

Auckland Cochlear Implant Consumer Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2015 at Hearing Association, Remuera, Auckland.

Hosts: Karel and Donald

Present: Donna, Kerry, Raewyn, Vince, Gloria and John, Marian and John, Zeta and Ged, Stuart, John C, *Raywyn Cooper.

Absent: Di, Pam, Louis and Mona, Maxine, Jorgen and Martha, Laurie, Raewyn Ashdown, Virginia, Rodney, Kathleen Bennett.

*new member

Donna opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. A new member Raywyn was referred to us by Pam. She has had a cochlear implant for 5 years.

Marian had received some exciting news since the last meeting and had notification of CI surgery on July 30. Obviously some more funding has come through because of the end of the financial year and this is great news.

A note in the NZ Herald Sideswipe from 7-7-15 said a distinctive piece of a cochlear implant had been found on Pigeon Mountain. Contact Howick Police or Sideswipe.

Pam is doing an order for My Tiny Reminder – people who want one (Pam, Raewyn, Donna, Marian, Anita, Gloria, Donald, Karel, Zita). These are to be imported and approx cost will be \$25-\$30. <http://www.mytinyreminder.com/>

Pamphlets need to be dropped off at drs, audiologists, hearing therapists, libraries. These have been made by Pindrop and they send out details to clubs in the vicinity. If there is no club in the area – they will organise one.

Info sent to new members is attached. Let Donna know if you think of more info which may be interesting or useful. There was discussion over the length of the rechargeable batteries lasting. Donna had 1 last only 3 years. Karel has all 3 still going well at 4 years. He has used batteries in a professional capacity and found they are best utilised by keeping them on the charger. Once they are off the charger they start to discharge and also storing them reduces the chargeability and length of usage. This started a discussion – however it is up to the individual as what suits them best. If using disposable batteries, be aware that once they are discharged, put them to one side. You may get another couple of hours of them watching TV, etc. Also too different batteries last different times. Donna had bought Panasonic which only lasted 2 days whereas Rayovac are lasting nearly 4 days. After visiting her local audiology store, they said when you take off the sticker, to leave it for 5 mins before using. Otherwise blow on the surface a few times to activate them and may make them last for a bit longer.

Bank account: currently \$180 and outgoings are coffee, tea, gifts. Perhaps have a Christmas party. Donna said we needed milk to come out of this – so that hosts only need to bring biscuits, etc. People who are asked to host/hostess are only required to bring biscuits.

Donna went to Life Unlimited after finding her analogue dial phone could do with an upgrade. She thought perhaps she may get funding. However a recent home event where she was the only one home prompted her to think she needed a smoke alarm system as well. Trish said she may get funding for the smoke alarm only, for safety reasons. This requires a home visit by the Fire Service to see how many units are required and also checks emergency exits and strategy in case of a fire.

She was able to try out a number of phones and found the volume on some of the phones did not change. When we had Patricia from Reid Technology John C (N6) asked if there were any phones available with Bluetooth capacity for home use. Patricia had said she didn't think so. However when Donna asked Trish there is a portable telephone put out by hearing aid suppliers - Phonak DECT (avail from Reid Technology). However there is a device which is needed to make it happen. Trish is finding out more details via Ellen at the University and also Stacey from Cochlear NZ. People who have a N5 processor for a home phone really need to have a telecoil and volume control – preferably not a cordless. Speaker phones are great. However it is best to try out models and some places will allow you to take them home to trial for a few days.

Donna introduced Melanie from NZ Police 111TXT.

She said with reference to Sideswipe article they had found the girl owner.

All calls via the 111TXT goes instantly to the police and get priority. With normal 111 calls – they are diverted on request to Fire, Ambulance, or Police – so with this there is a delay. The address where the phone call is from pops up on the screens immediately.

They do have problems occasionally when the server goes down. However keep calling/texting and you will get through.

Donna asked if you were able to ring on the 111 and say you are hearing impaired and advise them of the details like address, age, condition of patient. Melanie said this was possible. If you had registered your cellphone and advise them of this – they can then communicate via text. However you need to make sure you are registered and cannot use another persons cellphone. Melanie suggested that all family members should register.

Karel said he was chasing his grandson recently in the park and fell over and his processor fell off. It is very important that we understand our safety requirements before we have a situation where we need help.

Raewyn had registered however she's changed address. This is easily accessible by using her password to change any details on the 111TXT website.

Karel asked whether we needed to say our location on 111TXT. The address that is shown on screen is the one you have registered. If you are in a different location – you need to advise them of this from the start.

If people need to register for the 111TXT service and have no internet – they can go to the library where there is a staff member who is able to help.

If someone has no cellphone – they really need to get one. People who are unfamiliar with texting should practice. Obviously when the situation arises you can be under stress and unable to text properly. With cellphones where you need to hit the 1 button 3 times to get a C - get an upgrade. If you text speak (i.e. L8 for late; msg for message) the police will probably understand.

Melanie made the suggestion that we may like to visit the Comms centre in Grey Lynn in groups of 10 on a Saturday morning for approx 1 hour. This is so that they are able to do a 'live' display of how the 111TXT service works. This idea was a very generous offer and members are very interested.

Raewyn was a bit disturbed when talking to her neighbours one day. They had asked whether she had heard the police at night as they had been on the property. This was a bit concerning as once your processor is off there is not much you hear. Donna suggested that the police make up a sticker which goes on windows, doors, and perhaps letterboxes, which lets them know you are hearing impaired. Perhaps once you have signed up for the 111TXT service – they are sent out to you. Melanie said this was a good idea and to send info to her supervisor. Once the emergency services are aware of these – the hearing impaired person may feel safer.

Once you access 111 – you are locked into the system – and they will do all they can to help. Unfortunately 75% of calls are not urgent. If you need to ring your local police station after hours (say you've lost your passport) do so. This call is diverted to a general line and is not priority (so don't ring 111).

With the 111TXT service – the fire department and police are at the Grey Lynn address – however the ambulance is a different location. The Northern Comms district is from far north to Turangi, Coromandel and Coromandel. It is the biggest area in NZ with 14 staff. Counties Manukau has a staff level of 3. It is a very busy environment and challenging. Stuart thanked Melanie for her wonderful speech and presented her with a gift. Pamphlets were available advising of the service were handed out.

Afterwards there was food for thought. John C doesn't have a cellphone and thinks he may need one. People who visit and use hotels/motels need to advise staff at the desk that they have a hearing impairment if they are staying alone. Also the smoke alarm Donna was told about – you can take the smoke alarm off the wall and notifier unit with you – and is totally portable.

A number of members are already signed up for the NZ Police visit – date to be advised – limit 10.

The meeting concluded approx 12.10pm.