



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association

MANITOBA CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

April 2023

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The Board Hears

We have had a busy and fruitful time with exciting changes happening.

The Hearing Aid Grant Program was announced on March 2 by the Honourable Scott Johnston Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care. We are grateful to the government for this initiative and financial help it will bring for those 65 and over. Thank you Scott Johnston for getting this grant in place. There are many who are happily and anxiously waiting the details coming later this spring.

Our hearing aid petition will be ongoing as people with hearing loss between ages 18-64 are still seeking financial help. A rally supporting this is being organized for the afternoon of May 9. Please save the date and join us.

Our loop Manitoba campaign partnered with Inland Audio Visual is gaining momentum. At our AGM on May 23 looping will be the topic of our guest speaker.

The AGM on Tuesday, May 23 will again be a virtual meeting starting at 7 pm. Closed captioning will be available. The board is looking for a secretary and additional members at large. Please contact chhamanitoba@outlook.com if you are available. The board has continued to meet via Zoom with closed captioning to accommodate members who are not living in Winnipeg. So anyone anywhere in the province with passion for advocating for the Hard of Hearing can join the board. We are also seeking techies to help with the website, hybrid meetings and PowerPoint creation, either as board members or volunteers.

The Charleswood Rotary has begun a program collecting used hearing aids that can be reprogrammed and supplied to those between the ages of 18 and 64 who otherwise could not afford them. A big thank you to Ear Architects Hearing Care and the members of Charleswood Rotary for creating the boxes and setting up the collection sites.

Jo-anne Jones
CHHA-MB President



(Gladys Nielsen, Dr. Jon Gerrard, Jo-anne Jones)

Gladys Nielsen and Jo-anne Jones met with Dr. Jon Gerrard, MLA who read our petition in the Manitoba Legislature. A rally to support the petition will be held in front of the legislative assembly on the afternoon of May 9.

“For me, the effort to help people with impaired hearing is personal. My father’s hearing was impaired in the last decades of his life. My brother has had impaired hearing his whole life. I am glad that the efforts of my colleagues and I in the Manitoba Liberal Party are making a difference for those who live with hearing loss.” - Dr. Jon Gerrard

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association - Manitoba Chapter

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 Group: Canadian Hard of Hearing Association: Manitoba Chapter

chha-mb.ca

Hearing Aid Grant Program

The Hearing Aid Grant Program was announced on March 2nd, 2023, by Honourable Scott Johnston, Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care.

The program is a \$12.6-million grant program that will assist eligible older Manitobans experiencing hearing loss to cover the expense of testing, fitting and purchasing new hearing aids.

The hearing aid grant of up to \$2,000 is available to all Manitobans who meet the following eligibility criteria

- age 65 or over;
- family income below \$80,000 in the previous year;
- have documented hearing loss; and
- have been prescribed hearing aids by an audiologist or otolaryngologist.

Rebates for hearing aids previously purchased are not a part of the Hearing Aid Grant Program. Retro active payment is not permitted.

Please be advised that grant will be available in late spring 2023 and access to application and information will be posted on the seniors website, once the program is launched <https://gov.mb.ca/seniors>

A notification can be sent directly to you once the grant becomes available to the public. If desired, please send your email address to MINSENIORS@manitoba.ca

For more information, please see <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=58348>

“Our government recognizes hearing loss as priority concern for seniors and with this grant more Manitoba seniors who require hearing aids will have the financial means to access them.” said Johnston. “Hearing aids provide valuable benefits to improve quality of life in a number of important ways such as fully participating with family, friends and co-workers, while also avoiding the isolation that can be associated with hearing loss.” - Honourable Scott Johnston, Minister of Seniors and Long-Term Care



Age Related Hearing Loss Video Created by Barry Carr

Barry Carr has created a video that explains how the loss of the mid to high range frequencies effects our hearing as we age. Barry has retired from the audio –visual industry where he worked in both sales and system design. From this he gained considerable knowledge in electronics, acoustics, audio theory, and hearing.

