



Cochlear Implant Consumer Group - Waikato

January 2016

Greetings to Members of the Waikato Cochlear Implant Consumer Group

Cabby had passed the Coordinator role over to me so I to wish you all a Very Happy 2016 .

I am very conscious that all CI users and those who are waiting for one have been through an often long very difficult period of their lives as hearing diminishes and our lives change substantially. This time is frustrating and often very depressing. It is not easy for any of us or our partners and family.

We have experienced abuse as well like the person telling me to "bloody well listen" or "why don't you get hearing aids" when, if you are like me, you have had them for most of your life. When we do finally get a CI some of us have a slow very difficult journey until reaching the stage hearing speech is easy once more. And even for those for whom speech comes very quickly, life does not just suddenly become normal. Instead there is often a quite difficult road of rehabilitation gaining our confidence to do things we have not been able to do for a long time.

Helping each other make this journey is what I see as the most important thing we can do. We share this unique situation others probably can't really fully appreciate so I hope you all keep engaged with the group not only because it may benefit yourselves but because we can all help each other. Collectively we are a valuable resource.

I would therefore like to devote our first meeting to discussing issues we may face and looking at possible solutions that will help us get the most from our CIs. Some things may not be able to be solved but if even if a few can be, it will be worthwhile. I will list some I am aware of and would welcome you all to raise other issues.

1 The volume reduces so much from noises like a kettle boiling or appliance going we can't hear others speaking or our own voice very well which also occurs when travelling in a car. This happens with a lot of new hearing aids also.

2 Not able to hear TV clear enough to cease relying on "captioning", or the CI user can hear with a gadget but the sound is cut out for other people. My husband George may be able to help you sort this out.

3 Can you hear at a restaurant or in a noisy situation? If you have a Nuclear 6 processor do you have a Mini microphone and is it working?

4 Are you unable to hear clearly enough on the phone to carry out a conversation. Do you have a Phone Clip and is it working?

5 Are you experiencing muscle twitching of your face muscles from some sounds.

6 Air Travel with a mini microphone. What not to do.

7 Having a MRI scan. Do you know the model number of you implant?

My own background as a health professional (Physiotherapist) who specialised in the care of the disabled, being a patient advocate was very much my responsibility so please feel free to talk to me personally about any issue you may have and I will do my best to help you sort it out.

We will begin the year with a BBQ late February/early March and I will notify you with the particulars shortly.

Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ngaire Mathew'.

Ngaire Mathew

26 January 2016