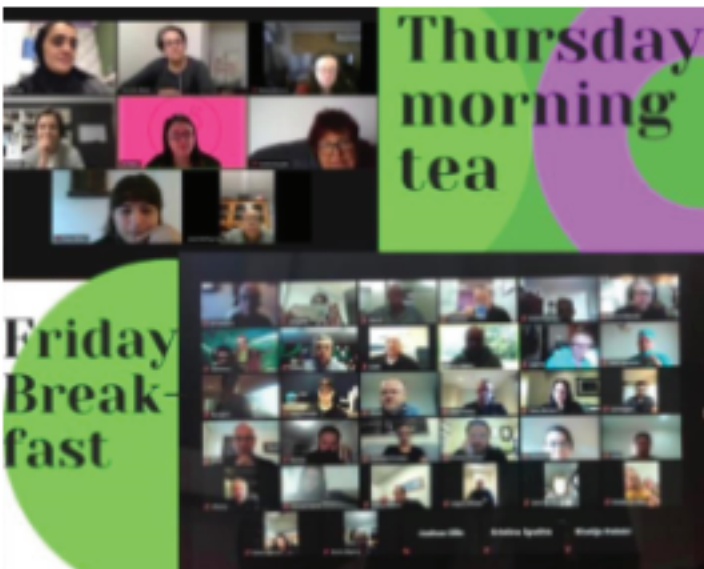




Casey Hearing is 4 years old!



On behalf of the Casey Hearing team, I'd like to say a massive thank you to all the families we've worked with, our clients, hearing aid manufacturer reps, community engagement partners, BNI members and Women Making it Work (WMIW) members for their support over the past 4 years. The past year has certainly been one of growth and resilience for the Casey Hearing community.

We are very grateful to our clients for being so open to our new way of working that incorporates social distancing. Your willingness to try drive-through services and engage through video conferencing (even at the age of 91 years) shows the positive and growth mindsets of the people that we are so blessed to work with.

Celebrating the joys of connecting communities has been one of our highlights this year. We look forward to continuing to work with all our clients so they can fully participate in life through the gift of improved hearing as well as working in the community and business sectors so those spaces can become more accessible for people with hearing concerns, thereby reducing the stigma of hearing loss.



Ear wax

Ear wax is completely natural, normal and clean. Some of us produce more than others, when we combine this with narrow or bendy ear canals we can see people whose ears become blocked with wax.

The feeling isn't pleasant, and hearing can be reduced. For hearing aid users, it can affect the working of their devices. Most people want it resolved sooner rather than later.

Casey Hearing offers micro-suction wax removal, where few drops are sometimes needed, and the wax is sucked out by a tiny vacuum.

So how has this been affected by a pandemic?

Firstly, to remove the wax the clinician needs to be close to you, touching your ear and sitting within a couple of feet. It's impossible to adhere to social distancing.

The second is the cough reflex. For a small group of people working in the ear canal makes them cough. That is because part of our vagus nerve runs in the ear canal and for some its particularly sensitive. And as you know, a cough generates airborne particles which increases the risk of transmission.

This is why we stopped carrying out wax removal in the short term. It's too risky for you, and for clinicians like me.

So what should you do in the meantime?

You should NOT put drops into you ears if you feel like they are getting blocked NOR give them a quick blast under the shower head?

The best thing to do is to keep your ears as dry as you possibly can at this time. If liquids go into the wax it will get bigger, and in the short term feel more uncomfortable. The best thing you can do is to keep them dry, that way as the wax loses moisture it will shrink a little- even the tiniest gap in there will offer some relief.

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Then, when it's safe to do so we can remove it with micro suction.

What are we doing to protect against Covid-19?

- **Scheduling** – We are timing appointments to ensure minimal patient interaction. The scheduling allows us to clean the office between patients and to ensure we don't have anyone waiting in the waiting room.
- **Phone consultations** – Our audiologist contacts patients telephonically before their consultation to take a case history and to get as much information as possible so as to reduce the amount of time you need to spend in the office.
- **Sanitisation** – All tools, instruments, and surfaces are thoroughly sanitised between patients.
- **Clinician Care** – Frequent 20-second handwashing, protective gear, and monitoring our own health.

Keeping everyone safe in our clinic is our top priority. When patients come in for their appointments, they are offered to use hand sanitiser or wash their hands, we practise physical distancing and masks are available to you on request. Patients who come in for ear wax removal are required to wear a mask.

We will continue to post hearing aid batteries and offer drive through services to patients who feel they or their family members are at risk of contracting the infection. We will continue to support the Casey Hearing community to access services remotely so they can continue to stay home and stay safe.

If wearing a face mask in public, please be mindful that some may need to lip read to communicate with you.



Read the perspective of someone with a hearing loss on communication with masks.

“I found communication with a mask very challenging during this pandemic as I do lip reading.

Wearing face masks and coverings is important because it helps prevent the spread of COVID-19, but wearing the mask introduces new challenges for the deaf and hard of hearing. It makes communication more difficult as it prevents lip reading and seeing facial expressions, which is a vital part of communication.

Our natural instinct is to move closer to people to understand them, this however is not complying with social distancing.

Some advice or tips:

1. Speak loud and clear, but don't shout – Shouting makes communication more difficult.
2. Take your time speaking – Speak slower than normal, but again if it's too slow, it's more difficult to interpret missed words and it takes too long to hear the whole sentence.
3. Ask follow up questions - Ensuring that the person understood what you were saying. If the person misunderstood, please repeat and attempt to use shorter sentences.
4. Be mindful of your environment – Try to move away from any type of distracting noise.
5. If you are in a safe environment, you can take a few steps backward and remove your mask so that the person can lip read. This may not be the safest option, therefore, please ensure if doing this that you are adhering to social distancing regulations. I've been told that transparency masks fog up, which makes lip reading difficult.
6. You may use a whiteboard or pen and paper to write a message. I've heard about speech to text apps on cell phones, but haven't tried to use it yet.

