

## Ear Foundation Research Strategy

### Aims

Research carried out by the Ear Foundation

- arises from issues and concerns expressed by users of cochlear implants, their families and the professionals who work with them
- aims to facilitate the effective use of cochlear implants and other new technologies in daily life - at home, school, work and leisure
- is practically relevant
- is disseminated as widely as possible.

### Approach

The research strategies used

- are usually qualitative
- include in depth explorations of personal experiences as well as other measurements of outcomes
- are multi-disciplinary in focus
- involve users at all stages.

### Dissemination

Presentation of findings is

- designed to be accessible to users of the technologies and those working with them
- made available to users, academic and professional audiences.
- disseminated through specially prepared booklets, the Ear Foundation website, the Ear Foundation courses, magazine articles, papers in academic journals and conference presentations.

The Ear Foundation is in a unique position to carry out such studies because of its tradition of research, training and education in the area of implantation, and its contacts with users, families, professionals and the major organisations operating in the field of deafness.

Currently, the main research areas are:

***The context of implantation.*** Some research studies focus on the situation of implantation itself, including attitudes to this. New concerns and challenges are constantly arising and need to be considered.

Studies include

- parent and family views of the implantation decision and process
- young people's views on having a cochlear implant
- implantation and children with complex needs
- bilateral implantation
- European perspectives on implantation; the view of users, parents and professionals
- needs of adult users
- outcomes from adult users
- needs of Baha users

**Language and communication.** Because a central aim of implantation is to improve hearing and communication, the development and use of language and communication skills is an important focus of research.

Studies include

- early communication skills and predicted later success
- the effect on communication of early implantation, prior to 2 years
- communication changes after implantation
- parents' views on communication changes after implantation

**Education.** Implantation has implications for education, but these are not always simple and straightforward. Ensuring the best use is made of implants in the educational environment is an important theme.

Studies include

- parents' and young peoples' perspectives on education
- good practice in education in primary and secondary settings
- reading abilities after cochlear implantation
- the effect of sequential bilateral implantation in school

A publications list is attached

Dec 2009