

# CICADA BUZZ

## PROF'S BOOK LAUNCH

12<sup>th</sup> March 2017

This is a very special occasion for CICADA. I am so pleased to see this book and be here to officially LAUNCH it. This has been a project of CICADA for some years now and is our tribute to Bill Gibson for everything he has done for us.

CICADA was initiated in 1984 and Bill and Alex Gibson showed great enthusiasm and backed us right from the start. CICADA has worked alongside SCIC and Cochlear Ltd for many years and we are proud that both of these organisations agreed to be our partners in this project to produce the biography of Bill Gibson.

So thank you to SCIC and Cochlear Ltd for your support and thank you to our author, Tina Allen, for doing the hard yards, putting pen to paper, so to speak and getting the job done.

It was Alan Jones, our previous CICADA President who first proposed that we should commission a biography of Bill. We wanted everyone to know this story - not just for what Bill has done to build the CI program in Australia, but also for the person he is.

He is well-loved and admired by many, though he always gets a bit embarrassed when you put him on a pedestal, unless he is lecturing or speaking at a conference !! He seems to have an uncanny ability to see things from a new and different perspective.

Bill Gibson challenged the status quo, saw opportunities, took them and created new ones. He is a great team player and drew together amazing people to work with him and establish the NSW CI program as a world leader. He is always first to acknowledge the contributions that others have made to the program, and was always ready to listen to the ideas of his co-workers and encourage and support his staff at SCIC. Bill tries to do his best by everyone.

They do say that behind every good man there is a good woman and Alex Gibson has been a true champion, supporting Bill through all these challenging and wonderful times. They have been great supporters of CICADA from the beginning, holding Christmas parties at their own home in the early years and participating in our BBQ days like we were part of the family.

So at this point, Bill and Alex, you might be quite glad that the book project is completed.

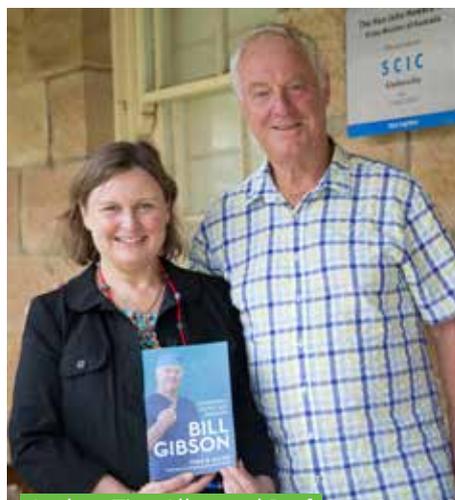
Our intention was to honour you, though I'm wondering if having a biography written is more painful than an operation! Spending hours of your time, drawing on 70 years of memories and revising written chapters!

I feel blessed to have witnessed this great history of the CI program. The startling discovery that I was suddenly and profoundly deaf, nearly 33 years ago, has turned out to be quite an amazing and rewarding experience and I am glad that Tina's words record this journey.

I think I can say that Prof gave me my life back!

To the recipients of CI's Bill is truly our **HEARO**.

Sue Walters.



Author, Tina Allen and Prof

## Presidents Report



### JUNE 2017

We had a lovely Autumn day for our BBQ gathering at Gladesville SCIC on 21st May. A crowd of about 85 people attended to hear our Guest Speaker, The Honourable Peter Anderson.

Mr Anderson was the first NSW Health Minister to provide public funding for the adult CI Program in 1987. This was a vote of confidence in Bill Gibson and a vital decision that really gave the fledgling CI program the boost it needed. In May 1988, CICADA arranged a formal dinner at Kirribilli RSL Club and invited Mr Anderson as guest of honour to thank him.

It was very nice to invite him back to CICADA and listen to Mr Anderson's engaging presentation, about how he met Bill Gibson and learned about the CI, followed through with funding and then proceeded to assist with funding for the newborn hearing screening program. Peter spoke with great enthusiasm about his long career in politics, policing and national security, his embracing of multiculturalism and the establishing of the Penrith Performing and Visual arts complex. He stayed back for the sausage sizzle, had a chat with people and drew our raffle. So THANK YOU AGAIN, Peter Anderson for your dedicated service to others.

