**SWEDISH-INDIAN AUDIOLOGY PROJECT**

Swedish researchers in Örebro received 400,000 Swedish kronor to cooperate with Indian researchers on research projects in audiology. The cooperation is between the National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped in India, the audiological research centre at Örebro University hospital and the institute for handicap science at Örebro University. In April, four Indian researchers came to Örebro to start the cooperation. The researchers plan joint projects for evaluating whether various phenomena in the handicap area are culturally related or similar in India and Sweden. One study will compare the rules set by the different societies about the people with handicaps and hearing loss who are entitled to support and help. While there are million people with hearing loss in India, there are around one million hearing impaired in Sweden. In India there is one audiologist per one million inhabitants, while in Sweden there is one audiologist per 12,000 inhabitants.

Source: Örebro University

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**COGNITIVE ABILITIES HARMED IN HEARING IMPAIRED**

A study has investigated cognitive decline in older adults, as it is not known whether hearing loss is independently associated with a rapid deterioration of cognitive functions. 1,984 older adults with a mean age of 77.4 years, participated in the study (they had been enrolled on the Health ABC Study, which ran from 1997-1998). The baseline cohort consisted of participants who did not have cognitive impairment to begin with. They took audiometric tests in the 5th year of the study and were followed up for a further 6 years. The hearing was evaluated at baseline, with thresholds of 0.5 to 4 kHz in the better ear. The cognitive tests were performed in years 5, 8, 10 and 11. The cognitive tests measured global function and executive function (3MS and Digit Symbol Substitution).

The study showed that 1,162 participants had baseline hearing loss and a annual rate of decline on the two cognitive tests of 4.1% (3MS) and 3.2% (Digit Symbol Substitution) more than the participants with normal hearing. The individuals with hearing loss at baseline had a 24% higher risk of incident cognitive impairment. The researchers also found that the risk for incident cognitive impairment and the rates of cognitive decline were inversely associated with the severity of the participant's baseline hearing loss. They conclude that hearing loss is independently associated with accelerated cognitive decline and incident cognitive impairment. They call for further studies on this association and on whether hearing rehabilitation can affect the cognitive decline.

M.VL.


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**THE FIRST SINGLE-UNIT AUDIO PROCESSOR FOR CI**

With the RONDO™, MED-EL offers exclusively the world's first integrated audio processor for cochlear implants, now globally available. This technical innovation combines the coil, control unit and battery into one compact and fully integrated unit, thus allowing convenient wearing comfort at the proven high MED-EL performance.

Because of its relegated position and the integrated omnidirectional Microphone, the RONDO™ single-unit processor allows CI users to keep the ear completely free without compromises. The proven technology of the OPUS audio processor promises maximum performance for cochlear implant users. The RONDO™ is compatible with all MED-EL cochlear implant solutions and sound coding strategies. The innovative RONDO™ single-unit processor is very lightweight at a mere 18.5 grams. Given its size of 44.1 mm by 37.2 mm and a thickness of 11.8 mm, it conceals easily behind a cover of hair. The compact processor fastens easily to the head by a magnet, available in three different strengths. The absence of a separate coil, ear hook and cable makes the RONDO™ the ideal audio processor for all CI-users wearing glasses.

N.G.

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**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN LINKÖPING**

Linköping is an important centre for research that concerns cognitive hearing science, with Liunaeus Centre BEAD, Linköping University. This summer, the Second International Conference on Cognitive Hearing Science for Communication, CHS2013, will be held there from June 16th-19th. After a first, and successful, conference, the second conference will explore new and old themes, with conference speakers from all over the world. The programme includes themes such as verbal fluency, impact of noise, impact of noise reduction, speech recognition, working memory, cognitive benefits of hearing aids, and many more.

Keynote speakers are Susan Gathercole, Nina Krus, Frank Musiek and Arthur Wingfield, and they are joined by speakers from around the globe. In addition to the scientific programme, there will be social activities, such as a traditional Swedish midsummer celebration.

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