When he was younger Barry played in a local rock band for a number of years. He is quite certain that volume levels he endured are the root cause of his moderate hearing loss. He still plays, but now with protection. Besides music, he loves photography and videography. Last year he tried his hand at video production and creating a YouTube channel.

The link to his latest video is <https://youtu.be/AefrFY-irhc>. Those who previewed think it is excellent.

Passing of Brian Gaber

Brian’s obituary appeared in the Free Press on April 21. Brian was an esteemed past board member. He was instrumental in securing yearly grants for printing services from Manitoba Hydro for our chapter newsletter. A retired engineer, he advocated for closed captioning at the Reh-Fit Centre and access for the Hard of Hearing at the MTS Centre. CHHA-MB sincerely appreciated all Brian’s work and enthusiasm and offers our deepest condolences to his wife Sharon and the family.

Auditory Processing Disorder by Mark Stouffer

What is an auditory processing disorder? And if you have this disorder, what can you do about it? Amanda Gorman is a young African-American poet and activist who garnered worldwide attention in January 2021 when she delivered her powerful and inspiring poem, "The Hill We Climb," at President Joe Biden's inauguration. In an interview with NPR, Gorman explained her struggle with speech impediments in childhood and difficulty pronouncing certain words. Gorman was also diagnosed with auditory processing disorder in kindergarten. Thanks to her mother and speech therapists, she was helped to develop her speaking skills further and gain confidence in her voice. Gorman's dedication and a strength-based approach based on perseverance in adversity contributed to her success as a poet. She also is an activist and promotes social justice to empower marginalized communities.



*Amanda Gorman
at President Joe Biden's inauguration*

The Manitoba Chapter of the Hard of Hearing Association has welcomed me as an APD advocate to provide this information to the citizens of Manitoba. Hearing loss is a condition in which a person's ability to hear sounds is reduced or impaired. It can range from mild to severe and affect one or both ears. Hearing loss can significantly impact a person's quality of life, including their ability to communicate, socialize and work. People with hearing loss can benefit from hearing aids, cochlear implants, or other assistive devices and treatments. But what if you still say you can't hear properly, and a regular hearing test is ok? This is where you may want to pay attention. I'm going to describe Auditory Processing Disorder as a brain hearing condition.

Auditory processing is the brain's ability to interpret and make sense of heard sounds. This involves several complex processes, including the detection of sound, the recognition of sound patterns, and the comprehension of spoken language. When sound enters the ear, it is transformed into electrical signals that travel to the brain. The brain then processes these signals and interprets them as meaningful sounds, such as music or speech. However, some people may have difficulties processing auditory information, even though their ears usually function. Individuals with APD can make it challenging to understand speech, especially in noisy environments or when multiple people speak. People with APD may also have difficulty distinguishing between similar sounds, following directions, and remembering spoken information.

Research into auditory processing is ongoing, and much is to be learned about how the brain processes auditory information. However, science shows us that certain factors, such as aging, noise exposure, medical conditions, and genetics, can affect auditory processing. It has been reported that Senator John Fetterman of Pennsylvania shows signs of an auditory processing disorder after he suffered a stroke in May 2022. A stroke in the temporal lobe, which is responsible for processing auditory information, can result in auditory processing difficulties or hearing impairments. Luckily Senator Fetterman has utilized real-time closed-captioning technology to understand the reporter's question, and he reads the live transcript of proceedings on his wireless tablet. It's important to note that having APD does not necessarily hinder a person's success or ability to function in society. People with APD can lead fulfilling lives and achieve great things with the proper accommodations, intervention, and support.

Suppose you suspect you or someone you know may have an auditory processing disorder (APD). In that case, seeking an evaluation from a qualified healthcare professional, such as an audiologist or speech-language pathologist, is essential. Here are some signs and symptoms of APD that may warrant an evaluation:

- Difficulty understanding speech, especially in noisy environments or competing sounds.
- Difficulty following directions or remembering verbal information.
- Difficulty processing or differentiating similar sounds, such as "B" and "D."
- Difficulty with phonemic awareness, or the ability to recognize and manipulate the individual sounds in words.
- Difficulty with reading, writing, or spelling.
- Poor listening skills or frequent misunderstandings in conversation.
- Behavioural or attentional issues in the classroom, such as difficulty staying focused or completing tasks.

