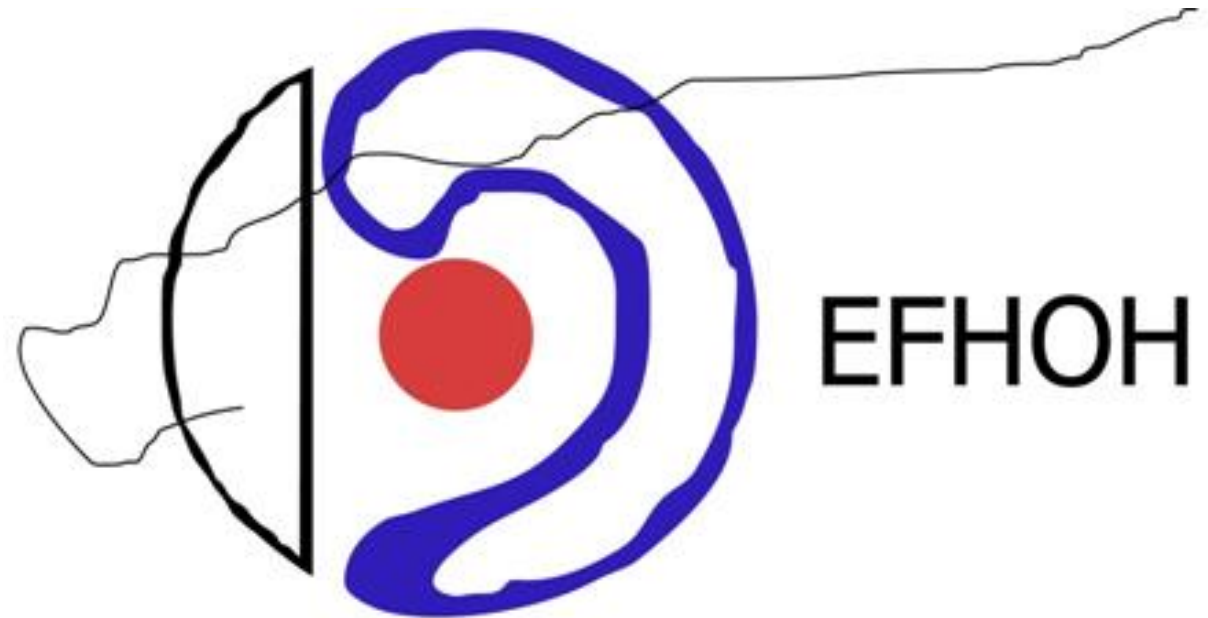


Impact of
COVID-19 on
persons who
are deafened /
Cochlear
Implant users



European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

CIICA Anniversary

24 February 2022

Lidia Best EFHOH President

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH)

- **OUR GOAL:** Europe where hard of hearing people can **live without barriers**, and have **the opportunity to participate** in all levels of society
- EFHOH was founded in 1993 to **represent interests** of 57 million hard of hearing Europeans
- EFHOH realize this vision through our **actions, publications, projects and campaigns**, involving EFHOH members and our partners.
- UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (**UN CRPD**) serves as a **foundation** for all our work.

When pandemic struck in Europe:



General Practitioners services moved to telephone consultations



Training, education and employment moved to online platforms



Local authority's rapid response teams - mostly phoned lines



Televised COVID-19 briefings - inaccessible

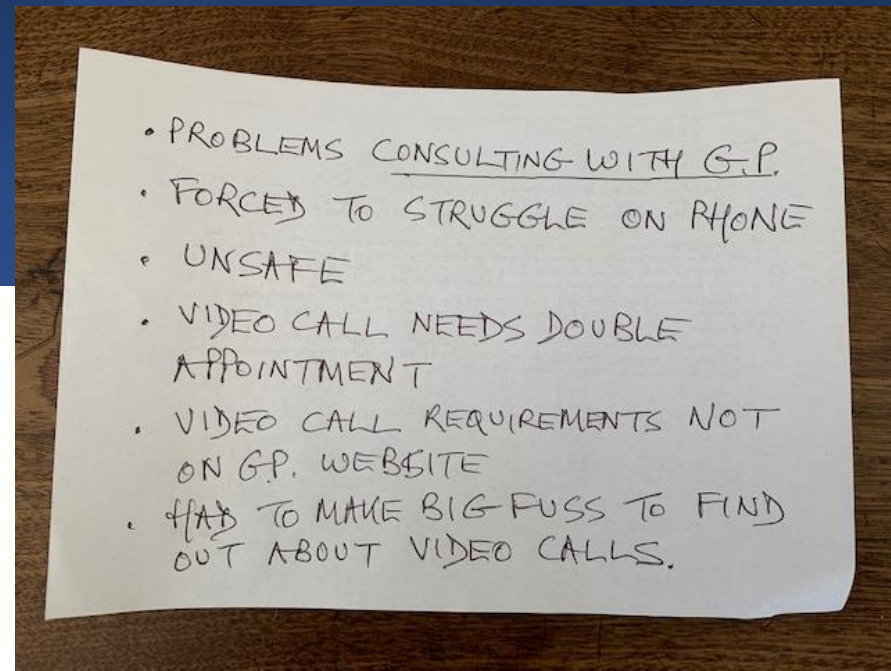
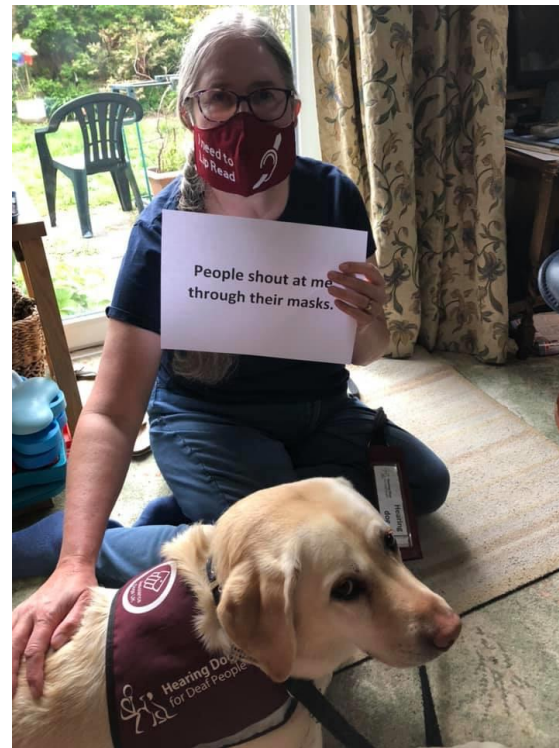
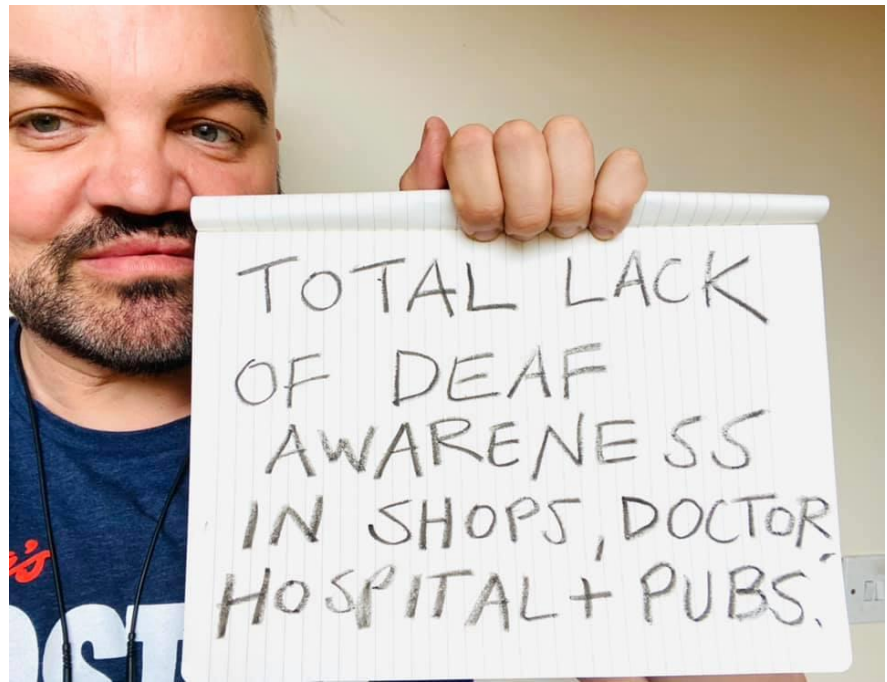


