



Greetings from Kelly Hearing

As we are all aware, the current pandemic has thrown us into strange and uncertain times. Firstly, we would like to take this opportunity to extend our warmest wishes to all our patients. Your safety is of the utmost importance to us and we are following all government guidelines, advice and recommendations.

Hearing care is deemed an essential health service. It is important that as members of society we can communicate and stay connected with the world around us. We rely on our hearing for everyday tasks like listening to government announcements on the news as well as staying in touch with family and friends.

The main purpose of this newsletter is to let you know that we are here for you, also what you can expect coming to the clinic as well as other options of accessing our service without having to attend in person. We share simple but effective advice on ways to manage the stress as we all navigate these different times together. Additionally, we have some advice on how you can help us, so as to ensure we all continue living our lives fully in the safest way possible.



If you suffer from Tinnitus:

Tinnitus is the perception of sound in the absence of an external sound source. It can be perceived in one ear, two ears or centrally. Patients may describe it in many ways; ringing, buzzing, pulsing or whistling, to name just a few. It is commonly associated with noise-damage or hearing loss.

Tinnitus can be exacerbated by stressful events in our lives, such as the current COVID-19 situation. During these times, it is helpful to practice mindfulness, meditation, relaxation and sleep hygiene techniques. Useful meditation apps include: Calm, Headspace, Aura, Smiling mind. Tinnitus masking apps (sound generators) can also be helpful. You can locate these by searching the app store on your mobile/tablet device (please note downloading these apps may incur a fee).

Visit these websites; British Tinnitus Association, CHIME.ie and the Cork Deaf Association for further information and helpful advice on tinnitus management during this time.

Help prevent Coronavirus



Wash your hands



Cover mouth if coughing or sneezing



Avoid touching your face



Keep surfaces clean



Stop shaking hands and hugging



Keep a safe distance



GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDING OUR CLINIC

Prior to your appointment

Prior to your appointment, we want to gather as much information to identify your needs in advance, preferably by email, so we are as prepared as possible and limit consultation times when you attend the clinic. Please do NOT attend the clinic without prior appointment as we cannot facilitate Drop-In visits.

What you can expect at our clinic

ON ENTRY

As you enter our hallway we request everyone avail of our

1. Touch free hand sanitizer
2. Masks
3. Optional gloves



We aim to bring everyone directly to their appointment, otherwise there will be no more than one client in the waiting room at a time. Only one person should attend an appointment unless assistance is required. We request you phone ahead if you are more than ten minutes before/ after scheduled appointment.

Audiologists will be wearing face masks and gloves during the consultation. Eye protection and aprons will be worn for longer and close contact appointments.

OUR CLINIC:

Surfaces including chairs and card machines will be cleaned thoroughly between clients.

Gloves and masks etc. are disposed in medical waste facility. Single use items are all disposed using medical waste: Ear tips and micro-suction tips.

All non-disposable examination items (Lyric fitting and microscope exam tips) are cleaned, sterilized individually wrapped in autoclave sterilizing unit.

Test room: Hepa filtering of air after each test.

We also have Perspex screens in the audiology test room and available in consultation rooms to enable us to more easily communicate and demonstrate items safely when we need to be in close proximity to you. Most of the appointments will be conducted at a distance of at least two metres from the Audiologist, including programming of hearing aids.

IMPORTANT: WE REQUEST THAT YOU DO NOT ATTEND IF:

1. You or anyone in your household has been feeling unwell in the past two weeks.
2. If you or anyone in your household has traveled abroad within the past three weeks.
3. You or anyone in your household has been confirmed to test positive for Covid-19 in the past three weeks.
4. If you have been informed by Contact tracing that you or anyone in your household have been exposed to an infected person in the past three weeks.

We do appreciate that this may cause inconvenience in getting your hearing issues addressed promptly, but we need to ensure safety for all our clients and staff.

We are working through appointments that were canceled due to the Virus, in order of priority.

COCOONERS...

For those clients who have been advised to cocoon for whatever reason, you may benefit from one of the service options that does not involve attending in person. A few options:

1. We offer a same day collect and return service for those living within 5km range of the clinic.
2. Get someone to drop the aid off and we will contact them to collect when ready.
3. Post the aid to us, please include name and contact details.
4. Telephone or Zoom video support calls at pre-arranged time.
5. Remote support appointment—we can program and adjust your hearing aids remotely from our clinic at a pre-arranged remote support scheduled appointment (for Marvel technology aids).





Managing hearing challenges with Face Masks and Social Distancing.

Many of our clients report masks and social distancing affect their ability to enjoy a conversation, asking what can be done to help them.

Hearing aids and Face Masks

Face masks prevent the individual from using visual cues to understand speech. Bare this in mind when talking to loved ones and be patient as they try to understand you. Face the person, talk clearly and try re-phrasing if they are finding it difficult to understand you.

Remember - when putting on or taking off a face mask, be careful not to pull the hearing aids with it. Face masks that loop behind the ear should be taken off gently, by lifting up and out from the ear, so as not to disturb the position of the hearing aid. We suggest only taking your mask off in your home or the car, that minimizes the risk of losing the hearing aids.

Roger Technology overcomes 2m distance... and more!