It's important to note that some of these symptoms may also be associated with other conditions, such as hearing loss, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), or language disorders. This is why an evaluation by a qualified professional can help determine the underlying cause of these symptoms and develop an appropriate treatment plan.

As an APD advocate and professional counsellor with expertise in working with individuals with disabilities, I decided to find out how a family with a child would get this special assessment in Manitoba. Children with APD should receive the support and accommodations necessary to thrive in the education system. I invited the Executive Director Karen Velthuys of the Learning Disability Association of Manitoba to a meeting with Diana Dinon, Regional Manager, Winnipeg Regional Health Authority Universal Newborn Hearing Screening Program and Shelly Lopez, an Audiologist with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), to explain how a child in Manitoba would get diagnosed with APD.

Dr. Diana Dinon has 33 years of experience as a pediatric audiologist. She is the current regional director of the newborn hearing and screening program and has been with the group since May 2021. Dr. Shelly Lopez has a doctorate in Audiology and 17 years of experience as a clinical service lead for the community audiology program at WRHA. She is an APD testing specialist who works on infant screening and diagnostics for the preschool population. Shelly received her training in Singapore.

Auditory Processing Disorder by Mark Stouffer

History of the efforts with APD: Shelly explained that this is the only publicly funded auditory processing disorder clinic in Manitoba for children. The team consists of two hard-working audiologists serving children with APD in Manitoba. They need more resources as they receive referrals from throughout the Province of Manitoba. They get approximately ten referrals per month. They had about 90 referrals in January 2022 and have a current waitlist of 52 children. Referrals for service come from various sources, including family doctors, school clinicians, and parents with self-referral. One of the two audiologists is on leave at this time.

Recruiting and retaining audiologists is more complex in Manitoba since we don't have a Department of Audiology in the Province. The team is dedicated to serving this underserved population in Manitoba. Once a referral form is received via email or mail at 1050 Leila Avenue Unit 3 Winnipeg, Manitoba R2P 1W6, Canada, an audiologist is assigned for the assessment process. They have several intake assessments to determine whether a child will need a complete diagnostic evaluation. Functional listening capacities are assessed when it's determined that a child has difficulties with hearing inside or outside a classroom setting.

Once a screening assessment is completed and it's determined that a full review is necessary, a more thorough evaluation is completed for children. This work is challenging because most children entering the clinic have been identified as having comorbid conditions such as ADHD, cognitive delays, or Autism Spectrum Disorder. Once a diagnosis of APD has been made, the team moves to intervention strategies: compensatory strategies to help modify difficult listening situations, amplification and use of an FM receiver and sound system. These devices look like hearing aids and have appliances that transmit from a speaker or teacher and send the audio to the aid worn by the child. Manitoba Health provides them for children.

Additionally, the department is conducting a literature review regarding using low-power hearing aids. There are audiologists in other Canadian provinces dispensing low-power hearing aids for Auditory Processing. I hope that the Province of Manitoba will see the benefit of this technology for those with APD moving forward. Low-gain hearing aids are a type of hearing aid that amplifies sounds at a lower level than traditional hearing aids. Some audiologists specializing in APD believe they may be helpful for individuals with auditory processing disorder (APD) who have difficulty processing speech and other sounds in noisy environments. It's important to note that not all individuals with APD will benefit from low-gain hearing aids. The effectiveness of these devices may depend on the specific nature of an individual's APD and their specific auditory processing difficulties. It's recommended that individuals with APD consult with a licensed audiologist to determine if low-gain hearing aids are a good option for them.

The Manitoba Chapter of the Hard of Hearing Association is working on a petition and efforts to get Manitoba Health to cover hearing aids for all Manitobans. I support those efforts for all Manitobans that are hard of hearing. Brain hearing matters.

