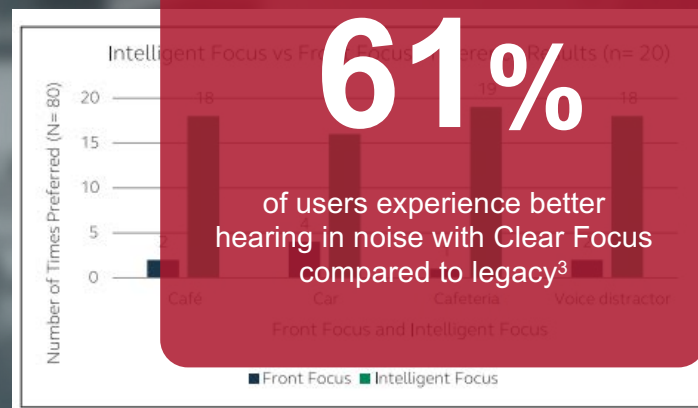


89%

Preference for Intelligent Focus
when hearing in noise
compared to legacy¹

61%

of users experience better
hearing in noise with Clear Focus³
compared to legacy³



1. Jespersen et al. (2025)

2. Jespersen & Hashem (2025); 3. Jespersen et al. (2024)

Closing Thoughts

Tammara Stender, AuD

The logo for ReSound GN is displayed within a red rounded rectangle. The text "ReSound GN" is in white, with "GN" in a smaller font size. Below the text is a white horizontal line that begins with a series of dots on the left and transitions into a solid line on the right.

ReSound GN

Elevating Care

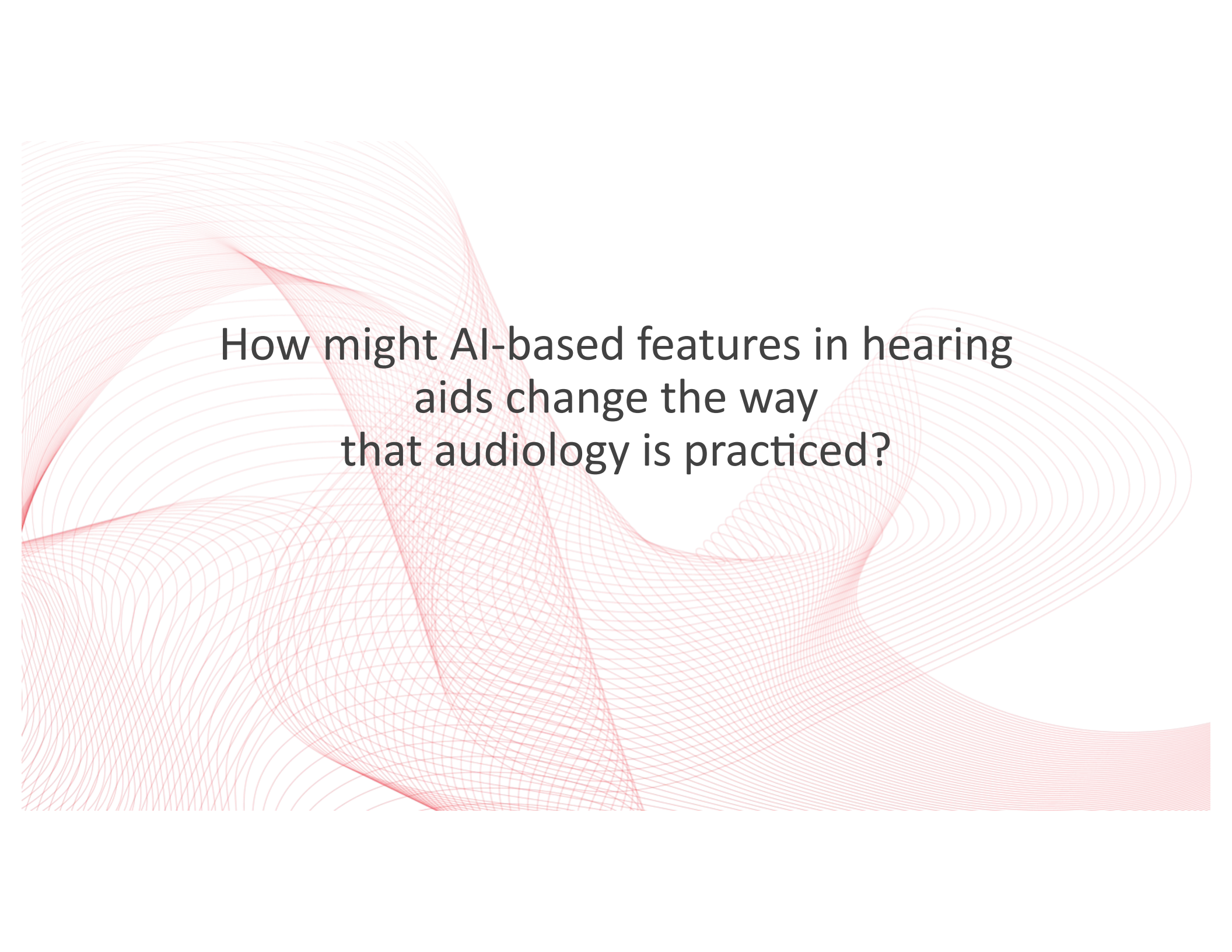
The AI Revolution

✓ Elevating Care –
The AI Revolution

Signia

Brian Taylor, AuD



The background of the slide features a complex, abstract design. It consists of numerous thin, red, wavy lines that flow across the frame. Overlaid on these waves is a grid of thin, red lines, creating a mesh-like effect in certain areas. The overall color palette is a soft, muted red against a light, off-white background.

How might AI-based features in hearing
aids change the way
that audiology is practiced?