# State CICADA Associations

## New South Wales

### CICADA AUSTRALIA INC.

Secretary: Judy Cassell  
PO Box 5028  
South Turramurra NSW 2074  
Email: jcassell6@bigpond.com

## Queensland

### CICADA QUEENSLAND

Secretary: Shirley Edwards  
85 Crotona Rd  
Capalaba QLD 4157  
Ph/Fax: (07) 3824 5003  
Email: info@cicadaqld.com.au

## South Australia

### CICADA SOUTH AUSTRALIA

PO Box 415  
Angaston SA 5353  
Email: mailadmin@cicadasa.org.au

## Western Australia

### CICADA CLUB W.A. INC.

Coordinator: Lynette Fleming  
33 Framfield Way  
Balga WA 6061  
Phone: (08) 9349 7712  
Fax: (08) 9349 9763

## Northern Territory

### CICADA DARWIN

Coordinator Chris Blackham-Davison  
Email: Deafncrazy@gmail.com  
SMS: 0427 897 170

## ACT

### CICADA ACT INC

Secretary: Pete Halsey  
pete.halsey@actdrc.org.au  
Mob: 0438 203 110 sms only

## Hook Up Online And Share Your News

Please visit us at [www.cicada.org.au](http://www.cicada.org.au)  
Or our Facebook page Cicada Australia Inc.  
Darwin friends now have their own  
Facebook page Cicada Northern Territory

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email, please send your details to [suewalters@cicada.org.au](mailto:suewalters@cicada.org.au)

Donations over \$2 to CICADA are tax-deductible.

CICADA Australia Inc. thanks Cochlear Ltd. for supporting the design, printing and distribution of this newsletter.

Presidents Report continued...

Thanks to Chris Rehn, CEO from RIDBC for attending and wisely summing up, clarifying just how important it was to have Mr Anderson as an advocate on our behalf, for the CI program and also initiating newborn hearing screening in NSW hospitals. Chris said what really resonates in Peter's work is that he believes in equity and a fair go for all. He didn't just start things, he saw them through.

David Brady, Chair of the Deafness Forum also spoke briefly about the BREAK THE SOUND BARRIER campaign to make hearing loss a national health priority and create awareness of the issues related to hearing loss.



Peter Anderson, Sue Walters and David Brady

I appreciate the assistance of Brad Doonan, who helped to facilitate live captioning services and Lee Smith from Steno-MeToo who provided excellent captions on the day. I hope to provide the transcript from the day on our CICADA website soon.

I encourage you all to contribute items for our website, to keep it fresh and current. Personal stories of your implant journey are especially welcome. People who look at our site do like to read testimonials from other implant recipients, especially when they are making the decision to have an implant. It can be such a valuable resource for them.

Neville Lockhart and Pat Mitchell our webmistress, have recently updated the Guide To Hearing Loss which they wrote for our website. This is a very good document that clearly summarises information on hearing aids and implantable devices.

There is a calendar on the website where you can look for social events planned for this year. We have recently had expressions of interest from regional members wanting to start or re-invigorate new CICADA groups- Canberra, Newcastle and Taree are all interested and we are working with them to have some more dates on our calendar soon.

Just to show how things have changed since 1988, I want to give you some current statistics on the SCIC program, which is the largest CI centre in the

southern hemisphere, servicing clients from 3 months of age to 99 years. In partnership with RIDBC, there are SCIC centres in North Rocks, Waverly, Penrith, Hearing Hub at Macquarie Uni, Gladesville, Liverpool, Gosford, Wollongong, Port Macquarie, Lismore, Newcastle, Darwin and in a few months, Toowoomba Qld will be opening. Canberra SCIC re-opened in a new location in February 2016 as a "state of the art" facility in Deakin, officially launched by the Disability Discrimination Commissioner Alastair McEwin.

Dr Halit Sanli, SCIC biomedical engineer does a tally of the SCIC statistics at the end of every calendar year and I pulled a few figures from his analysis. There are currently 3088 clients actively using their implants, 927 of which are bilateral. Bill Gibson has performed 2097 implant operations, Catherine Birman 1111 and Melville da Cruz 461 as at Dec 2016.

Government funding is allocated to provide 49 implants at RPA, 56 at Children's Hospital Westmead and 12 at Westmead Public, amongst others.