Warmly,

Mark Stouffer
 Auditory Processing Disorder Advocate
 Masters Science (MS) in Education: Counselling
 Canadian Certified Counsellor (CCC)
 Member Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA)
 Certified Clinical Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC)
 Registered Clinical Counsellor (RCC)

Resources:

(2012). Canadian Guidelines on Auditory Processing Disorder In Children And Adults: Assessment and Intervention. *The Canadian Interorganizational Steering Group For Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology*. <https://canadianaudiology.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Canadian-Guidelines-on-Auditory-Processing-Disorder-in-Children-and-Adults-English-2012.pdf>

(2000). Scrambled Sounds. *Dartmouth Medicine*. https://dartmed.dartmouth.edu/summer00/html/scrambled_sounds.shtml

"When the Brain Can't Hear: Unraveling the Mystery of Auditory Processing Disorder" by Teri James Bellis *Central Auditory Processing Disorder*. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. https://www.asha.org/practice-portal/clinical-topics/central-auditory-processing-disorder/#collapse_6

Referral Process for Children for APD Testing:

Parents can self-refer using the following process:

- Calling the Children's Therapy Initiative (CTI) Central Intake at 204-258-6550, OR
- Sending the CTI referral form to fax number 204-258-6799. Here's the link for the CTI referral form [Microsoft Word - CTI - Wpg Ref Form Mar 29 2016.doc \(sscy.ca\)](#)

For more information on SSCY, please see the link below.
<https://sscy.ca/caregivers-families/childrens-therapy-initiative/>

Hearing Aid Donation Program

Do You Have Old Hearing Aids to Donate? Is Someone You Know in Need of Hearing Aids?

The **Hearing Aid Donation Program** will run based on financial assistance for those who are low income individuals aged 18-65 who are hearing impaired, and require hearing aids to function on a daily basis. The program will allow them to have a more 'normal' lifestyle, apply for jobs, support their families and assimilate within their communities. The program also keeps electronics that are still useful out of our landfills.

There are multiple boxes located in senior centers as well as with the *Canadian Hard of Hearing - Manitoba Chapter*. Once a month, *Rotary* will collect anything that has been dropped off in the boxes and deliver them to *Ear Architects Hearing Care*.

They will review the financial assistance forms, to determine who is eligible to receive donated hearing devices.

More information and financial assistance form can be found on any of the websites below:

Ear Architects Hearing Care
www.eahearing.com

Rotary Club of Winnipeg – Charleswood
www.charleswoodrotary.org

Canadian Hard of Hearing – Manitoba chapter
chha-mb.ca

Scan this QR code for
donation information



EAR ARCHITECTS
HEARING CARE

Our Gratitude to Our Sponsors

CHHA - MB would like to acknowledge our appreciation to our sponsors and contributors. Without their support, we would be unable to provide the services and information we offer.



MEMBERSHIP

The CHHA-MB yearly membership fee is \$40 for an individual or \$60 for a family membership. The fees support CHHA National and \$10 of the fee remains in Manitoba.

Fees or donations can be made by cheque payable to CHHA-MB, through PayPal on our website, or by e-transfer. The first time you use e-transfer, add us as NAME: CHHA-MB EMAIL: chhambtreasurer@outlook.com. In the comments, please be sure to state if it is a membership fee or donation and include your postal mailing or email address for a receipt.

Thank you for your continued support of our Chapter. With your help we are able to continue providing information, education, and advocacy on behalf of the hard of hearing in Manitoba.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please send an email to:
chhamanitoba@outlook.com



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association - Manitoba Chapter Membership Form

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Email: _____

Yes, I would like to receive the newsletter by email.

New Membership Membership Renewal Membership Date: _____

Annual Membership Fees:

Individual: \$40 Family: \$60 Non-Profit Org: \$130

Donation Donation in Memory of: _____

Charitable Registration No. 131620742 RR0001

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