



IFHOH JOURNAL

December 2020
v2

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The International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) is an international non-governmental organisation representing the interests of more than 466 million hard of hearing people worldwide.

*IFHOH is registered as a charitable organisation at Vereinsregister Amtsgericht, Hamburg, Germany
- Nr. 69 VR 10 527.*

IFHOH Journal includes information about IFHOH activities, world news related to hearing loss, articles written by IFHOH members, and much more. It is published four times a year and posted on IFHOH's website, www.ifhoh.org. The Editor can be reached at journal@ifhoh.org.

All the views expressed in IFHOH Journal are those of the individual writers. and do not necessarily reflect

From the Editor's Desk

From the Editor's Desk



Carole Willans
Editor and IFHOH Special Advisor

Dear IFHOH friends,

The New Year is a time for looking back and for looking forward. Every new year brings a time of reflection – of what we have accomplished, what our new goals will be, and what we are grateful for. Many people make resolutions to either break bad habits, create new ones, or maintain existing ones. *IFHOH Journal* has one key resolution: we promise to continue to share with you many of the key stories on issues, advocacy, and activities of interest to hard of hearing people around the world. In other words, our goal is to keep you, our dear readers, informed about new developments in a way that can be useful to you in your country, your organization, and your community – no matter where you are on the planet.

Your feedback, constructive criticism, contributions and, above all, your readership, have proven invaluable this past year in our mission to produce the best newsletter possible in the context of the pandemic. We hope that you will continue to enjoy the content and support that IFHOH provides through this newsletter, our website, our Facebook page, and our news bulletins and other outreach efforts.

At *IFHOH Journal*, we are proud of our reporting in 2020, busy with big plans for 2021 and thankful for the support of our readers. Yes, we are thankful for your support. You are the reason we are do what we do. IFHOH's work overall is intended to enhance the quality of life in your community. Because of you, we can give voice to those who are not being heard. Because of you, we can provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and perspectives. Because of you, we can spark the change that helps hard of hearing people be part of a more resilient and knowledgeable world-wide community that contributes to the well-being of all society.

On behalf of the whole IFHOH team, I wish you, your family, and your friends, the very best for the coming year! May it be filled with health and hope for everyone as we move forever forward.

- Carole

IFHOH President's Message



Ruth Warick

Dear Friends,

The new year of 2021 brings with it the promise of widespread vaccinations for the COVID-19 virus which we hope will result in the end of the pandemic.

It also brings an important milestone for our community, namely, the release of the World Report on Hearing by the World Health Organization on 3 March 2021, which is also World Hearing Day. This is a seminal report in response to the World Health Assembly Resolution 70.13, adopted in 2017. It promises to be an important advocacy tool for our community.

IFHOH will hold its first webinar of 2021 on 13 January 2021 at 5 pm CEST, focusing on World Hearing Day and the World Report on Hearing. Speakers will be Dr. Karen Reyes and Dr. Shelly Chadha, Technical Officers, Prevention of Deafness and Hearing Loss Programme, WHO. A poster is included in this issue. The weblink to register for the event is:

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEkfumugjorGt13EMb81dswBiQn7h2xLR_U.



Dr Shelly Chadha and Ruth Warick at the WHO (in pre-pandemic days)

Meanwhile, please go to the front page of the IFHOH website (www.ifhoh.org) to review or download the Communications Toolkit related to the World Report and World Hearing Day. Also, please consider planning an activity for World Hearing Day. WHO, the World Hearing Forum and the Coalition for Global Hearing Health (CGHH) have small grants available for organizing and holding a World Hearing Day activity. The deadline to apply is 11 January 2021 and more information is available in this issue.



Screenshot during Steering Committee with WHO held 1 December 2020

In other news, IFHOH has embarked on two new development projects. One is on *Hearing Health Care Access & Communication During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond*. A Fellow will undertake the groundwork for the project in the first half of 2021. Eligible hard of hearing persons from developing countries are urged to apply for the full-time Fellowship. The deadline to apply is 27 December 2020. Please see further information about the joint IFHOH-International Disability Alliance Fellowship in this issue.

Our second new development project relates to a study of employment issues facing hard of hearing persons in Uganda. Following a juried competitive process, Brender Wanyana and Moses Serwadda of Uganda have been appointed IDA/IFHOH Fellows to undertake the project until the end of June 2021.

A third project was recently completed, namely, about inclusive education in Nepal and Uganda. Findings from the study are on the IFHOH website in a report entitled *Inclusive Education Report: Realities Facing Hard of Hearing Learners in Uganda and Nepal*.