CI's are changing the world for deaf people, opening up opportunities, enabling them to stay in touch and participate in the hearing world. The technology is advancing all the time and the idea of humans "merging with machines" has become a reality that has opened up new frontiers in research.

So these are very interesting times.



Peter Anderson receives a CICADA badge from Sue Walters, 25th May 1988

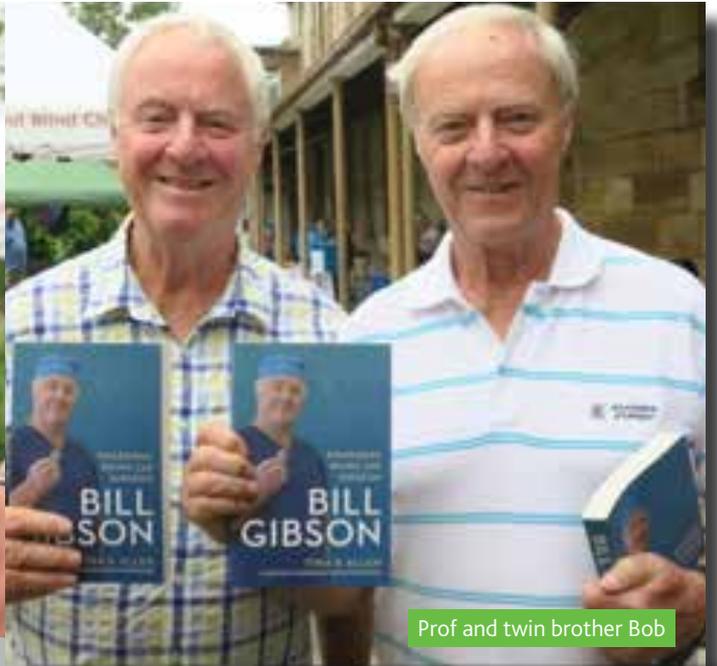
## Laughter is the Best Medicine

Finding a woman sobbing that she had locked her keys in her car,  
A passing soldier assures her that he can help. She looks on amazed as he removes his trousers, .....  
Rolls them into a tight ball and rubs them against the car door.  
Magically it opens.....  
"That's so clever," the woman gasps. "How did you do it?"  
"Easy," replies the man. "These are my khakis".

# BOOK LAUNCH



Prof and Alex



Prof and twin brother Bob



Sue and Prof – first telephone conversation with Cochlear implantee



Sue



Lunch



Prof signs book for Betty Rooney



Author, Tina Allen



Prof and Alex cut the cake

# WORD IS SPREADING ABOUT THE BILL GIBSON BIOGRAPHY

CICADA should be very proud of how the biography of Professor Bill Gibson has been received by the hearing and wider community, reports its author Tina Allen.

Since February this year there have been a number of successful book launches. Professor Gibson's efforts have also been praised during his appearance on Channel 7 and in three radio interviews including Chris Bath's evening show on 702 ABC Sydney.

The biography has received reviews in the newsletters of Better Hearing Australia (Whispers), Self-help for Hard of Hearing People (Hearing Matters) and the Whirled Foundation (Whirled News) as well as local newspapers and the Weekend Australian (review available on the CICADA website). Steven Carroll from the Sydney Morning Herald wrote in his review: '...it is a rounded portrait of someone who made a dramatic difference to the quality of life of thousands: the kind of story that often goes unsung, but which has now been given a voice'.

The aim of the biography was to make Bill Gibson's pioneering efforts better known. Most reviews also mention that CICADA commissioned the biography, so news about the club is spreading as well. To ensure that the story is preserved beyond its shelf life in bookshops, CICADA members and their friends can assist by enquiring if the book is available at their local library and requesting they stock a copy. Or alternatively you could purchase a copy from CICADA and donate it to your library. 'The library project' is something that we can all be involved in, as can writing a review of the book for your favourite on-line bookseller, i.e. Amazon, Booktopia, Dymocks and/or Collins Booksellers.



