Redesigning surgery around what matters to patients

Emma Stapleton

Consultant Otolaryngologist and Auditory Implant Surgeon

CIICA Brussels, Oct 2026

MANCHESTER 1824

The University of Manchester

NHS
Manchester University
NHS Foundation Trust



Consultant surgeon since 2018

Clinical lead since 2021

Adult only practice

Redesigning surgery?



Patients' fears of CI surgery (700 adults)

General anaesthesia

Surgery complications

Identity and experience

No stated fears or worries

Frequent sub-themes

Being put to sleep (losing autonomy)

Not waking up

Getting a paralysed face

Losing my established identity

Feeling sick after anaesthesia

Having a 3hr operation

Implant not working

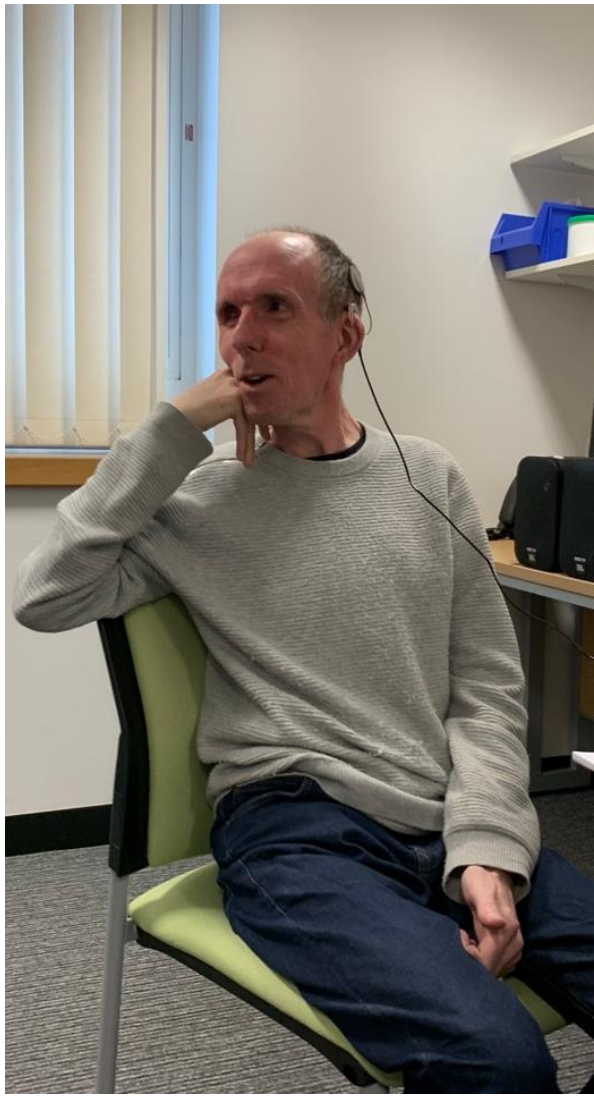
Hearing differently and not liking it

(and these are the patients who’ve made it as far as a listing clinic!)

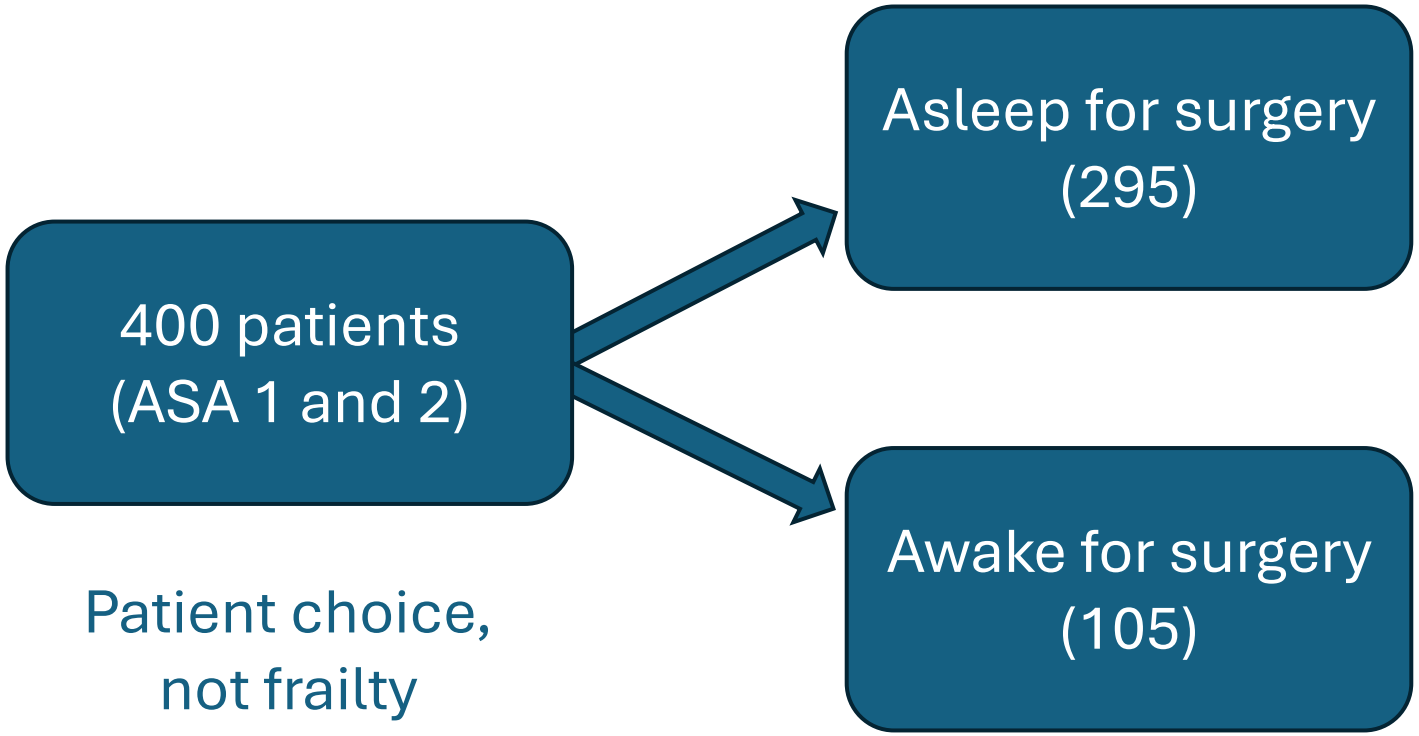
Patients who change our practice







What happens when surgeons offer choice (with equipoise)?



Patient choice,
not frailty

74%

26%

What do patients want to know?

Will I feel it?
Will it be painful?

How long will it take?

Will I recover more quickly?
Will I avoid nausea?

What do you recommend for me, doctor?

Validated patient satisfaction scores

4 hours postop	**4 weeks postop**
Asleep – moderate	Asleep – very high
Awake – high	Awake – very high



Patient experience

reported 4 hours after

awake CI surgery

Awake patient experience reported 4 weeks later

Empowerment

Choice validation

Confidence

Grateful for care and communication


You’re doing great
More vibrations

Listening to our patients is key

Challenging preconceptions and outdated models

Modifying surgical pathways to embed patient perspectives

Improving accessibility and patient engagement

MANCHESTER 1824

The University of Manchester

CIICA
COCHLEAR IMPLANT INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF ACTION

Thank you