A webinar on the event was held in December 2020 and the recording with captions is available on You Tube: [IFHOH Workshop on Inclusive Education - November 30th 2020 - YouTube](#). You can read more about this in this issue.

We also have a project related to cochlear implant advocacy that includes raising awareness about cochlear implants, which is under-utilized and not even available in some countries. A webinar was held in October 2020 and more are being planned in 2021. One will be about our policy paper on cochlear implants which we are revising to update and to take into consideration the recent adoption of an International Consensus Paper on CI Clinical Practise.

Regarding the IFHOH World Congress, the landscape for the coming year is still unknown regarding whether large gatherings will be allowed. Originally scheduled in May 2020 with our European partner, SINOSZ, our hopes to reschedule to spring 2021 are being dashed by the continuing pandemic. We will communicate any new plans as soon as they are finalized.

In closing, I wish you, your family, and friends all the best this holiday season and into the coming New Year. I invite you to connect with me should you have any suggestions or questions.

With warmest regards,

Ruth Warick
IFHOH President
president@ifhoh.org





Updates on World Hearing Day and the World Report on Hearing

Join us on **13 January 2021** for a discussion about the upcoming World Hearing Day (celebrated every year on the third day of March) and the World Report on Hearing, which will be released on that day by the World Health Organization. This is a seminal report about ear and hearing care in response to the World Health Assembly Resolution 70.13 adopted in 2017 and is an important advocacy tool for our community.

Speakers for the **webinar** are Dr. Karen Reyes Castro and Dr. Shelly Chadha, Technical Officers Prevention of Deafness and Hearing Loss Programme, World Health Organization.



Dr. Karen Reyes Castro



Dr. Shelly Chadha

Date: **Wednesday, 13 January 2021**

Time: **5 pm CEST, 9 pm PKT, 8 am PDT, 11 am EDT**

Duration: **75 minutes**

Platform: **Zoom - please register in advance at**

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJEkfumuqjorGt13EMb81dswBiQn7h2xLR_U

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email about joining the webinar.

Accessibility: **Realtime captioning and International Sign Language will be provided.**

Special thanks to the International Disability Alliance for its support in arrangements for this webcast.

World Hearing Day Small Grants Programme



As part of activities of the World Hearing Forum (WHF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Coalition for Global Hearing Health (CGHH) invite proposals for **WHF-CGHH Small Grants for World Hearing Day 2021**.

The World Hearing Day 2021 will be observed on 3 March with the theme "**Hearing Care for ALL! Screen. Rehabilitate. Communicate**". World Hearing Day 2021 will also mark the release of the first ever World Report on Hearing.

WHF, WHO, and CGHH have launched a small grants scheme. As part of this scheme, partners can apply for a grant of up to USD 800 to cover expenses related to World Hearing Day Activities. A maximum of 30 grants will be provided based on recommendations made by a selection panel.

Eligibility criteria: Events/activities will be eligible for the small grants scheme if they:

- Take place on or close to the World Hearing Day (3 March 2021)
- Focus on the theme: "Hearing care for ALL! Screen. Rehabilitate. Communicate"
- Target the general population and/or policymakers, to raise awareness about hearing loss
- Use WHO awareness materials for the day
- Have a measurable outcome
- Are registered on the WHO website

Requirements / Timeline

- Make an application by 11 January 2021 at cghh.usu.edu/smallgrants/2021/
- Provide details of the host organization/institution or the organizer
- Notification of selected grantees will be made by 5 February 2021
- Following the event, a brief report with photos must be submitted to WHO by 12 March 2021. Photos must include a signed declaration of consent from recognizable persons in the photographs
- Selected grantees will receive up to USD 800 by 31 March 2021

For further information about the selection criteria and process please go to:
cghh.usu.edu/smallgrants/2021/





Inclusive Education Project

Realities Facing Hard of Hearing Learners in Uganda and Nepal

Hard of hearing students need to be separately identified in data collection so that their distinct educational needs can be met. This was one of the findings in a newly released IFHOH report *Realities Facing Hard of Hearing Learners in Uganda and Nepal*.

Presenters during a webinar on 3 November 2020 also discussed other findings from 82 field interviews with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and key stakeholders. These findings include:

- The invisibility of the needs of hard of hearing learners in educational policies
- Lack of knowledge about the accessibility and communication requirements of hard of hearing learners
- Lack of training specific to the needs of hard of hearing learners for teaching and educational administrative staff

The report is available on the IFHOH website (www.ifhoh.org), and the webinar can be viewed at [IFHOH Workshop on Inclusive Education - November 30th 2020 - YouTube](#).