Tina Allen, Prof and David Allen



Book Launch at Sydney University. Professor Dame Marie Bashir, Alex Gibson, Prof, Professor Jennie Brand-Miller

## Sir Jack Brabham

**Former Cicada member and renowned racing driver, receives another honour.**

Just over 50 years on since Sir Jack Brabham AO, OBE claimed his third Formula 1 title. The Royal Australian Mint (the Mint) has honoured Jack's incredible contribution to the motor racing industry with the release of a special commemorative coin today.

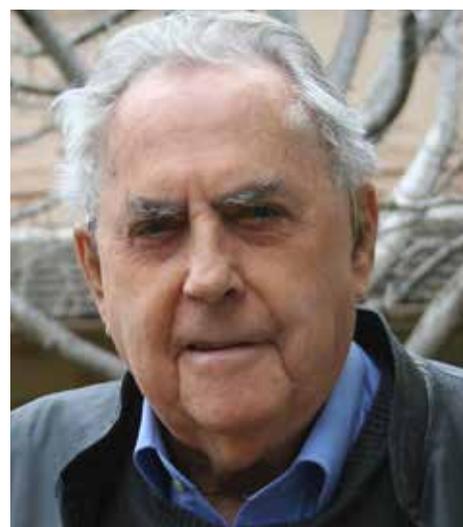
Featuring the very same racing car in which Brabham became the one and only Formula 1 driver to ever win a World Championship in a car of his own construction, this coin also depicts a portrait of Brabham and a green and gold track, the colours of his original car.

Royal Australian Mint Chief Executive Officer Mr Ross MacDiarmid said it was fascinating to think about the ingenuity Brabham applied over 50 years ago, not only to secure the historic 1966 world title, but also Jack's development of the

rear-engined cars we see today which resulted in his 1959 Formula 1 crown. "Sir Jack Brabham was not only a superb racing car driver but he was also an innovative engineer and pioneer, paving the way forward for motorsports," said Mr MacDiarmid. "As we enter the 2017 Formula 1 season, this coin celebrates one of the world's motor racing greats and his remarkable achievements, on and off the track."

Sir Jack Brabham's youngest son David Brabham said it was really rewarding to see his father's life and influence on motor racing being recognised on this special 50 cent coin.

"To have our father recognised through a commemorative coin by an iconic national institution, the Royal Australian Mint, is really special and very important in carrying the Brabham legacy as my father's achievements are likely to never be repeated with today's technology replacing hands-on experience," said Mr Brabham.



# Holly Taylor

(nee McDonell)

Posted this message on Facebook 4th June 2017  
Reprinted here with her permission:

When I was 4 years old, I became profoundly deaf after contracting bacterial meningitis. 30 years ago today, I became the world's first commercial paediatric recipient of the Cochlear implant, the Australian technology invented by Professor Graeme Clark, with my surgery done by Professor Bill Gibson.

There are now hundreds of thousands of people worldwide who have benefited from this technology. It is still extraordinary to me, even after so many years, that a profoundly deaf person like me can hear with the cochlear implant, and I am forever grateful for this. I am so lucky to have had 30 amazing years (so far) of hearing with the cochlear implant and I can only continue to offer my profound thanks to all those involved in my hearing journey.

In particular, thank you to Professor Graeme Clark and others involved in the invention and development of the Cochlear implant, including Jim Patrick, to Prof Bill Gibson and the Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre and to Cochlear Limited which has become one of the most loved companies and has been with me every step of the way as they continue to evolve the technology.

Thank you to my parents, to Viktorija McDonell, for having the foresight to make the decision to take a risk in the early days of the Cochlear implant, when everything was new and unknown, so her daughter could have a chance to live a hearing life. That was easily the best decision you ever made!



Viktorija McDonell, Prof Gibson and Holly Taylor February 2017



Our very own Sue Walters with Holly on the day of her switch on

# Cicada Raffle 2017

Cicada will be holding its annual raffle later in the year. If you would prefer NOT to receive raffle tickets, please email Judy Cassell – [jcassell6@bigpond.com](mailto:jcassell6@bigpond.com) - or write by snail mail to – The Secretary, PO Box 5028, SOUTH TURRAMURRA 2075, so your name can be removed from the raffle mailing list. If you have previously notified the secretary, this is already recorded, so no need to get in touch again.

Keep those changes of address coming in, so that we can keep in touch. Email the secretary Judy Cassell - see contact details above.