Audiology and Wine Pairing

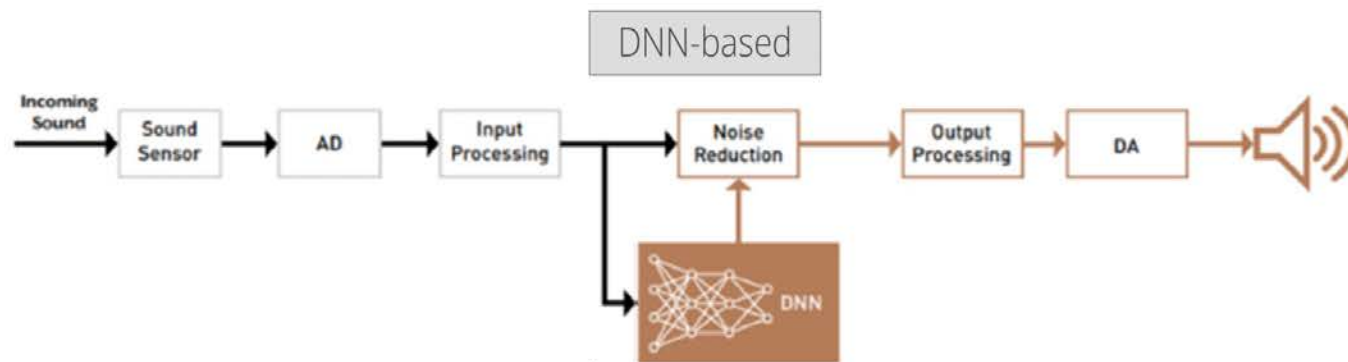
THE GREAT COURSES
PERFECT PAIRINGS
A GUIDE TO FOOD & WINE PAIRINGS

– FOOD –	– WINE –	– WHY –
 Filet Mignon	 Cabernet Sauvignon	Textures are complemented - both are rich and full-bodied
 Salmon	 Sancerre (Sauvignon Blanc)	Contrast between oil and acid enhances experiences of both
 French Fries	 Champagne	Acid in the wine cuts through the oil from the potatoes
 Fettuccini Alfredo	 Oaked Chardonnay	Notes of butter and cream will match
 Smoked Holiday Ham	 America-Oaked Shiraz (Australia)	Notes of smokiness will match
 Pork Chops	 Pinot Noir	Red-berry flavors will complement meal
 Curry Chicken	 Off-Dry Riesling	Contrasting flavors of fruit and spice
 Dark Chocolate	 Ruby Port	Bitterness of chocolate offset by sweetness of Port
 Salted Almonds	 Gamay	Salt will enhance fruit flavors of wine



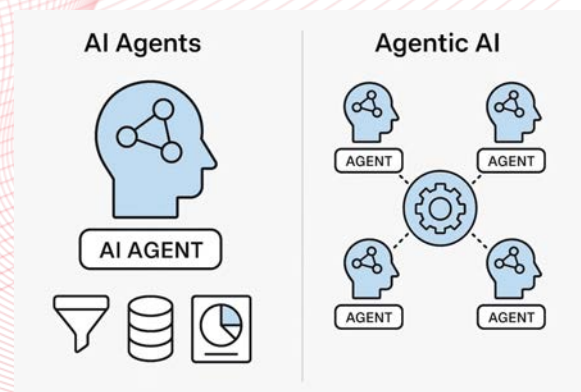
Precision Audiology

- Each manufacturer has a different “flavor” of DNN-based noise reduction:
 - At-risk for cognitive decline: Brand 1
 - Socializing is highest priority: Brand 2
 - Listening fatigue is the #1 challenge: Brand 3



Agentic AI in Hearing Aids – The Future?

- **Proactive Environmental Adaptation** – AI predicts when the wearer is about to enter a noisy room and preemptively adjusts devices
- **Autonomous Focus Switching** – AI identifies the most important sound (person speaking) in a complex environment and actively steers the mics to that sound, instantaneously
- **Wearer-Intent Detection** – By analyzing context clues (head movements, ambient sounds, biometric signals of wearer) the AI guesses what the wearer wants to hear and adjusts settings accordingly



Humanistic Audiology

- Counseling, listening with empathy, empowering individuals to take action..... these are your superpowers that cannot be replaced with AI



Closing Thoughts

Brian Taylor, AuD



ReSound Tammara Stender, AuD

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ReSound GN

How do today's AI-enabled hearing aids translate to real-world benefits for patients?



Deep learning

Algorithms with brain-like logical structure (called neural networks) capable of making decisions after being trained with vast amounts of data

Machine Learning

The ability of machines to automatically learn without being explicitly programmed.

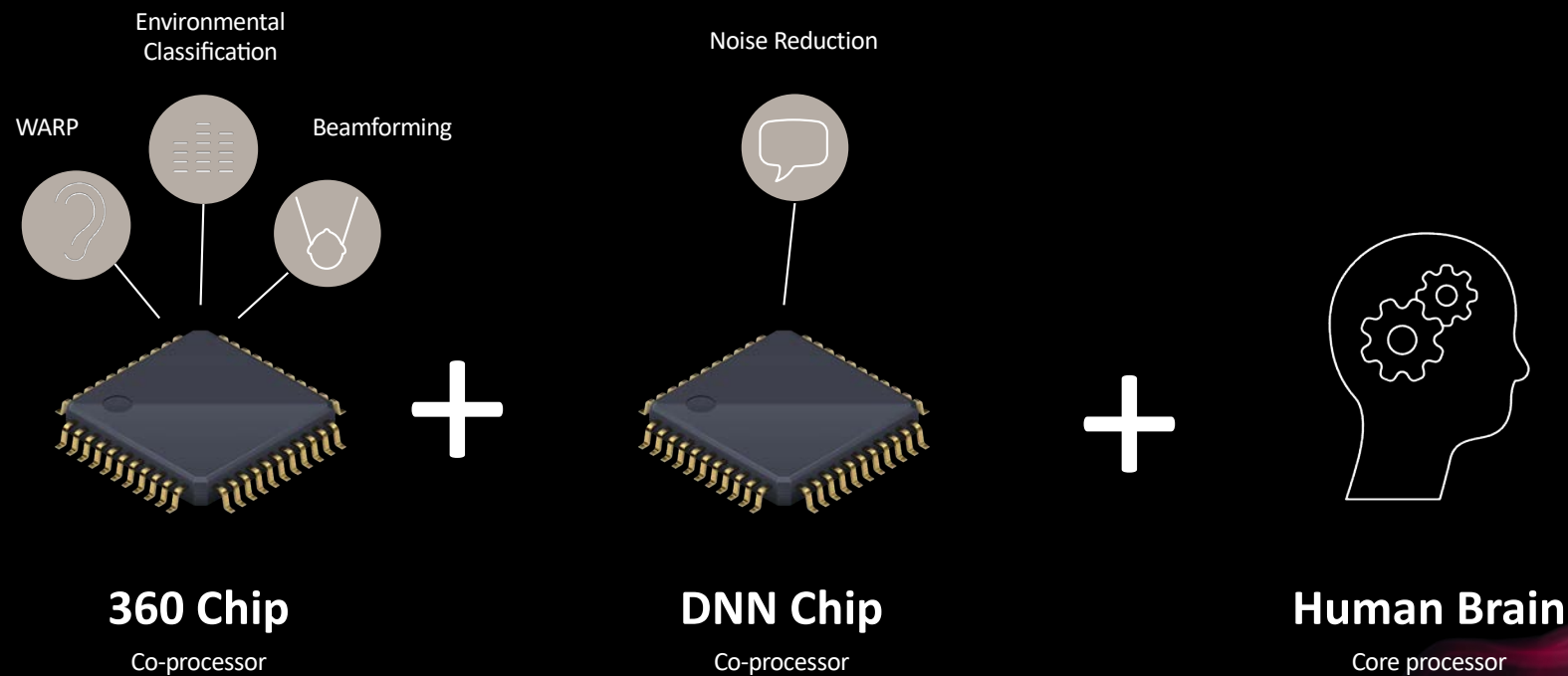
Artificial Intelligence

The ability of machines to do tasks that historically only humans could do, such as reasoning, problem solving and decision making.