The presenters included team members for the project: Karina Chupina, project lead consultant; Jeevan Bhattarai, project associate - Nepal; Brender Wanyana, project associate - Uganda; Patrick Gift Egessa, project member - Uganda; Neeta Keshary, project member - Nepal, and Ruth Warick, project manager.



Patrick Gift Egessa, Brender Wanyana, Ruth Warick, Neeta Keshary, Karina Chupina, and Jeevan Bhattarai

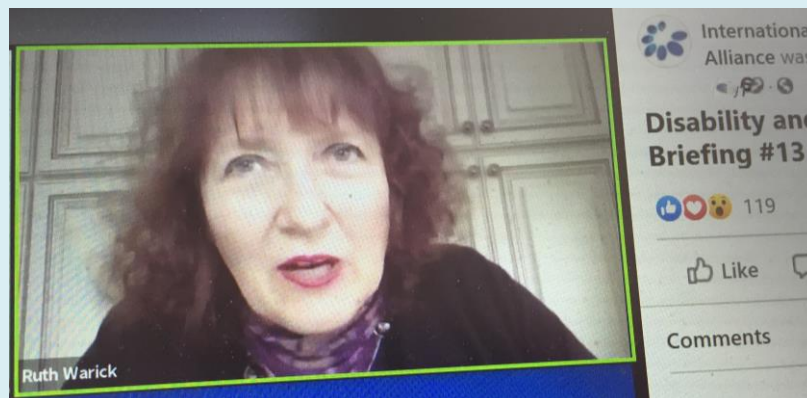
International Disability Alliance



IFHOH is a member of the International Disability Alliance (IDA), a network of regional and international disability organizations. Ruth Warick serves as IDA's first vice-president and was active during the recent Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The event was held mostly online during the first week of December 2020.

During this COSP, Ruth Warick's activities included:

- Moderating a session of the Special Rapporteur and Chair of the CRPD Committee
- Presenting at a session on Independent Monitoring for the CRPD
- Presenting on an Inclusive Education Framework during a special event on education.



Ruth Warick actively participating online in the COSP (December 2020)

In addition, with the encouragement of the IDA, IFHOH has entered into arrangements for three Fellows to engage in projects related to employment and hearing health care access during COVID-19.

IFHOH is also taking part in the second phase of the IDA Inclusive Education Flagship and is involved in the IDA's Employment Flagship. For more information on IFHOH's involvement with IDA, please feel free to contact Ruth by email at president@ifhoh.org.



IFHOH/IDA Fellows Appointed

Employment of Hard of Hearing People in Uganda

The International Federation of Hard of Hearing people (IFHOH) and the International Disability Alliance (IDA) are pleased to announce that two Fellows will be undertaking work on the employment of persons who have a hearing loss in Uganda. Brender Wanyana and Moses Serwadda are the first Fellows hired by IFHOH and will be working on the employment project until end of June 2021.

This Fellowship Programme has a dual objective of providing support to the member organization's capacity to advance the rights of persons with disabilities while also building the capacities of individual disability activists through learning, mentorship, exposure to different policy, and project processes. This Fellowship will involve the completion of interviews on employment issues with hard of hearing persons and employers, the review of available data and research, and the preparation of webinars on employment issues. The following is further information about the two Fellows, the first to be hired by IFHOH.



Brender Wanyana

Ms. Wanyana is a teacher by profession, holding a Bachelor Arts in Education and an Advanced Certificate of Education. She has completed the IDA 's training program, Bridge CRPD-SDGs Modules 1 and 2. She has previously served as a field researcher for IFHOH's Inclusive Education Project during which she conducted interviews with students, parents, teachers and educational stakeholders, later preparing a summary of her research findings. She has been active in the consumer movement as an advocate, mobilizing parents and creating community awareness. She has a hearing loss from a young age when her left ear drum was damaged. She possesses the temperament and ability to be a Fellow dealing with employment issues. She is the Treasurer for the Uganda National Association of the Hard of Hearing. She believes in the importance of respect for inherent dignity and autonomy of individuals with a hearing loss.



Moses Serwadda

Mr. Serwadda is a hard of hearing inclusion activist with over 7 years of experience, including the founding of the Uganda Federation of the Hard of Hearing, where he currently works as the Programs Coordinator. Moses has previously volunteered at the Disability Employment Rights Initiative (DERI), where he conducted training events to equip youth with disabilities with the skills necessary to acquire employment and connected them to potential employers. He also been at the frontline of coordinating the Inclusion Works program since its inception to ensure that hard of hearing are included under SightSavers. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology and a Certificate in Special Needs and Rehabilitation. He is an alumnus of the 2019 Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and the IDA Bridge CRPD-SDGs Modules 1 & 2 trainings held in Uganda in 2018. Moses is a peer educator on hearing loss issues and serves on the Safe Listening Committee of the World Hearing Forum.

