Abstract
More children with complex needs are receiving cochlear implants. For these children, helping them to make best use of their new hearing means that as professionals we need to rethink how we deliver our services; both from the specialist cochlear implant centres and locally.

The Ear Foundation carried out research funded by Advanced Bionics, with 10 parents of implanted children with complex needs. The purpose of this research was to find out their views around cochlear implantation—from referral and assessment, through to post implant follow up. The families were all interviewed, using a semi structured format. We have found this technique to be most useful in allowing the same topic to be covered in all interviews, but giving freedom for the interviewer to follow up in more detail this use of interest or particular concern that arrives spontaneously. The families selected for the interview covered the range of complex needs found in deaf children, and covered geographic, social and age spread.

During this presentation, we will be focussing on the key issues raised by these families, with particularly emphasis on education and therapy services and the outcomes of cochlear implantation for this group of children. We will also explore some of the areas which require more detailed research.

Biography
Suzanne is a Speech & Language Therapist who has been working in the field of deafness for 18 years, firstly on the Nottingham Paediatric Cochlear Implant Programme and more recently at The Ear Foundation. Suzanne’s particular specialism is working with families of preschool deaf children. She manages The Ear Foundation’s Connect & Communicate programme for families, which involves running weekly communication groups, baby days and special issues days. Over the past few years, she had rekindled her interest in supporting children with deafness and complex needs; prior to working with deaf children she worked for several years at the Child Development Centre in Nottingham, supporting children with a wide range of physical and learning needs. Suzanne works closely with other voluntary organisations like the National Deaf Children’s Society. She has lectured both nationally and internationally on all aspects of her work to both professionals and parents. She is married to Martin and has a 12 year old daughter, Rhianna. She lives in Nottingham.