Be patient with us as we are still adapting to this new challenge. One of the most beautiful things we can do is to help one another. A little bit of kindness goes a long way. “

(Tahseen Ahmed, Occupational Therapist, Groote Schuur Hospital, South Africa)

YOU HAVE
better days
AHEAD OF YOU
THAN YOU HAVE
BEHIND YOU.

@CHRISTINECAINE



We are thinking of you all as Melbourne Metro heads into our second lock down. There are better days ahead so let's look towards that. Stay home and be safe. If there is anything we can do to support you so you don't need to be coming to the clinic, please let us know. Hopefully we return to engaging in life without restrictions really soon.

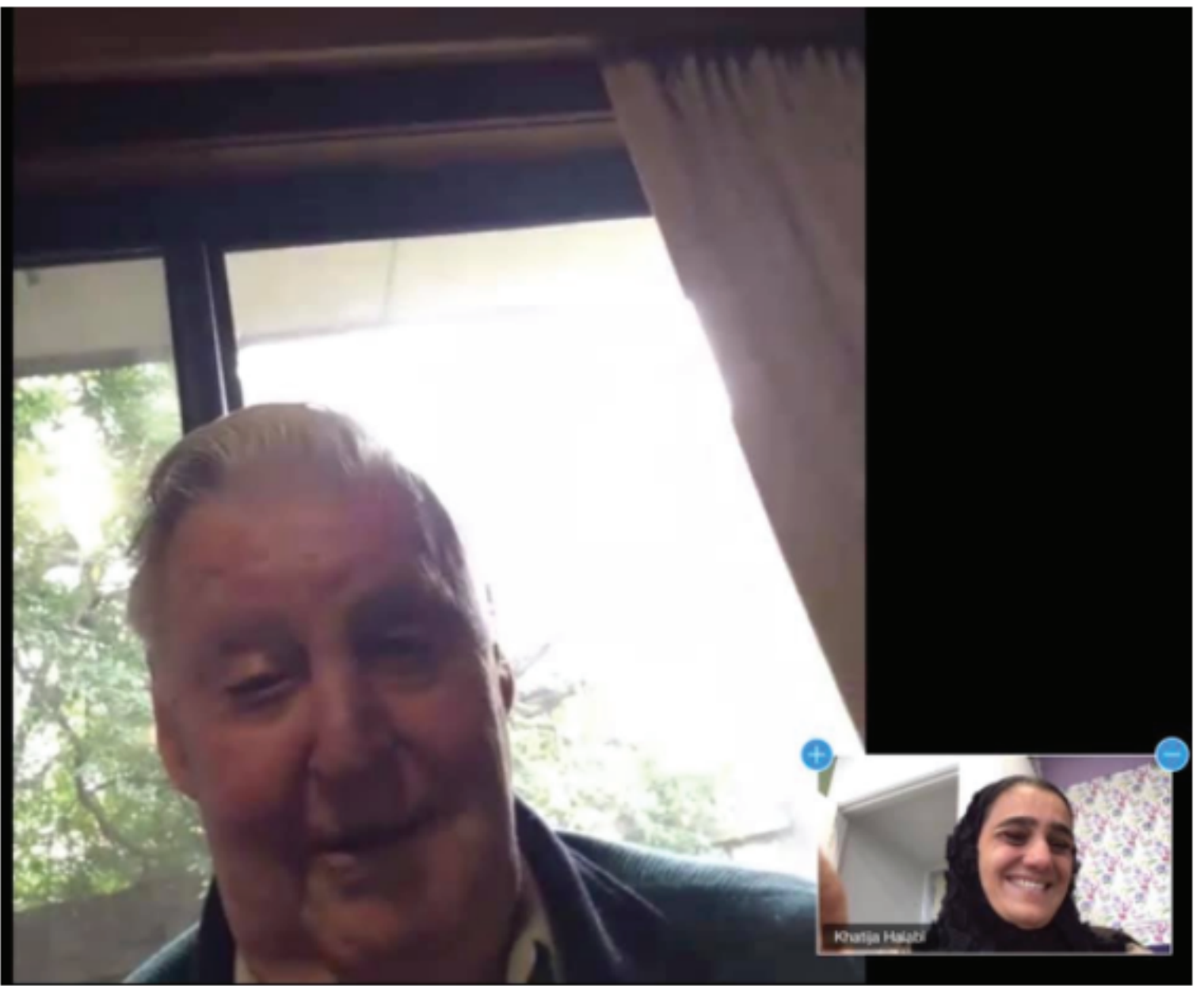


Testimonials

Thank you to our patients who send through reviews. Hearing about your journey with us is an important way of improving our services.

Introducing Tracey, our receptionist, who works alongside Jemma. We love her professional service and friendly manner with the families we engage with.

"Thank you Tracey for your patience on the phone when we got lost and arrived late." Barb and Clive



"My mother-in-law suggested I take my 90 year old father (Wilf) to Khatija at Casey Hearing as she was so happy with her new hearing aids. At Wilf's original assessment, we were both impressed with Khatija's care, thoroughness and kindness. Stage 3 isolation restrictions came into force just as the new hearing aids were ready and we were able to receive instruction and try the new hearing aids in the safety of my parents' home via a Zoom conference. The improvement in hearing was instant, Wilf could suddenly hear my mother playing the piano through two closed doors and he is hearing better than he has for over 10 years. We highly recommend Khatija".

Mary and Wilfred