For more information on this Fellowship programme, please contact Ruth Warick at president@ifhoh.org.

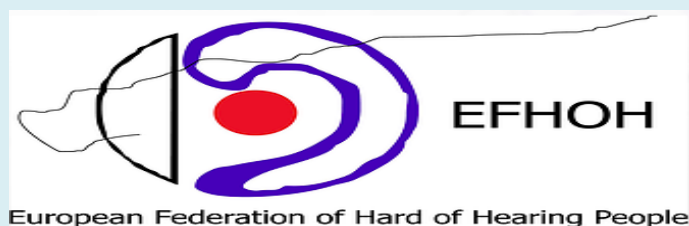
Applications Open for Hearing Health Care Fellowship

Hearing Health Care Access & Communication During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond

IFHOH with IDA is pleased to announce a new project related to hearing health care and best communication and access practises. A Fellow will undertake the groundwork for the project in the first half of 2021. Eligible hard of hearing persons from developing countries are urged to apply for the full-time Fellowship.

The deadline to apply is **27 December 2020**. For the application form please go to [Career & Consultancy Opportunities | International Disability Alliance](https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/opportunities) (www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/opportunities) and go to the section on Fellowships.





EFHOH News



By **Marcel Bobeldijk, EFHOH President**

EFHOH is very pleased to share our December 2020 Newsletter with you. It is a new format, and by this Newsletter we are also proud to introduce you to our two new Newsletter editors, Alper Coskun and Ece Saygi. In a fabulous cooperation with the EFHOH webmaster, our two new editors finished preparing the EFHOH Newsletter, and we started distribution on 10 December 2020.

2020 has been a very strange and unpleasant year for all of us. All of the EFHOH Board members have absolutely no doubt that they have all missed very much meeting with hard of hearing people throughout the year.

With the EFHOH Newsletter 2020 the EFHOH Board wishes you all a very nice Christmas and a Happy New Year.

We really look forward to the next time we can meet you anywhere in Europe or even somewhere in the World.

Take good care - this is still needed.

When you go to this link, you need to click on 'here' at the bottom of the screen, and then the Newsletter will open. We wish you a nice read.
See you all hopefully soon.

<https://www.efhoh.org/efhoh-newsletter-december-2020/>



WHO's Regional Leadership in Europe Engages to Reinforce Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the COVID-19 Response



On Monday, 23 November 2020, the EDF President, Yannis Vardakastanis, met with Dr. Hans Kluge, Regional Representative for WHO in Europe, to discuss ways in which children and adults with disabilities can be included in the pandemic response.

(Editor's Note: The ideas in this report may be of interest to all IFHOH members, even those not in Europe.) Source: Disability Voice 9 (EDF's newsletter)

As COVID-19 hit the world, [the European Disability Forum \(EDF\) expressed](#) the importance of [inclusive responses to the pandemic](#) with full involvement of persons with disabilities. Right from the beginning of the pandemic, persons with disabilities were discriminated against and excluded from government responses. EDF began its cooperation with the WHO European regional office to develop inclusive [COVID 19 public health information](#). The meeting on 23 November 2020 served to take stock of the current situation and health priorities and outline future cooperation.

The meeting, which was also attended by a representative of the Healthy ageing, Human resource for Health & Health Services, and Strategic partnership units of WHO EURO was a good opportunity to examine the situation of persons with disabilities during this second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Priorities raised by EDF, included the lack of accessibility and inclusion in public health messaging, denial of healthcare and discriminatory triage guidelines, invisibility of persons with disabilities in data and statistics, and exclusion of children with disabilities from quality schooling during school shutdowns.



Yannis Vardakastanis
EDF President



**Dr. Hans Kluge,
WHO Europe**

Dr. Kluge shared the general strategy of WHO for the Euro region. He stated his commitment to leave no-one behind and to forge cooperation with all partners. He reflected on the importance of keeping primary schools open, safely, to ensure that children with disabilities do not get excluded. He also emphasised the importance of inclusive accessible public health messages.

Now that we are hearing good news about effective vaccine development, EDF called on WHO to support the prioritization of persons with disabilities for vaccine roll-out.

Overall, the meeting laid out some key priorities for EDF and WHO's cooperation in the region, including inclusive and accessible public health messaging and cooperation at the national level between DPOs and WHO representatives in the countries.