Robyn Jones, Charlie Jones (no relation) and Alan Jones, celebrate their June birthdays at the June morning tea



**Morning Tea. Held on the first Thursday of the month at Gladesville**

**6th July; 3rd August; 7th September; 5th October.**

**BBQ's. 13th August and 12th November – a flyer will be sent out closer to the event, giving details of the day.**



# Support Groups

CICADA is currently working to develop two new Support Groups. Newcastle and Taree. See details for each of the groups below. Please also see the CICADA website for up to date details of these events [www.cicada.org.au](http://www.cicada.org.au)

## Taree

There is much interest in forming a support group in the Taree area. An afternoon tea is planned for Saturday 9th September at 2pm, to be held at St Johns Hall, Victoria Street Taree. The afternoon tea will be supplied by the Taree Quota Club and a number of the Cicada Committee from Sydney plan to attend.

To indicate your interest and find our more details of the day, please contact

**Robyn Herps** [Robyn.Herps@scic.org.au](mailto:Robyn.Herps@scic.org.au)

Phone 1300 658 981 or

**Jeanette Holland**

[theknoll21@tpg.com.au](mailto:theknoll21@tpg.com.au)

Phone 0265 510 910 Mbl 0403 995 298

## Newcastle

Newcastle will be having their first Cicada get together at **SCIC Newcastle** on Wednesday 14 June at 10am for morning tea – *sorry the Buzz will likely be out too late for this notice*. This new group plans to meet every **even** month on **the second Wednesday** of the month, so the next one following the publication of the Buzz will be on **Wednesday 9th August** at 10am. All are welcome.

If/when the group outgrows the centre a larger venue will be arranged. **Maira Havard** is going to kindly co-ordinate the group. Contact details are below

**Maira Havard** - [moirak@bigpond.com](mailto:moirak@bigpond.com)

**Alison Gron** - 4926 8100

## Illawarra

The Illawarra group continues to be very successful and active, meeting at a variety of locations in the area. The most recent gathering was held at Windang on 9th April. Special thanks to David and Bob and the many volunteers who helped to cook a lovely BBQ and to David for his ongoing organization of the support group.

Faye Yarroll reported that .. "As usual in the Illawarra the sun was shining and we all had a beautiful day and even made some new friendships. Having the opportunity to get together and to be able to share our Cochlear Stories and answer questions for those considering a Cochlear Implant is what this group is all about."

The next gathering is planned for **Sunday 25th June** to be held at Shellharbour pool.

For further details contact

**David Romanowski.**

Mobile: 0432 715 691

Email: [dr930@uowmail.edu.au](mailto:dr930@uowmail.edu.au)



Illawarra group at Windang

## Northern Rivers

The Northern Rivers next meeting will be held on **Thursday 29th of June**.

For further information or to be added to the email list, contact **Sheliya Van Buggenum** - [sheliyavan@yahoo.com](mailto:sheliyavan@yahoo.com) OR Phone **Lismore Office** on 1300 658 98

## Western Sydney

Our May picnic day at Nurragingy Reserve was an enjoyable time even though the Numbers were a little down. Join us for the next picnic on the **20th August**.

Our Tuesday social morning tea has moved from Penrith to the **Royal Institute for the Deaf and Blind Centre at 5-7 Floribunda Ave Glenmore Park**. The new venue has a number of advantages in that it is larger, not as noisy, easier parking and there is a bus 797, from Penrith station at 9.56 am that stops out the front. With the larger room we will be able to invite guest speakers to discuss issues relating to Cochlear implants. Our first speaker was Katherine from Penrith SCIC who explained the uses of some of the equipment that comes with the implant kit. The group has grown, with a number of new recipients of Cochlear Implants as well as those just thinking about it with people attending from as far afield as Goulburn and Canberra. It is a good opportunity to hear what others have experienced.

The committee would like to thank the RIDBC for the use of the facility.

For further details contact **Sean and Margaret Sewell** on Mobile +614 2521 5654 or 041 5205 877 **Judy Tutty** – Co-coordinator 043 704 9452

## May Houterman's Story

I would like to tell my story about my deafness. In 1958 I started my working life in the metal trades as an apprentice in fitting, machining and spring making. In those days there was no WorkCover to oversee safety in the workplace. As my experience in my work increased, I was promoted to work on machines. After doing this for a while, I started complaining that my ears were hurting. I asked my employer if they had something to protect my ears. Their response was, what are you a sissy?