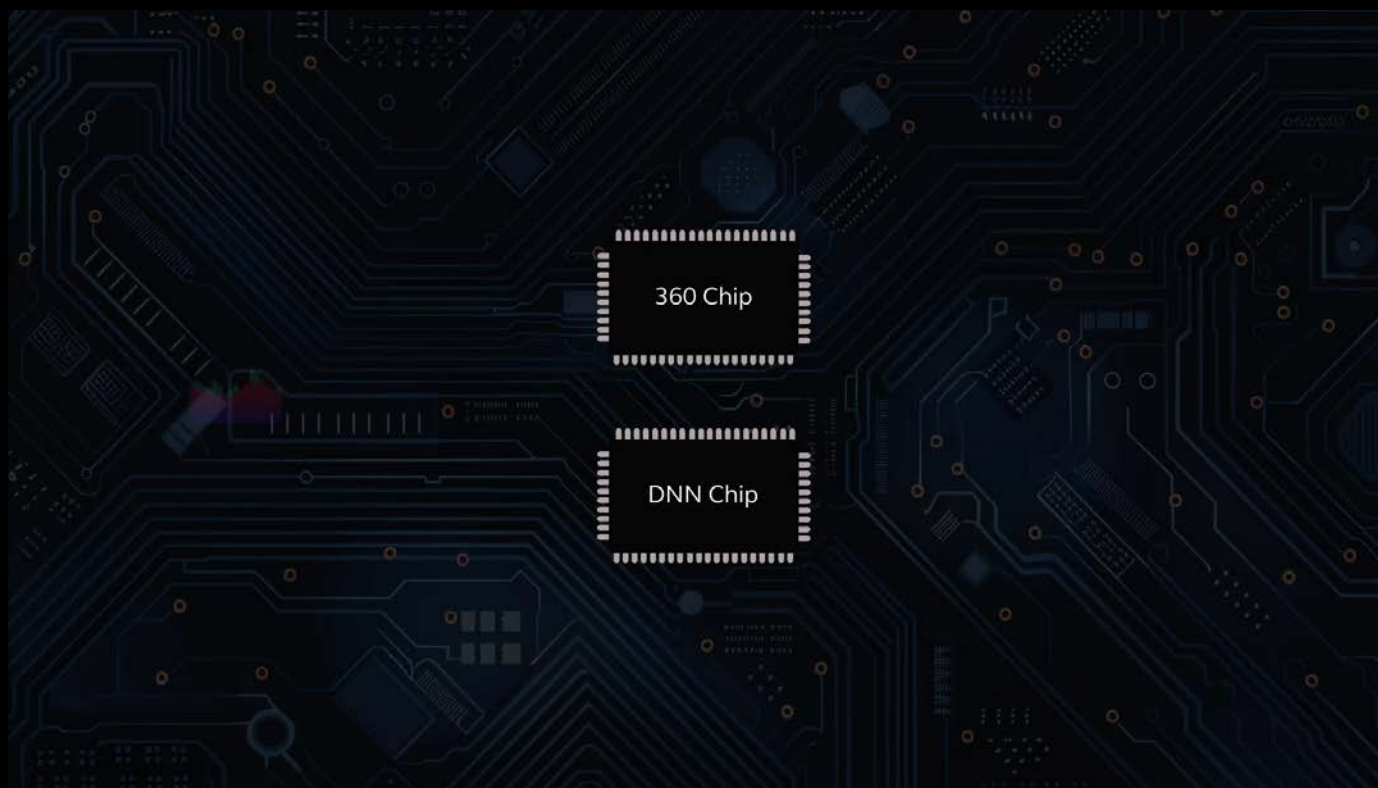
Intelligence Augmented

Help, not replace the human

Intelligence Augmented: Conscientious Combination of Directionality with AI-Enabled Noise Reduction to Support the Human's Natural Abilities



Putting It Together in a ReSound Hearing Aid



Peter

Restaurant Consultant

- Severe high frequency hearing loss
- Prefers to experience restaurants during peak hours, but struggles to hear his clients in noise
- Considering early retirement due to significant fatigue
- QuickSIN results: 9 dB SNR loss

What Would You Recommend?

Directionality:

4-mic beamforming – so HE can choose what matters

Noise Reduction/Listening Effort Reduction:

DNN noise reduction – to intelligently remove distracting noise and reduce fatigue

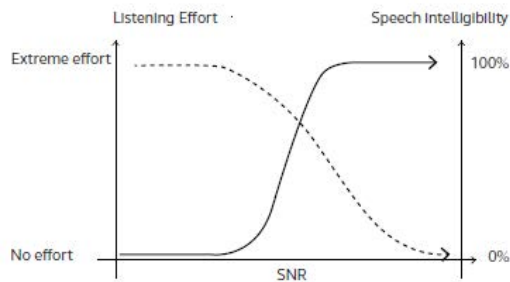


Figure: Klink et al., 2012

Connectivity for Difficult Listening Situations:

Auracast, direct streaming, remote microphone accessory (Multi-Mic+)



Peter

Restaurant Consultant
Significant listening fatigue
9 dB SNR loss

Intelligence Augmented Philosophy

Intelligence Augmented Philosophy

Help from the
machine



To **empower**
the **human**

power the machine



To help
human

Closing Thoughts

Tammara Stender, AuD

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ReSound GN

✓ Elevating Care –
The AI Revolution

Starkey
Dave Fabry, PhD



The AI Revolution

Can you explain the way that Starkey is using DNN AI to improve patient satisfaction and benefit?