"We appreciate deeply the commitment of WHO to cooperate with the Disability Movement in the European region. Access to a good standard of health is a human right. We know that this right is not a reality for all. Leaving no-one behind must be our shared vision. The pandemic, described by Dr. Kluge in our meeting as a 'human catastrophe' has side-lined persons with disabilities even further in our societies. We need to reverse this. It should reinforce our determination to ensure access for all to the best health, the best standard of living, and the most choices and opportunities in life," stated EDF President.

[Read more about our project with the WHO Europe](#)

[Read more about the WHO EURO disability and rehabilitation work](#)

[Read more about EDF COVID-19 related work](#)

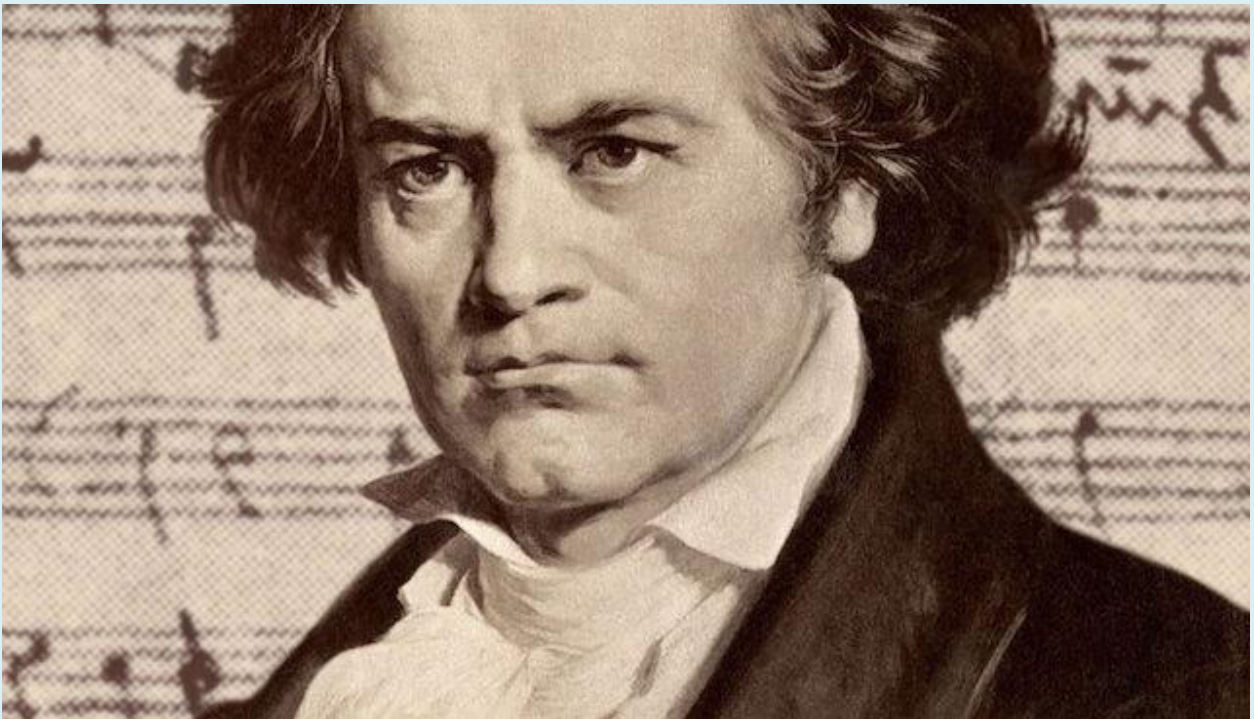
[Read more about EDF's recommendations on vaccination](#)

With [53 country offices](#) across the WHO European region, the WHO Europe wants its response to COVID-19 to be fully inclusive of persons with disabilities. WHO EURO wants also to ensure it is in line with the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) and the new global guidance published by WHO - [WHO Disability Consideration on COVID-19](#) - and by Antonio Guterres - the [UNSG policy brief on disability](#). It is crucial that WHO staff, national ministries, and other key partners involve persons with disabilities and their representative organisations (DPOs), to address the range of risks which persons with disabilities face as a result of COVID-19.

EDF will develop a series of materials focusing on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in response to COVID-19. EDF will work on 'how' to ensure persons with disabilities are included in the COVID-19 response. EDF will therefore focus on COVID-19 prevention, access to health services, and [rehabilitation](#).

This Holiday Season, We Can all Learn a Lesson from Beethoven

By [Arthur C. Brooks](#) - Source: *The Washington Post*, 13 December 2019
(https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/this-holiday-season-we-can-all-learn-a-lesson-from-beethoven/2019/12/13/71f21aba-1d0e-11ea-b4c1-fd0d91b60d9e_story.html)



"For the last three years my hearing has grown steadily weaker . . . in the theatre I have to get very close to the orchestra to understand the performers, and . . . from a distance I do not hear the high notes of the instruments and the singers' voices."