After working for 30 years for different employers in the same industry, where the attitude was the same, I decided to have a hearing test done. The result of which was that the ear specialist recommended that I possibly could benefit from wearing hearing aids. In those days the cost and even now, it is prohibitive. So I carried on with my work. Slowly my hearing got worse and worse. The final result was, that I withdrew into my own world as I failed to understand conversations. In family gatherings I sat in a corner, did not go out with my wife, until finally I started to fall into depression. In 2000 I retired and in 2005 I started to receive a part age pension. I discovered that the Federal government had a Hearing program. In the end I received two subsidised hearing aids. They helped in the beginning but my hearing degraded even more.



In 2012 I attended a Probus Club meeting where a guest speaker made a speech about Cochlear implants. After her speech I approached her and as result of that I had an assessment done at SCIC Gladesville. From that assessment I received a Cochlear implant in my left ear. What a revelation that was. 2 years later I received my implant in my right ear. At the time of writing this, I have become a complete different person. I join in conversations, became a member of the Cicada committee and also became involved with the Cochlear Company in research.

I blame my deafness on a variety of reasons. Lack of work safety laws, which are a lot better now, also lack of interest in preventive action regarding noise. As an example, at my local Leagues Club, there is a waterfall of at least 10 meters high and 3 meters wide. It is very close to the Bistro and a Chinese restaurant. It is nearly impossible for me to hold a decent conversation with people. Even the attendants at the signing in desk complain about the noise. Loop systems to help people with hearing aids and Cochlear implants are rare. I believe that Council town planners and architects should pay a lot more attention to use sound proofing materials. The reason being that background noise and echoes are very difficult for us to cope with. Also I believe a lot more should be done about public awareness regarding excessive noise.

I strongly believe that an epidemic of deaf people will come in the next 25 years if nothing is done. When I talk to people who ask me, what is that on your head and I explain to them the reasons how I got them they are amazed. As an example I get close to them and tell them to close their eyes. I then give a short sharp yell in their ear. Most of the time they say, hey that hurt then. So I say to them, multiply that by 50 times a day for 20 years. They say wow, I did not realise that. Governments, State and Federal, should investigate public awareness programs which have to be realistic by using people like me to show people what will happen if they do not look after their hearing.

## A Tribute to Geoffrey Johnston

"VALE" to our CICADA member, implant recipient Geoffrey Johnston, who passed away early this year. Elaine was his companion for 20 years and describes him as caring, compassionate, humble, kind, polite and loving... having been brought up in the old fashioned traditional way.

Geoffrey had meningitis at the age of 7 and spent 12 months in hospital. Recovery from the illness was very slow. He didn't recognize his family for a while and had an arm and legs in splints, profound hearing loss in one ear and severe loss in the other, so life was very difficult without access to good hearing.

However, Geoff in his later years became a member of Macarthur District Crossroads – (Christian Fellowship with the Disabled) and Bankstown branch also.

He and Elaine became friends and went to family gatherings and on trips to the country together. They attended some CICADA gatherings and after receiving his implant, Geoffrey was able to enjoy hearing again over the last few years of his life. He was on the Board for Macarthur disability services and played carpet bowls.

So VALE to Geoffrey.

Thanks to Elaine for bringing him to CICADA gatherings and helping out.

Sue Walters



Elaine and Geoff at a Cicada function

## Laughter is the Best Medicine

A tomato family is walking down the road, baby tomato falls behind, daddy tomato goes back smacks him on the head and says "Ketchup!"

## Our Congratulations to Cathy Birman on this Award

In March Associate Professor Cathy Birman, the current Medical Director of the SCIC program, was awarded with the NSW Premiers Award for Woman of The Year.



## Important information for NSW residents using a Cochlear™ Freedom® or older sound processor

For recipients in NSW using a Cochlear™ Freedom® or older sound processor, SCIC Cochlear Implant Program, an RIDBC service, worked with the New South Wales Government to provide upgrades to the latest generation Cochlear™ Nucleus® 6 sound processor - at no cost to you.