Dave Fabry, Ph.D., Starkey



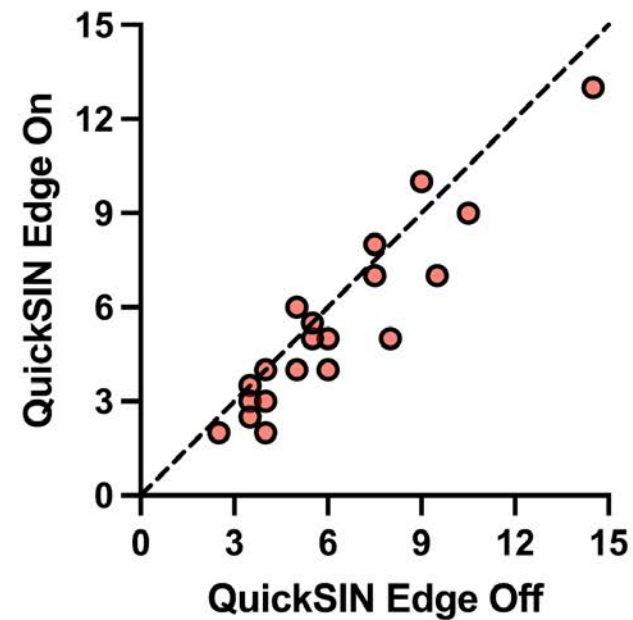
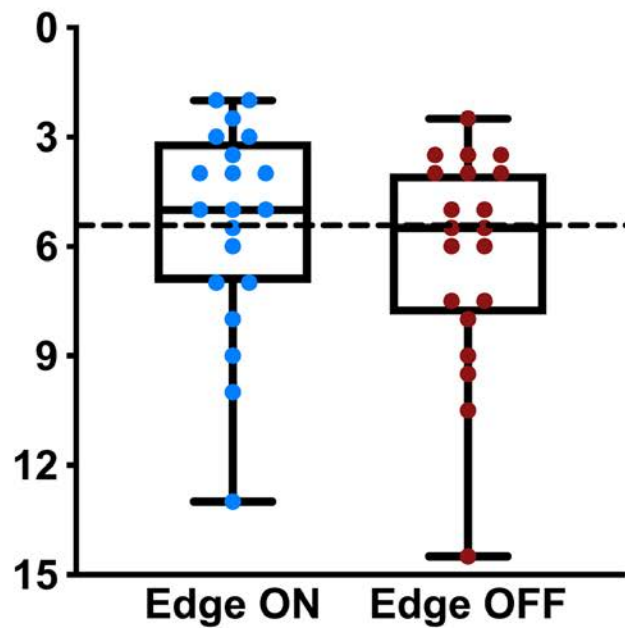
Edge Mode+

On-demand ability to zero-in on speech in challenging environments



QuickSIN SNR loss is lower by

~ 1 dB on average when Edge AI is active





OPEN ACCESS

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Rejimon JP, Venkatakrisnan S, Bhowmik AK,
Jackler RK, Steenerson KK and Fabry DA
(2025) Effectiveness of deep neural networks
in hearing aids for improving signal-to-noise
ratio, speech recognition, and listener
preference in background noise.
Front. Audiol. Otol. 3:1677482.
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Effectiveness of deep neural networks in hearing aids for improving signal-to-noise ratio, speech recognition, and listener preference in background noise

Matthew B. Fitzgerald^{1*}, Varsha Mysore Athreya¹, Majd Srour²,
Jwala P. Rejimon¹, Soumya Venkatakrisnan¹,
Achintya K. Bhowmik^{1,2}, Robert K. Jackler¹,
Kristen K. Steenerson^{1,4} and David A. Fabry²

¹Department of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, United States, ²Starkey Hearing Technologies, Eden Prairie, MN, United States, ³Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders, California State University – Sacramento, Sacramento, CA, United States, ⁴Department of Neurology and Neurological Sciences, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, United States

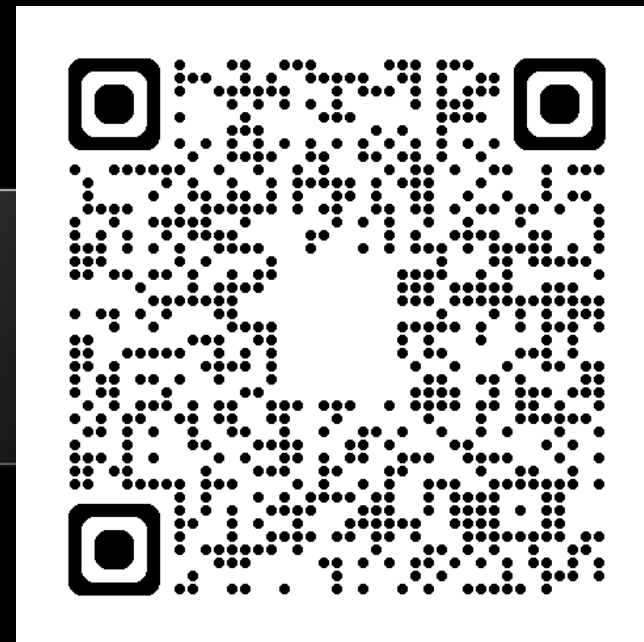
Introduction: Traditional approaches to improving speech perception in noise (SPIN) for hearing-aid users have centered on directional microphones and remote wireless technologies. Recent advances in artificial intelligence and machine learning offer new opportunities for enhancing the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) through adaptive signal processing. In this study, we evaluated the efficacy of a novel deep neural network (DNN)-based algorithm, commercially implemented as Edge Mode™, in improving SPIN outcomes for individuals with sensorineural hearing loss beyond that of conventional environmental classification approaches.

Methods: The algorithm was evaluated using (1) objective KEMAR-based performance in seven real-world scenarios, (2) aided and unaided speech-in-noise performance in 20 individuals with SNHL, and (3) real-world subjective ratings via ecological momentary assessment (EMA) in 20 individuals with SNHL. **Results:** Significant improvements in SPIN performance were observed on CNC-4-5, QuickSIN, and WIN, but not NST-4-5, likely due to the use of speech-shaped noise in the latter, suggesting the algorithm is optimized for multi-talker babble environments. SPIN gains were not predicted by unaided performance or degree of hearing loss, indicating individual variability in benefit, potentially due to differences in peripheral encoding or cognitive function. Furthermore, subjective EMA responses mirrored these improvements, supporting real-world utility.

Discussion: These findings demonstrate that DNN-based signal processing can meaningfully enhance speech understanding in complex listening environments, underscoring the potential of AI-powered features in modern hearing aids and highlighting the need for more personalized fitting strategies.

KEYWORDS

hearing aids, audiology, speech in noise, deep neural network, artificial intelligence, ecological momentary assessment





DNN Improves the Hearing Aid

Better in:

adapting to any
acoustic environment

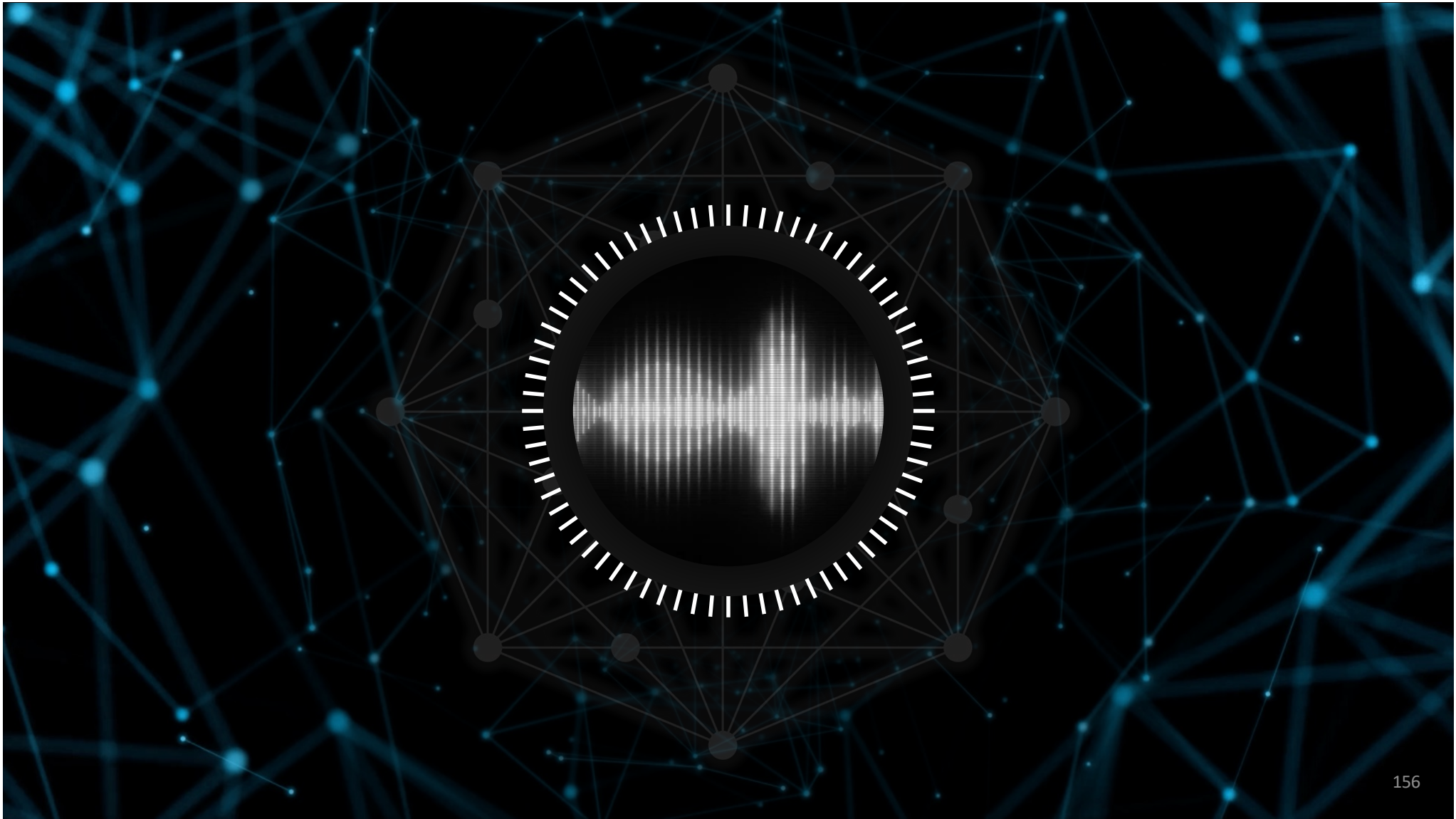
performing
classification

end-to-end
optimization

enabling
personalized
solutions

non-stationary
environments

fusing sensors



INDUSTRY FIRST
**DNN SPEECH
ENHANCEMENT**



INDUSTRY FIRST
**DNN SPEECH
ENHANCEMENT**



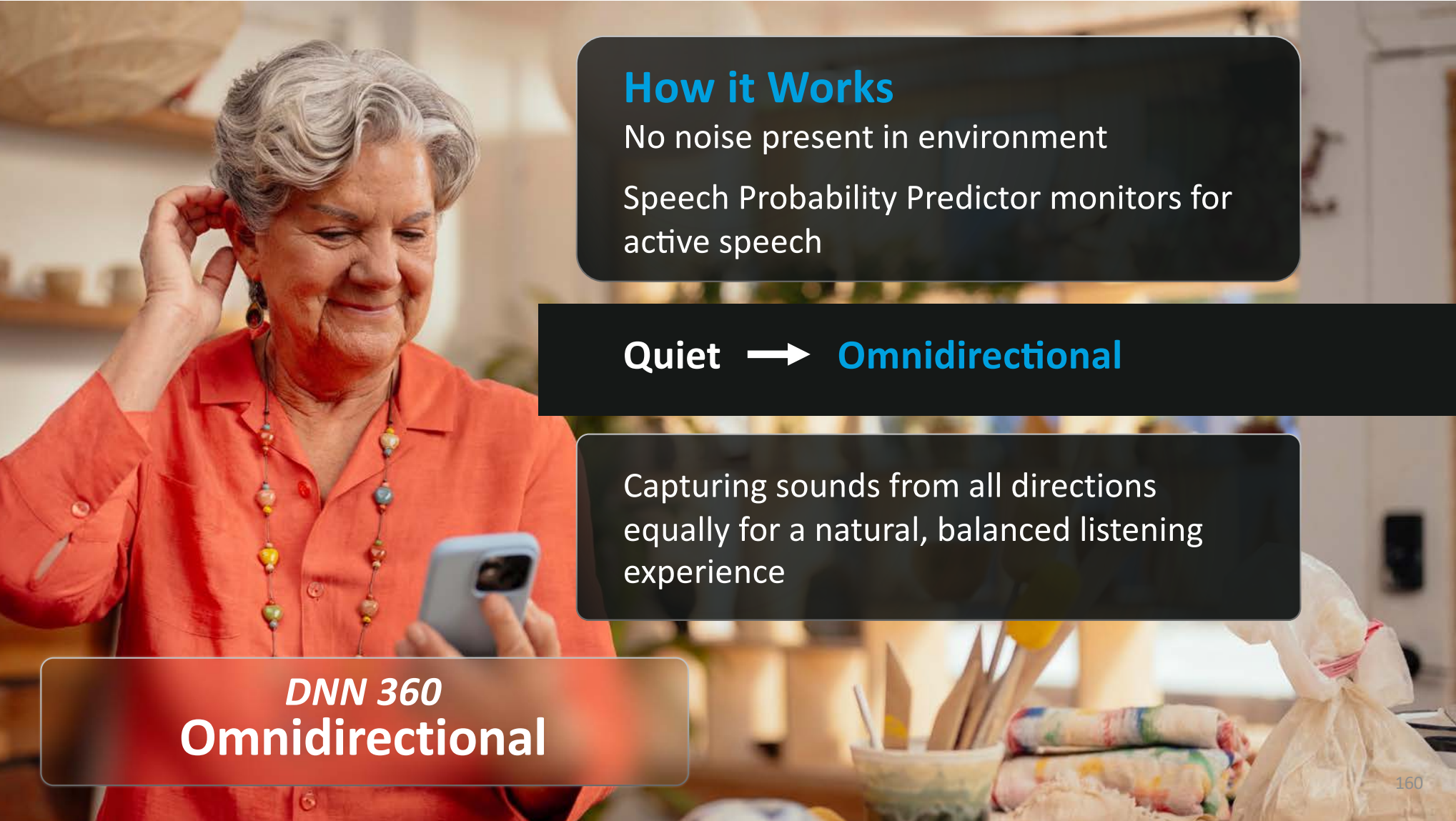
INDUSTRY FIRST
**DNN
DIRECTIONALITY**

INDUSTRY FIRST
**DNN SPEECH
ENHANCEMENT**

INDUSTRY FIRST
**DNN SPATIAL
AWARENESS**



