



A SOUTH AFRICAN COCHLEAR IMPLANT ASSOCIATION

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Dear Friend

Hearing is one of the senses that connects us to our families and friends, and to the world around us. The world without the sound of birdsong or a mother's voice is empty and silent. Hear Us is a non-profit organisation based in Cape Town that is committed to help individuals afford a cochlear implant (CI) together with the long-term maintenance of the devices. We are appealing to those that understand the amazing difference that a CI can have on your life or on the life of one of your loved ones. We would be very grateful if you would consider contributing to our organisation by leaving a legacy in your Will and helping us to **change the lives of those with severe-to-profound hearing loss.**

The cost of a CI device, including sound processor, is approximately R250,000. At the Cochlear Implant Unit at Tygerberg Hospital, initial surgery costs, including audiological assessments and electrode programming (mapping), amount to an additional R200,000; however, this amount is heavily subsidised at this public healthcare facility. Ongoing equipment maintenance costs add up over a lifetime of use and these costs include ongoing maintenance, equipment repairs and replacement of spare parts, insurance, rehabilitative therapies, and travel to audiology and other consultations, as well as upgrades to the sound processor. There is limited government funding for both the initial and ongoing costs, and with medical aid only covering partial costs, many people need to raise funds to be able to afford this, or give up on the promise of a better life with hearing.

It is especially important for young children to undergo surgery and start hearing in the first three years as this is the critical period of language learning, and thus delays in surgery due to needing to raise sufficient funding need to be prevented. It is also complicated for adults by the fact that they may lose their jobs due to their deafness making fundraising even more difficult. Cochlear implantation, although a very cost-effective procedure in the long-term, is still a very expensive intervention and Hear Us aims to help as many people as possible on this journey of successful rehabilitation. Currently, Hear Us helps approximately 30 individuals each year with paying for cochlear implant devices, replacement of parts, repairs, and upgrades, as well as contributing to schooling and accommodation costs for children to attend specialised schooling.

With more money, we could help more people!

Please contact us if you would like any further information or official documents, or learn of other ways to help. If you know of any family or friends that may be willing to contribute to our organisation, then please pass on our contact details!

Yours sincerely

Sarah Allwood
Chairperson Hear Us