These are the words of Ludwig van Beethoven in [1801](#), when he was 30. His 249th birthday is this week (birthdate was Dec. 16, 1770). (Editor's Note: This article was published in 2019, so, this year it is his 250th!)

Beethoven was, as we now know, going deaf. Already quite famous as a pianist and composer, he had for several years experienced buzzing and ringing in his ears; by 1800, his hearing was in full decline. The problem thereafter worsened by the year, and it became clear to him and those around him that there was no hope of remission. But what happened as a result changed the world of music, and holds a lesson for us more than two centuries later.

For a long time, Beethoven raged against his decline, insisting on performing, with worse and worse results. To be able to hear his own playing, he banged on pianos so forcefully that he often left them wrecked. "In forte passages the poor deaf man pounded on the keys until the strings jangled," [wrote](#) his friend and fellow composer Ludwig Spohr. "I was deeply saddened at so hard a fate."

Beethoven confided in friends that without sound, his life would be meaningless. One close to him [wrote](#) of his laments: "It is a cry of revolt and of heart-rending pain — one cannot hear it but be shaken with pity. He is ready to end his life; only moral rectitude keeps him back."

He finally gave up performing as his deafness progressed but found ways to keep composing. His housekeepers noticed that he would try to feel the timbre of notes on the piano by putting a pencil in his mouth and touching it to the soundboard while he played. When his hearing was partial, he apparently avoided using notes with the frequencies he could not hear. A 2011 [analysis](#) in the British Medical Journal shows that high notes (above 1568 Hz) made up 80 percent of his string quartets written in his 20s but dropped to less than 20 percent in his 40s.

In the last decade of Beethoven's life (he died at 56), his deafness was complete, so music could reside only in his imagination. That meant the end of his compositional career, right? Wrong, of course. During that period, Beethoven wrote the music that would define his unique style, change music permanently and give him a legacy as one of the greatest composers of all time.

Entirely deaf, Beethoven wrote his best string quartets (with more high notes than in works from the previous decade), his magisterial "[Missa Solemnis](#)" and his greatest triumph of all, the [Ninth Symphony](#). He insisted on conducting the latter piece's premier (although legend has it there was a second conductor in the wings whom the orchestra was actually following). After the performance, unaware of the thunderous ovation, Beethoven was physically turned by one of the musicians to see the jubilant audience members on their feet after hearing what has come to be regarded by many as the greatest orchestral piece ever written.

It seems a mystery that Beethoven became more original and brilliant as a composer in inverse proportion to his ability to hear his own — and others' — music. But maybe it isn't so surprising. As his hearing deteriorated, he was less influenced by the prevailing compositional fashions, and more by the musical structures forming inside his own head. His early work is pleasantly reminiscent of his early instructor, the hugely popular Josef Haydn. Beethoven's later work became so original that he was, and is, regarded as the father of music's romantic period. "He opened up a new world in music," said French romantic master [Hector Berlioz](#). "Beethoven is not human."

Deafness freed Beethoven as a composer because he no longer had society's soundtrack in his ears.

Perhaps therein lies a lesson for each of us. I know, I know: You're no Beethoven. But as you read the lines above, maybe you could relate to the great composer's loss in some small way. Have you lost something that defined your identity? Maybe it involves your looks. Or your social prestige. Or your professional relevance.

How might this loss set you free? You might finally define yourself in new ways, free from the boundaries you set for yourself based on the expectations of others. For example, as you age, what if you lean in to the "declines" — really just natural changes — and use your wisdom more than your beauty and wits? What if you turn your energy from impressing strangers to being completely present with the people you love?

This holiday season, perhaps we can all learn a lesson from the life of the great Beethoven. Take time to listen to the [Ninth](#) and give deep thought to the changes in your own life. You might not revolutionize music, but maybe you will discover joy in the freedom that can come from losing something, but allowing yourself to grow.

- With thanks to *The Washington Post*

Calendar of Events

30 - 31 January 2021 - IFHOHYP Annual General Meeting 2020



Location: Online

The International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People (IFHOHYP) is happy to announce that the IFHOHYP Annual General Meeting 2020 will take place on the 30 - 31 January 2021 18:00 - 21:00 CEST (yes, we are aware that this is not 2020 anymore). It will take place online and be supported by palantypists to ensure accessibility for everyone.

Sign up to become an observer of this event! There are no limits of how many can sign up and we hope many young people from all over the world will join. **Sign up here:** <https://buff.ly/2VfaChv>

The AGM will consist of both a decision-making phase and fun time where we will socialize and play games.