INDUSTRY FIRST
**DNN
DIRECTIONALITY**



How it Works

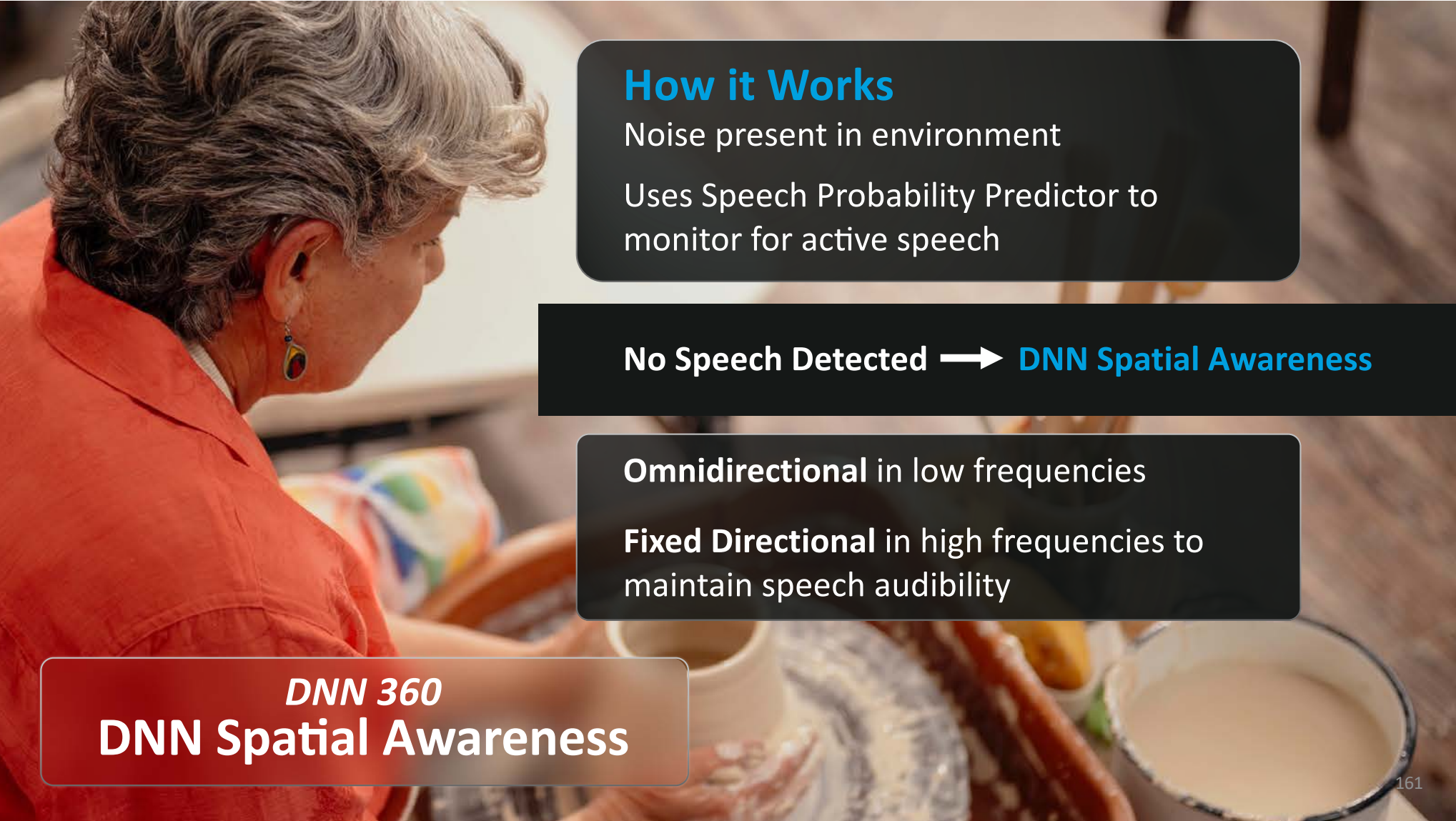
No noise present in environment

Speech Probability Predictor monitors for active speech

Quiet → Omnidirectional

Capturing sounds from all directions equally for a natural, balanced listening experience

DNN 360
Omnidirectional



How it Works

Noise present in environment

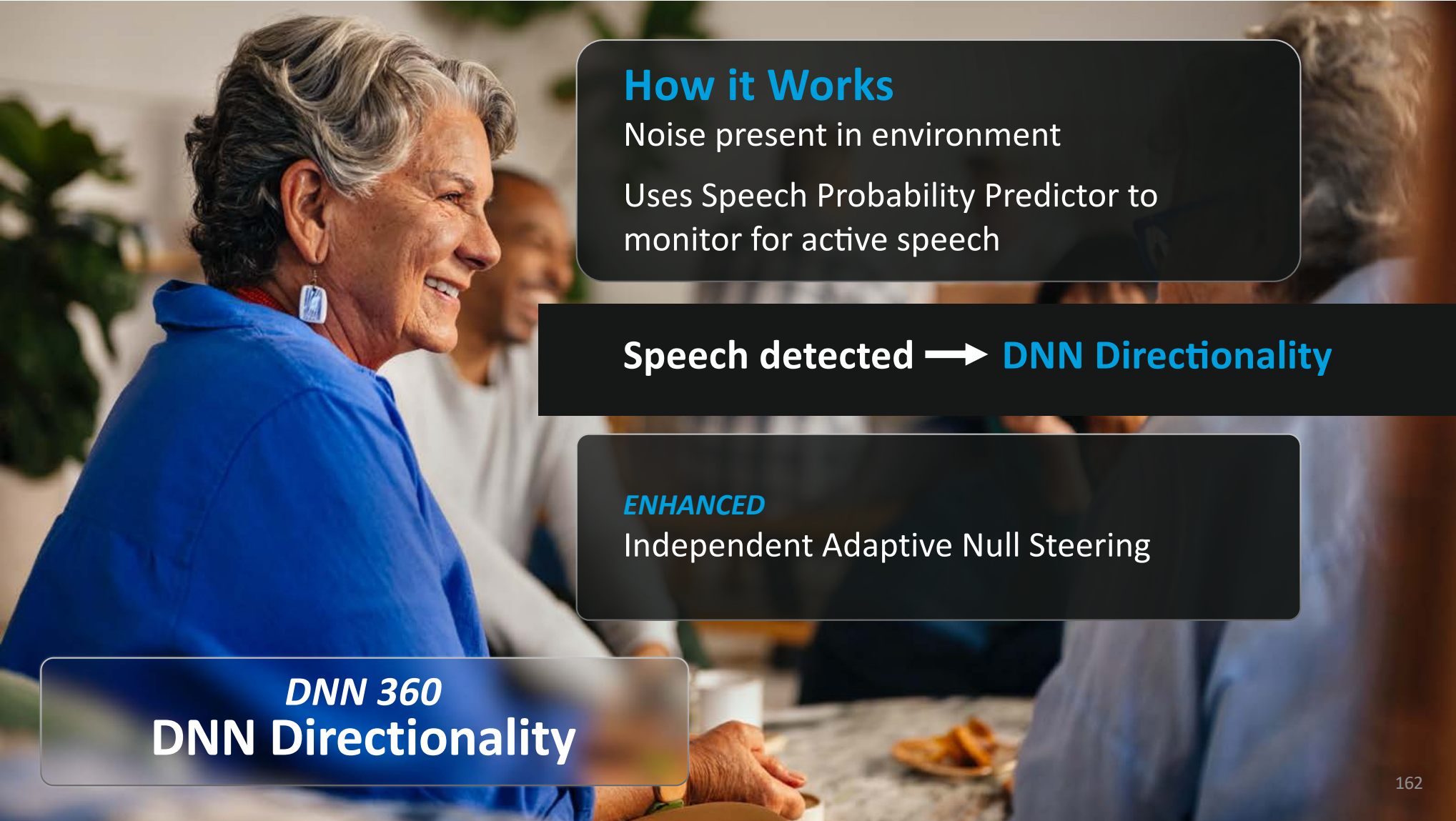
Uses Speech Probability Predictor to monitor for active speech