Unlike the implantable electrode, for all processor technology, there is a limited time devices can be supported in terms of service and repair, product replacement as well as access to accessories and spare parts. The Freedom Sound Processor was released in Australia in 2005 and Cochlear has announced it is no longer able to sell these processors as of 5 August 2015 and no longer able to repair from 31 December 2019.

The Nucleus 6 is the latest Cochlear sound processor that works with your existing implant. It is designed to help you enjoy better hearing in all situations. More information on Nucleus 6 can be found at [www.cochlear.com/au](http://www.cochlear.com/au).

For more information about this upgrade, please contact us SCIC Cochlear Implant Program.

## Cochlear buys audiology software firm

May 2017 [news.com.au](http://news.com.au)

Hearing implant maker Cochlear has agreed to buy audiology software company Sycle for \$US78 million (\$A106 million). The San Francisco-based Sycle owns a cloud-based management software that seamlessly integrates services for hearing professionals, which is used by more than 7,000 clinics in the US, UK and Canada. Cochlear, which will pay \$US56 million (\$A76 million) in cash and settle the balance over three years based on business performance, says the acquisition will be funded from existing debt facilities.

# Australia urged to make Hearing Health and Wellbeing an Urgent Priority

Health leaders throughout the world have made Hearing an international priority at a meeting of the World Health Assembly in Geneva. Australia was among the many member nations that endorsed a strategy to tackle the massive social and economic costs of hearing loss and ear disorders.

360 million people live with disabling hearing loss including 32 million children. In Australia, 3.5 million people live with hearing loss. It is estimated that half the incidence of hearing loss can be prevented or minimised.

"Unless action is taken, the numbers will continue to rise as populations age and young people continue to engage in harmful listening practices," says Dr Etienne Krug from the World Health Organisation. It is estimated that hearing loss costs the Australian economy \$15 billion each year.

CICADA is a supporter of a public campaign called Break The Sound Barrier ([www.breakthesoundbarrier.org.au](http://www.breakthesoundbarrier.org.au)) that calls on Australia's state, territory and federal health ministers to act now to avoid the growing national economic and social impacts of hearing loss.

CICADA believes Australia urgently needs a coordinated national strategy to address hearing loss. This is a public health issue of such importance, it is critical to make hearing health and wellbeing a National Health Priority.

**Being a National Health Priority will fund these important initiatives:**



**Hearing checks for all Australian children at key stages of life.**

**A national hearing awareness promotion campaign.**



**Improved accessibility for Auslan**

**Universal access to hearing health checks every five years for people over 50.**



**Make hearing devices tax deductible.**

**Don't let children fall through the gaps with changes to the way hearing services will be delivered in Australia.**



Be part of the movement to make hearing health and wellbeing a National Health Priority in Australia – visit [www.breakthesoundbarrier.org.au](http://www.breakthesoundbarrier.org.au)

## Implant unlocks doors for family

April 2017 The West Australian

Three generations of a Perth family are living proof of the big gains that come from science, all gifted with hearing thanks to Australian medical research. The cochlear implant has transformed the lives of 69-year-old Leslie French, his 42-year-old daughter Jody Maitland and 13-year-old grandson Hayden. Born with major hearing loss, the three can now hear voices on the phone, dogs barking and even the sound of footsteps and a ticking clock. While they all had the same surgeon, Ear Science Institute of Australia director Marcus Atlas, their operations came at different stages in their lives. Mr French was the first to have an implant in 2005 soon after he retired, and in 2006 his wife Kathy persuaded their daughter Jody to go down the same path. "I had been wearing hearing aids since I was young but after I became a mother I realised how much I wasn't hearing, like the sound of my child in the next room," Mrs Maitland said. "My mother made me realise how much I was missing out on, especially after seeing the difference it made to Dad, and having the cochlear implant just changed my life and for the first time I could talk on the phone."

Mrs Maitland's eldest son was diagnosed with deafness at four years old, and after his hearing continued to decline he received a cochlear implant when he was 10. "I never reached my potential in my career, and with Hayden I didn't want him to struggle and miss out on things," Mrs Maitland said. "Since he had his implant his school grades have gone from Cs and Ds to As and Bs." The ear institute is one of four neurological research groups coming under one roof in Perth.