

Developing a Hearing-Wellbeing app

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

Project Title Preferences for an education and support App for hearing loss self-management: A Discrete Choice Experiment

What is the Project About?

Hearing loss not only affects the ability to hear, but also to communicate, which can negatively affect a person's social and emotional wellbeing.

To help people manage the social and emotional impacts of hearing loss, we are designing a Hearing-Wellbeing App that can be used on your mobile phone, tablet, or computer.

The aim of the App is to help you learn more about navigating hearing difficulties and to engage you in training programs to improve your hearing experience in your day-to-day life.

The App will be your go-to source for the latest hearing information and will feel like having an audiologist in your pocket, where you can find the answers to questions about hearing devices, hearing strategies you can use in challenging listening environments and checking in on social and emotional wellbeing and your listening goals.

The App will help you better understand your hearing loss and empower you to be an advocate for yourself and for others.

We will also build a website (called the clinician dashboard) where your hearing healthcare professional can select specific content suited for your needs and suggest this content to you through the App. The clinician dashboard also allows your clinician to see how you are going with the App.

The first stage in our research involved interviews with 20 adults with hearing loss and 20 hearing professionals to find out what they think about the client App and clinician dashboard idea, and how we might best design them. They came up with a long list of great ideas for things we could include in our App and Dashboard.

We would now like to survey 300 adults with hearing loss and 300 hearing professionals to find out which of these wonderful ideas we should include in our App and Dashboard.

Developing a Hearing-Wellbeing app

Who is doing the Research?

- This project will be conducted by National Acoustic Laboratories, led by Dr Bec Bennett.
- This research is funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), an Australian government research funding body.
- There are no costs or incentives to you for being involved in the project.

Why am I being asked to take part and what will I have to do?

You have been invited to participate because:

- you recently visited one of our Lions Hearing Clinics, and
- you are aged between 40 and 70 years (the target age group for our App).

If you choose to participate, you will complete a one-off 20-25 minute online survey.

The survey will ask about your age, gender, use of hearing aids / cochlear implants, use of health Apps and sets of questions asking your preference for different App features.

Are there any benefits to being in the research project?

There may be no direct benefit to you from participating in this research. Sometimes, people appreciate the opportunity to discuss their opinions/feelings/hearing difficulties. The research will allow us to develop better services for people with hearing difficulties, in particular for those who find that they still struggle at times, even with using hearing aids.

Are there any risks, side-effects, discomforts or inconveniences from being in the research project?

Apart from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or inconveniences associated with taking part in this study.

Who will have access to my information?

The information collected in this research will be deidentified. This means that your survey entries will be anonymous and there will be no way for us to identify who provided what responses. Hopefully this anonymity gives you the confidence to provide open and honest answers. Any information we collect will be treated as confidential.

Developing a Hearing-Wellbeing app

One of the questions in the survey gives you the option to provide your email address if you wish to receive details of the outcomes of the study. If you provide your email, your email address will be stored separately to your survey results. These two will not be linked.

Electronic data will be password-protected. The information we collect in this study will be kept under secure conditions at National Acoustic Laboratories for 7 years after the research is published and then it will be destroyed.

The results of this research may be presented at conferences or published in professional journals. You will not be identified in any results that are published or presented.

Will you tell me the results of the research?

We will write to you at the end of the research (in about 18 months) and let you know the results of the research, if you provide your email address (optional). Results will not be individual but based on all the information we collect and review as part of the research.

Do I have to take part in the research project?

No. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. It is your choice to take part or not. You do not have to agree if you do not want to. If you decide to take part and then change your mind, that is fine, you can withdraw from the project at any point. If you choose not to take part or start and then stop, it will not affect your relationship with, or any care you may receive from, your hearing service provider now or in the future.

You are free to withdraw from the study at any point.

What happens next and who can I contact about the research?

For more information, please contact the Chief Investigator Dr Bec Bennett on bec.bennett@nal.gov.au.

If you decide to take part in this research we will ask you to sign an electronic consent form, that will be embedded within the survey. Providing consent tells us that you understand what you have read and what has been discussed. Providing consent indicates that you agree to be in the research project and have your health information used as described. Please take your time and ask any questions you have before you decide what to do.

Developing a Hearing-Wellbeing app

National Acoustic Laboratories Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC number 2023-22). Should you wish to discuss the study with someone not directly involved, in particular, any matters concerning the conduct of the study or your rights as a participant, or you wish to make a confidential complaint, you may contact the National Acoustic Laboratories ethics officer Phillip Nakad (Hon. Secretary of HAHREC) on (02) 9412 6908 or Phillip.Nakad@nal.gov.au.

All research participants are entitled to retain a copy of any Participant Information Form and/or Participant Consent Form relating to this research project.