No Speech Detected → **DNN Spatial Awareness**

Omnidirectional in low frequencies

Fixed Directional in high frequencies to maintain speech audibility

DNN 360
DNN Spatial Awareness



How it Works

Noise present in environment

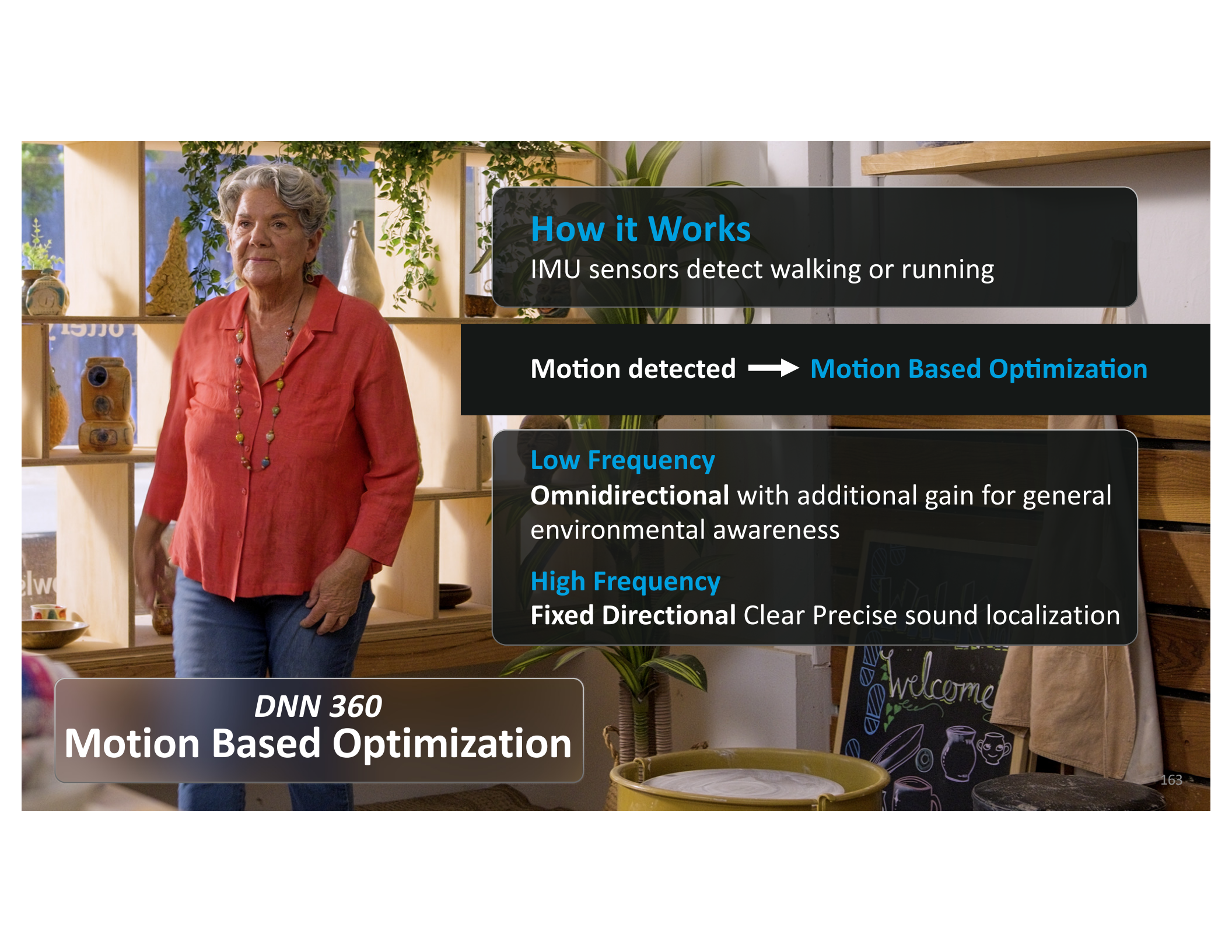
Uses Speech Probability Predictor to monitor for active speech

Speech detected → **DNN Directionality**

ENHANCED

Independent Adaptive Null Steering

DNN 360
DNN Directionality



How it Works

IMU sensors detect walking or running

Motion detected → Motion Based Optimization

Low Frequency

Omnidirectional with additional gain for general environmental awareness

High Frequency

Fixed Directional Clear Precise sound localization

DNN 360
Motion Based Optimization



For More Information – www.starkeypro.com

Closing Thoughts

Dave Fabry, PhD



Elevating Care

Clinical Precision & Evidence

✓ Elevating Care –
Clinical Precision & Evidence

Oto
Edmund Farrar

oto

As more tinnitus tools enter the market, evidence is becoming a key differentiator.

How has your recent research shaped the way clinicians evaluate what 'effective' tinnitus care should look like?

What do we mean by “effective”?

1. Symptom change alone is not enough
2. Short term improvement is a low bar
3. Real world delivery matters

Benchmark

Effectiveness means comparison to existing best practice.