Hearing Care services – stopped

Over 5% of the world's population – or 466 million people – have a disabling hearing loss . Approximately one third of people over 65 years of age are affected by disabling hearing loss. One of the main impacts of hearing loss is on the individual's ability to communicate with others. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/deafness-and-hearing-loss>

People over the age of 70, deemed as having a greater risk of contracting COVID-19

NADP Members social media messages



A close-up photograph of a woman with long brown hair, her eyes closed and hands pressed against her ears, conveying a sense of distress or pain. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue and white.

Late deafness and pandemic – colliding with each other

- Late deafness has radical, far-reaching effects in all areas of life. Everything which once was normal is now hampered by communication problems.
- It's as if your world collapses.
- During pandemic, CI services while stopped or were restricted, masks and COVID restrictions added further distress and isolation.

Pandemic result: long waiting lists for assessment

Quality of life for people with hearing loss

INCLUSION

Quality of hearing care
and hearing technology

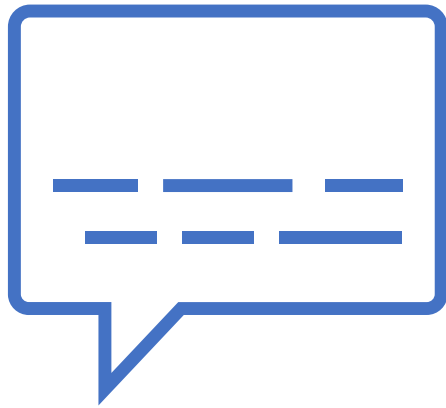
Awareness/ Empathy



Accessible society/
Equality

Peer support networks

TELEHEALTH offers new opportunities but:



While the Telehealth offers new outreach opportunities, deployment of inaccessible online platforms created new barriers during the pandemic

ITU / WHO have responded to the situation by developing Global Recommendations for Accessible Telehealth.

The recommendations were developed by working closely with experts with disabilities.

The Recommendations are at the final stage and should be published this year.



COVID -19 has exposed inaccessible Health Services

YOU CAN CHANGE IT



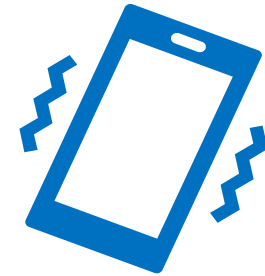
In addition to
telephone contact
offer range of ways
for appointments



Provide email
contact



For video Telehealth
appointments use
accessible platform –
enable captioning o
have third party
interpreting/
captioning support



Provide mobile
number for SMS
conversation

Accessibility is a pre-condition to active participation in healthcare

Accessibility and clear communication matters in health consultations

YOU CAN IMPROVE IT

- ✓ Make sure the appointments are accessible to your patient- can they see you clearly? (clear masks?)
- ✓ Have you planned for accessible appointment ?
(clear audio, captioning, sign language, lipreading, written text)
- ✓ Provide instructions in writing to take home – (listening effort means, cognitive overload)
- ✓ Give extra time to answer questions – the appointment is already stressful experience



Working
together to
make “Build
Back Better” a
reality, not a
wish 😊



Contact : president@efhoh.org