(Use this tool to convert CET time to your local time: <https://www.thetimezoneconverter.com>.)

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19 May 2021 - EFHOH Annual General Meeting 2021



Location: Online

Information:

<https://www.efhoh.org/efhoh-world-congress-2020/>

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) expects to hold its Annual General Meeting online on 19 May 2021 (TBC). More information is forthcoming in January 2021. Please check the link above for updates,

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**13 - 17 September 2021 - International Conference for Pastoral Care
among Hard of Hearing - IVSS Churchear**



Location: Haus Hainstein in Eisenach, Germany

Information: <http://www.churcheear.org>

Contact: Barbara Adamus, board member

Email: post@churcheear.org

The International Conference for Pastoral Care among Hard of Hearing was postponed this year and is now scheduled to take place 13 - 17 September 2021. The conference site remains the same.

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The International Federation on Ageing (IFA) is thrilled to announce that the [15th Global Conference on Ageing "Rights Matter"](#) will be convened, for the first time, both virtually and in-person in Niagara Falls, Canada on 9-12 November 2021. [Pre-conference master classes and summits](#) will be held on 9 November 2021.

[Register now](#) to join - in-person and virtually - with delegates from government, NGOs, industry, academia and the global community of older people from 9-12 November 2021.

The IFA 15th Global Conference will include presentations, debates and discussions on the action areas of the [Decade of Healthy Ageing](#): ageism, age-friendly cities and communities, primary health care, and long-term care, along with the theme older people and pandemics forming the structural pillars of the IFA 15th Global Conference on Ageing "Rights Matter". Submit an abstract now or find out more about these five themes at www.ifa2021.ngo.

The [15th Global Conference on Ageing](#) comes at a time when our vision must be a world of healthy older people whose rights are both protected and respected by creating an environment that enables older people to do what they have reason to value.

The IFA looks forward to seeing you - in-person or virtually - in November 2021. If you need any assistance in registering or submitting an abstract, please do not hesitate in contacting the Conference and Events Manager Ms Nathalia Wittingham at NWittingham@ifa.ngo.

* * * * *

First part of 2022 - Women Deliver 2022 Conference

Location: TBD

Information: at [WD2022.org](https://www.wd2022.org)

Contact: Cara Bronander

Email: cbronander@womendeliver.org

Every three years, the Women Deliver Conference galvanizes momentum for gender equality. It is a bold and diverse gathering, a fueling station of ideas, and generator of action, convening thousands to identify solutions and drive change for girls and women. WD2022 will take place in the first half of 2022. The location and dates will be announced by the end of 2020. Organizers say that, regardless of location, WD2022 will have a robust digital program and global dialogue component - making participation open to everyone. Organizers have been conducting a global community survey and based on this guidance, specific themes, tracks, and sessions will be developed. IFHOH representatives are among the persons consulted so it can be expected that the events will be accessible to hard of hearing people. Find out more at <https://www.wd2022.org/>.



IFHOH JOURNAL – EDITOR’S NOTE

Let us help you attract participants to your events!

Please send me an email providing me with details.

Carole Willans, Editor, *IFHOH Journal*, email: journal@ifhoh.org

News Bytes

News Bytes

COVID-19 AND HEARING LOSS: WHAT WE KNOW



Based on published case reports, it appears that sudden hearing loss is *rarely* a symptom of coronavirus onset. What does appear to be a little more common (though still rare) is developing hearing loss or tinnitus as a complication of COVID-19 infection, meaning it is not part of the initial symptoms but develops later. In October 2020, the medical journal BMJ Case Reports published a [case study](#) of a 45-year-old British man who developed tinnitus and sudden hearing loss in one ear after he became critically ill with COVID-19. His hearing partially recovered after he received steroid treatment. While it is not possible to prove that COVID-19 directly caused his hearing loss, the authors explained, it seems likely this was the case, because he did not receive any drugs that include hearing loss as a side effect (known as ototoxicity). ***“Overall, research shows that hearing loss and tinnitus are not common symptoms of COVID-19 infection; nor are they considered common complications as the disease progresses.”*** However, it is well-known that some medications used to treat the coronavirus (e.g., quinine, chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine) carry a relatively high risk of hearing loss or tinnitus as a side effect. Research is needed to understand how the coronavirus affects hearing and balance. (Source: *Healthy Hearing*, [COVID-19 and hearing loss: What we know](#), Joy Victory | 18 December 2020, <https://www.healthyhearing.com/report>)