A framework for clinicians

- How does it compare to guideline recommended equivalent?
- Are the outcomes clinically meaningful and sustained?
- Is it scalable within existing practice?
- Does it reduce clinician burden?

✓ Elevating Care –
Clinical Precision & Evidence

Closing Thoughts

Dr. Edmund Farrar

The logo for 'oto' is displayed in a dark teal color. It features a lowercase 'o', followed by a lowercase 't' with a short horizontal bar on its left side, and another lowercase 'o'. The font is a clean, sans-serif style.

✓ Elevating Care –
Clinical Precision & Evidence

Audioscan

John Pumford, AuD

The Audioscan logo is displayed in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters 'a' and 'n' feature a stylized, light blue circular graphic element on their left and right sides, respectively, giving the logo a modern, tech-oriented appearance.



What practical steps can clinicians take to reduce variability in their verification measures and improve confidence in their daily fitting decisions?

John Pumford, AuD

Director of Audiology, Education and Clinical Research

Audioscan

Measurement Mics and Calibration

- Confirm measurement microphones functioning correctly
- Follow test box and REM calibration procedures
- Recalibrate routinely



audioscan



Test Box Measures

- Use proper coupler, coupling
- Minimize slit leaks, check connections
- Consider positioning (ref mic, hearing aid)
- Reduce vibration, fully close test box



audioscan



REM Measures

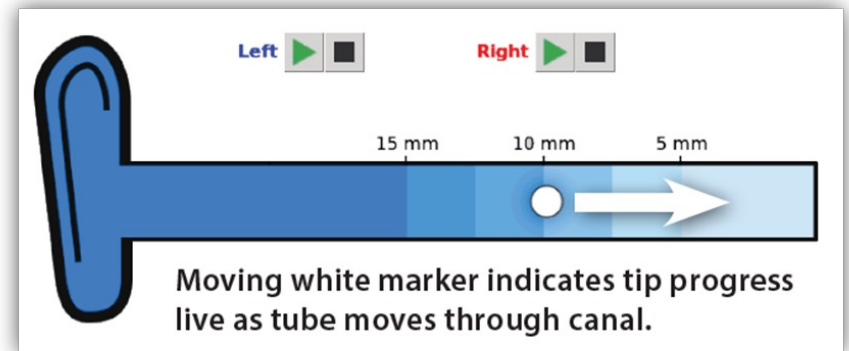
- Consider patient and equipment positioning
 - Locate away from reflective surfaces (~1 m, 3 ft)
 - Seat patient at 0 degrees azimuth
 - Seat patient within 0.5 m (~1.5 ft of speaker)
- Manage room noise or reflections



audioscan

REM Measures

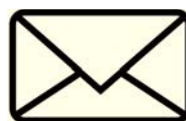
- Ensure consistent probe tube placement (within 5mm of TM)
- Shallow, variable placement = measurement error
- Check position with otoscopy
- Leverage hardware / software tools to assist



audioscan



Additional Audioscan Resources



support@audioscan.com



audioscan

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Clinical Precision & Evidence

Closing Thoughts

John Pumford, AuD

The Audioscan logo is displayed in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters 'a' and 'n' feature a stylized, light blue circular graphic element on their left and right sides, respectively, suggesting sound waves or a circular path.

Elevating Care

Communication & Access

✓ Elevating Care –
Communication & Access

CareCredit
Jessica Lawley, BA





QUESTION:

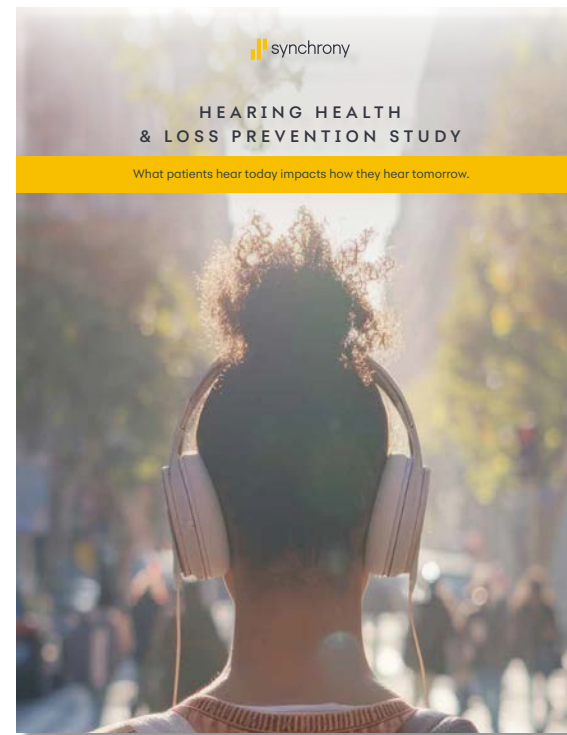
HOW CAN AUDIOLOGISTS CHANGE THE CONVERSATION WITH PATIENTS ABOUT HEARING LOSS PREVENTION AND PROACTIVE BASELINE TESTING?

SYNCHRONY HEARING HEALTH & LOSS PREVENTION STUDY



The **Synchrony Hearing Health & Loss Prevention Study** reveals important insights into why people aren't prioritizing their hearing and what you can do to help.

Read the full study at
www.preventativehearinghealth.com



CARECREDIT RESOURCES



We're here to help with new educational tools and resources to motivate patients of all ages to prioritize their hearing health and start their audiology journey at your practice.

<https://www.carecredit.com/providers/love-to-hear-it/>



Digital Lookbook

Research that sheds light on common perceptions — and misperceptions — regarding hearing loss, barriers to hearing health, and factors that motivate patients to seek care.

[READ THE RESEARCH](#)



Website Content

Ready-made blocks of copy to help boost your web presence and encourage patients to pursue care.

[DOWNLOAD WEB CONTENT](#)



Email Content

Ready-to-use email copy to help elevate your emails and provide hearing health awareness to your patients.

[GET EMAIL CONTENT](#)



Social Media Resources

Post-ready images and content to help amplify your social media presence and spur patients to action.

[ACCESS SOCIAL RESOURCES](#)



Closing Thoughts

Jessica Lawley, BA



✓ Elevating Care –
Communication & Access

CaptionCall
Lauren Fettig





How can consumers find out about and access a federally funded program like CaptionCall IPCTS?





Communication & Access

- © **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** led to the development of relay and captioned telephone services for the deaf and hard of hearing
- © Recommended by **Hearing Care Professionals** nationwide





Lauren Fettig

Director of National Accounts

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612-500-8849

Connect with us.





Closing Thoughts

Lauren Fettig



Thank You!

2026 Industry Roundtable

Moderator: Christopher Spankovich, AuD, PhD, MPH



Jessica Lawley, BA



John Pumford, AuD



Dr. Edmund Farrar



Lauren Fettig



Dave Fabry, PhD



Brian Taylor, AuD



Tammara Stender, AuD



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 - Choose take exam