“ Many of our patients have found Roger to be a life-changing device, especially during the current social distancing restrictions ”

Roger is a wireless microphone that connects directly to compatible hearing aids. Hearing aids alone provide the most benefit when a speaker is within 1.5 metres of the listener, making the 2m social distancing even more challenging for hearing aid users. This is where Roger comes in to boost hearing aid performance.

The Roger Select microphone is an excellent device which is worn by the speaker or placed close to people speaking, allowing clearer, more audible signals reach the patients ear, even when the speaker is wearing a mask. It can also be placed on a table, for example during a family meal, can connect to both TV and computer audio bringing those sounds directly into your ears. Roger can benefit both your work and private aspects of life.



Research suggests that speech understanding improves up to 61% in a group conversation when using Roger compared to hearing aids alone. Contact the clinic if you would like to learn more about this technology.

Taking care of your mental health

It is understandable for us to feel anxious about the current health crisis. The constant news updates, quarantine protocols and cancellation of holidays and plans has led to a lot of fear and stress worldwide. While either cocooning or limiting our movements to support and protect one another, we need to ensure our mental health is prioritized.

Here are a few ways you can take care of yourself mentally:

- Make sure to eat well, get enough sleep and try to get some activity in each day. Being stuck inside can feel limiting, but there are a lot of apps and videos that can walk you through at home workouts and meditations to shake up your daily routine.
- Take breaks from the news and social media. It can all be a bit overwhelming, so make sure to unplug each day to decompress and keep a positive mindset.
- Connect with friends. Out of sight doesn't have to mean out of mind. Call your loved ones to touch base. Get out that old notepad and paper and write a letter. Keep in contact with those you care about to combat any loneliness you might be feeling during this time.
- Finally, try have fun. We are all concerned for our physical health right now, but mental health can have a huge impact on our overall wellbeing so make sure to look out for both. Start a new project; plant a herb garden, paint or draw, try a new recipe!





What we have been up to

Australia: Ann was delighted to be invited to present at the Australian National Lyric event in Melbourne in July 2019. A lot was learned sharing best practices and experiences globally.

First in Ireland once again: We are proud to announce that Ann Kelly Hearing has become the first Roger Certified Centre in Ireland.

International AKH Event: We hosted a Tinnitus and Lyric Day with experts from America and Switzerland. It was a very exciting and enlightening meeting!

Name-change: Ann Kelly Hearing will be known as Kelly Hearing going forwards

Keeping up-to-date with hearing aid technology: We attended the following educational events

Audiology two-day Seminar in Seville, Spain

ISHAA Spring and Autumn Education Days

Advanced Real Ear Measurement course, UK, Warrington, UK

Roger Certified Partner meeting, Manchester

Phonak Marvel 2 Launch, Manchester, October and virtual Marvel 3 Launch

Ann attended an Advisory meeting on future technology

Naomi completed training and certification in Micro-suction and Lyric fitting

Staff News

Our New staff member: Naomi Kilroy

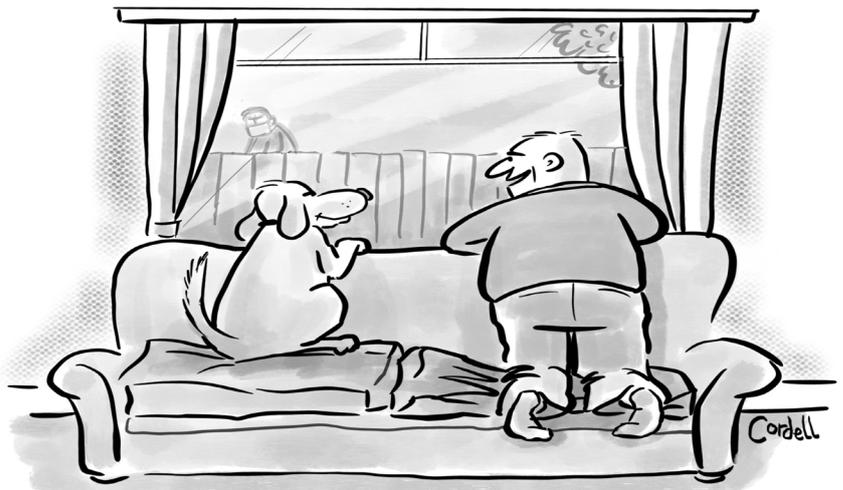
In September, we welcomed Naomi to the clinic. Naomi graduated from University College Cork with a Masters in Audiology. She comes from a scientific background, holding a BSc. in Neuroscience from University College Dublin. Naomi has experience working with both adults and paediatrics in HSE settings throughout Ireland. She is a member of the Irish Academy of Audiology and the Irish Society of Hearing Aid Audiologists.



As part of her Masters, Naomi conducted research into how tinnitus is managed by General Practitioner's in Ireland.

This was published in March 2020 in the Irish Journal of Medical Science, a Springer publication. This research is a huge feat and paves the way to better care for tinnitus patients in Ireland. For anyone who would be interested in reading the full study, please contact the clinic for a copy.

Many congratulations Naomi!



"Until now, I never understood why you got so excited when someone walked past the house."

We say a very massive THANK YOU to our essential workers.

Everyone should be so proud of themselves for following the guidelines. Together, we have saved lives.

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