TOTALLY IMPLANTABLE COCHLEAR IMPLANTS

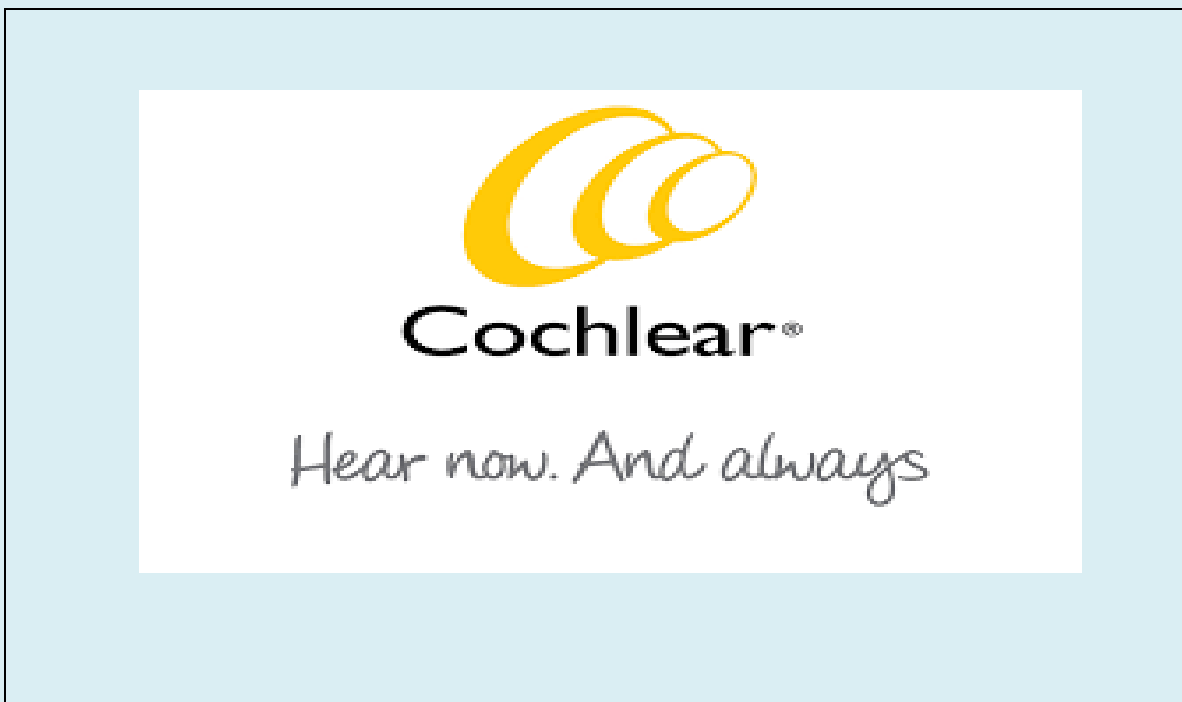


Prof. Dr. Philippe Lefebvre

On 24 September, the first person in Europe received a novel totally implantable cochlear implant (TICI). It was implanted by Prof. Dr. Philippe Lefebvre, head of the ENT Department of the CHU of Liège and Professor at the University of Liège in Belgium within a feasibility study. The TICI is a product of MED-EL. It will take several years before it receives market approval.

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This issue features Cochlear!



Cochlear believes that deaf and hard of hearing people should have access to hearing health care and the hearing technology they need to enable them to live full and connected lives.

Cochlear's implantable hearing technology has helped over 450,000 people of all ages in over 100 countries to live full and active lives by reconnecting them with family, friends, community, and work.

IFHOH JOURNAL

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is February 15, 2021.
Contributions are welcome!

The preferred length for articles is one page (400 to 500 words). Short and long articles, from 25 to 1,500 words, may also be accepted. News bytes and announcements of coming events are appreciated, including photographs and illustrations. Please send pictures in jpeg format and files as rich text or word documents. Many thanks!

Carole Willans, Editor, *IFHOH Journal*, email: journal@ifhoh.org



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The International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) is an international non-governmental organisation representing the interests of more than 300 million hard of hearing people worldwide. IFHOH is registered as a charitable organisation at Vereinsregister Amtsgericht Hamburg, Germany (Nr. 69 VR 10 527) and is also an International Non-Governmental Organisation having special consultative status with the United Nations' Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). IFHOH is a member of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and works closely with the UN system using the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a tool for change.



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IFHOH Board (from left to right): Heikki Niemi, Avi Blau, Ruth Warick, Patrick Gift Egessa, Marcel Bobeldijk and Hanh Duong Phuong (Hanh is photo-shopped in)

MERRY
Christ
MAS

& HAPPY NEW YEAR!

— 2021 —

**May you be filled with the joy
and excitement of the season,
and the hope of a new year.**

