

Family Fun

Bowling Buddies, Tralee

To start off the year's Family Fun schedule we organised a get-together at Easter.

We decided to hold our Easter family day in Bowling Buddies, Tralee again this year as it has always proved to be such a hit with all age groups.

As predicted it was a huge success and we were joined by our regular families and some new families also. This was a wonderful opportunity for the parents to meet and chat and for the children to enjoy some fun time with their peers.

Our participants were made up of hearing parents with deaf children and deaf parents with hearing children. Siblings and cousins and friends were also welcomed. It was wonderful to see some of the parents practice their sign language skills with Deaf adults.

We had some very competitive participants who couldn't wait for their turn and some others who wandered off mid-game to kick off steam in the indoor play area. The management in Bowling Buddies were, as ever, very accommodating.

We ended the day with an Easter treat for every child. They were delighted to receive an Easter egg before leaving.

Roll on the summer for more Family Fun! If you would like to join us give the office a call for more details.



Protect your Hearing during the Festival Season



Unique Characteristics

Prevents Hearing Loss

No More Annoying Ringing in your Ears

Music Quality remains Optimal thanks to

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Conversations Can Still Be Heard

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 For an appointment call 064 66 20052

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DeafHear.ie

Services for Deaf & Hard of Hearing People

KERRY South Newsletter

Spring 2015



Campaign comes to Kerry

In May, Kerry schools got the opportunity to join the Keep the Sound Campaign. Three schools availed of the opportunity to participate – Killorglin Community College, Saint Brigid's Secondary School Killarney and Intermediate School Killorglin. Throughout the campaign in Kerry, we managed to meet with over 250 students and their teachers.

This campaign has been running around the country, visiting various counties over the past year. The aim of this public health campaign is to raise awareness of the potential damage that can be done to people listening to music too loud, too long, through headphones/earphones. In a short 30 second test the Sound Heads calculate the sound level that students listen to music and provide a personalised feedback for each student.

Participation was really great from students in all the schools we visited. Everyone was interested and enjoyed the opportunity to fit their own headphones onto our Sound-head monitors. While most of the young people we tested had their volume set at safe level there were one or two listening at a very high volume that caused some concern, for themselves as well as us! We were able to take the time to explain the effect this would have on their hearing and encourage them to listen at a safer level in the future.

Outreach Service Kerry

2015

- Free & Confidential Service
- Support & Information
- Minor Hearing Aid Repairs
- Assistive Technology
- Benefits & Entitlements

Tralee (Drop in)

Clogheresta, Hawley Park
Second Friday every month
10.30—12.30pm

Killorglin (Drop in)

Killorglin Day Care Centre
Second Thursday every month
2 - 4.30pm

Cahersiveen

(By Appointment)

Cahersiveen Community
Centre
Second Tuesday every month
11—3pm

For more information contact
the office.

Tinnitus Support

Regular Tinnitus Support Group meetings take place in the Killarney office.

We host these meetings between 1-3pm to facilitate those who work, or those who live rurally and use public transport.

Our meetings give people with tinnitus the chance to meet with others, share wisdom and experiences.

We also offer one to one support for people experiencing Tinnitus.

For more details and dates of our next meeting contact the office.

HSE Launch National Guidelines on Accessible Services

DeafHear welcomes the recent publication of the guidelines, and believe that if they are implemented in full, they will have a positive effect on the health of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. DeafHear's Head of Information said "Communication is a fundamental element in good health care. Deaf and Hard of Hearing people need to be able to communicate fully with their doctors and nurses. That means they need to be able to explain their health difficulties to the health professionals AND they need the health professionals to communicate to them all of the information on tests, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care."



The guidelines provide clear practical advice for health professionals on communicating with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. This includes asking the person how best to communicate with them and providing assistive technology, such as listening devices, as required. For people who are sign language users, the guidelines state "Patients and service users are entitled to request and be provided with a qualified sign language interpreter". The guidelines also state that while the onus is on the service user to request an interpreter, it is the responsibility of staff to make the arrangements. "These guidelines clearly represent a major step forward in improving access to health and social services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, and we look forward to them being implemented in full".

New Generation Text Relay Service

The introduction of a 'Next Generation Text Relay' (NGTR) service is a real priority in ensuring equivalent access to telecommunications for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

Whether it is ordering a pizza, ringing a plumber, or booking an appointment with your GP, a NGTR service is badly needed by Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

ComReg have just completed a consultation on a new text relay service, and hopefully this will be introduced by 2016. The introduction of a new NGTR service will be a key step towards equivalent access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. To learn more about Text Relay Services, go to: www.DeafHear.ie



ComReg:

Do they make a difference to the lives of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people?

ComReg is the statutory body with responsibility for the regulation of the telecommunications and postal sectors. It was established in 2002. In 2009 the European Union introduced a new Directive known as Article 23a, which states that people with disabilities should have equivalence in access and choice to electronic and telecommunication service. This Directive was transposed into Irish Law in 2011. DeafHear have been involved in advocating and informing ComReg on appropriate measures to meet the requirements of Article 23a. The following is a list of some new measures that have been introduced to help ensure people with disabilities, including Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, can have equal access to telecommunication services as the rest of the population:

- **Accessible Facility to Test Terminal Equipment:** Companies who sell telephones -mobile /smart phones, must offer a person who uses a hearing aid or cochlear implant the opportunity to test the phone in the shop or have a returns policy that will allow the person to return the phone/equipment if it is not suitable or compatible with their specific hearing needs.
- **Accessible Complaints Procedures:** Providers must be able to make a complaint or an enquiry in a number of ways including by telephone, SMS, letter and email. They may also nominate a person to act on their behalf, if they wish.
- **Accessible Top-up Facility for prepaid mobile phones:** Before this was introduced, many people who used a prepaid phone needed to call a number and follow the voice prompts to register their top-up payments. This was obviously impossible for many Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, so they were often faced with having to ask the shopkeeper or a stranger on the street to register their top-up payment for them! Following the introduction of this customers could top-up by text...meaning people could now register their top-up independently! Of course, this measure not only benefitted Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, but thousands of hearing people now top-up by text every week!
- **Facility to Register Requirements:** This allows a person with a disability to register their requirements with their service provider. This includes the right to nominate a third party (a relative or friend) to act on their behalf, to register their preferred means of communication and details of any special terminal equipment they require. DeafHear is aware that many elderly people with hearing loss find it much less stressful to be able to nominate a third party, particularly those who cannot make voice calls, and are not familiar with email, web chat etc. Other measures introduced are:
 - Accessible Directory Enquiries,
 - Accessible Billing
 - Accessible Information

Since ComReg required service providers to introduce these measures, DeafHear have found that the number of difficulties and complaints clients have brought to our attention has decreased significantly, especially in relation to the purchase of telephones and dealing with queries and complaints. We commend ComReg on the introduction of these measures, as they have made a real difference to the lives of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people!