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Dr Arline Bronzaft, PhD passed away passed away on October 29, 2025. Aline was an avid campaigner for a quieter city and had been appointed to the New York City Mayor's Board of Grow NYC where she oversaw the noise activities in the city and its abatement. *Arline was a Professor Emerita, City University of New York, and the co-author of the book "Why Noise Matters." She has written articles on noise for encyclopedias and books, published her noise research findings in academic journals and has written on noise for the popular press and was the first recipient of the Citizen Psychologist Presidential Citation from the American Psychological Association for using her scientific knowledge to assist communities in their efforts to reduce noise pollution.*

Arline had contributed a chapter to one of my edited textbooks on environmental noise control and the effects on learning in noisy school. In one of her early studies from the 1970s, the reading levels of students in a school where the classroom was adjacent to noisy train tracks were compared with matched students in that same school whose classroom faced a quieter residential neighbourhood. She found statistically significantly lower reading scores for children on the noisier side of the school. And not leaving it at just publishing the study, but Arline successfully advocated for noise abatement in the school as well as in the surrounding neighbourhood forcing the owners of the train tracks to install rubber pads beneath the tracks and had acoustic treatments installed for the school.

*In 2022, Arline contributed an article to CanadianAudiologist.ca called "Advocating for less noise and more quiet". This can be found here (*Advocating For Less Noise and More Quiet | Canadian Audiologist)

Editor's Note: Every year, HearingHealthMatters.org publishes their Top 10 Most Read Hearing News Stories of 2025 and CanadianAudiologist.ca has been given permission to reprint these news items. On a personal level, in my mind, HearingHealthMatters.org ranks as one of the best and most-balanced site in the field of Audiology today. The link to these top 10 stories is: https://hearinghealthmatters.org/hearing-news-watch/2025/top-10-news-stories-of-2025/

Top 10 Most Read Hearing News Stories of 2025



HHTM

December 30, 2025

In 2025, hearing healthcare captured broad attention as research, clinical innovation, and real-world impact converged in compelling ways. This year's most-read stories reflected deepening insights into tinnitus and hyperacusis, advancing evidence on hearing loss and cognitive health, and progress toward novel therapeutics — from cell-based approaches to synapse-targeted treatments. Alongside scientific and clinical milestones, developments in care delivery, workforce dynamics, and accessibility technology underscored how the field is evolving to meet diverse patient needs.

Below, we present the Top 10 Most Read news stories of 2025, highlighting the breakthroughs, debates, and innovations that resonated most with our community and helped shape the conversation in hearing health this year.

Top 10 Hearing News Stories of 2025

1) Sound Pharmaceuticals Receives FDA Breakthrough Therapy Designation for SPI-1005 in Meniere's Disease

In December, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted Breakthrough Therapy Designation to Sound Pharmaceuticals' investigational oral drug SPI-1005 for the treatment of hearing loss associated with Ménière's disease — the first such designation for any drug targeting this inner-ear disorder, which currently has no FDA-approved therapies. SPI-1005, an anti-inflammatory agent that has also met co-primary efficacy endpoints in a pivotal Phase 3 trial, is being developed for several neurotologic conditions including noise-induced hearing loss and ototoxicity, underscoring its potential as a novel therapeutic option.

2) Hearing Loss and Cognitive Decline: New Research Reinforces the Link and the Role of Early Intervention

New research from long-term and pilot studies reinforced the strong association between hearing loss and cognitive decline, showing that greater hearing impairment over decades was linked with worse cognitive outcomes and suggesting that early identification could be critical. The pilot Treating Auditory Impairment and Cognition Trial (TACT) study also indicated that structured hearing aid use may help preserve cognitive function in older adults with mild impairment, highlighting both the potential and the need for further study on interventions that support brain health.

3) Single Dose of AC102 Nearly Eliminates Tinnitus and Restores Auditory Synapses in Preclinical Study

Researchers reported that a single dose of the novel compound AC102 nearly eliminated tinnitus-like behavior in a preclinical acoustic trauma animal model while also restoring synaptic connections between inner ear sensory cells and the auditory nerve. With no currently approved drug treatments for tinnitus, these findings — published in the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* — highlight the potential of AC102's synapse-targeted approach as a promising step toward a new treatment for tinnitus.

4) Senators Warren, Paul, Grassley Reintroduce Medicare Audiology Access Improvement Act in U.S. Senate

In June, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators reintroduced the Medicare Audiology Access Improvement Act (MAAIA) to modernize Medicare by removing outdated barriers and allowing beneficiaries to access the full range of hearing and balance care provided by licensed audiologists. The legislation, backed by major hearing and aging organizations, aims to reclassify audiologists as practitioners and streamline reimbursement so seniors and people with disabilities can receive more timely, affordable audiologic services.

5) Sydney Opera House Introduces Auracast™, Transforming Hearing Accessibility in a World-First for a Cultural Institution

In March, the Sydney Opera House demonstrated Auracast™ broadcast audio through a collaboration between GN, Hearing Australia, and the National Acoustic Laboratories, enabling direct wireless audio streaming to compatible hearing aids and personal devices during

performances and venue tours. The project highlighted how emerging wireless standards can expand accessible listening options in large public venues, offering users greater control over clarity and volume without relying on traditional assistive listening systems.

6) Vestibular Function Testing Aids in Differentiating Menière's Disease from Vestibular Migraine, Study Finds

A new study from the Netherlands reported that vestibular function tests—particularly the video head impulse test (vHIT) and caloric testing—showed distinct patterns that can help clinicians differentiate between Ménière's disease and vestibular migraine, two conditions with often overlapping symptoms. The findings suggest that objective vestibular assessments may play a more meaningful role in improving diagnostic confidence and guiding appropriate management for patients with complex dizziness presentations.

7) Up to 32% of Dementia Cases May Be Attributable to Hearing Loss, Study Finds

A large cohort study published in *JAMA Otolaryngology–Head & Neck Surgery* reported that nearly one in three dementia cases over an eight-year period could be attributed to objectively measured hearing loss, emphasizing the strength of the hearing-dementia connection. The findings highlight the potential public health impact of routine audiometric screening and greater access to hearing care as part of strategies to support cognitive health in aging populations.

8) UK Approves First Human Trial of Rinri's Rincell-1 Cell Therapy for Hearing Loss

In August, Rinri Therapeutics announced the initiation of the first-in-human clinical trial evaluating its investigational cell therapy designed to regenerate auditory neurons and restore hearing function. The Phase 1 study represents a significant milestone in regenerative approaches to hearing loss, with early safety and feasibility data expected to inform future development and refinement of inner-ear biologic treatments.

8) Workplace Impact of Tinnitus and Hyperacusis Highlighted in New Research

A study published in the *International Journal of Audiology* found that more than half of patients with tinnitus or hyperacusis reported reduced work capacity, and that hyperacusis severity was a strong predictor of both reduced ability and work absence. The findings underscore how auditory symptoms themselves — independent of anxiety or depression — can impair occupational functioning and highlight the need for workplace awareness and supportive interventions.

9) New Study Finds 61% Reduced Dementia Risk Among Hearing Aid Users Under 70

Adults with hearing loss who began using hearing aids in their 60s had a significantly lower risk of developing dementia, suggesting that earlier intervention may help protect brain health decades later. Notably, the benefit was observed in participants under age 70, while no significant reduction in dementia risk was seen among those who initiated hearing aid use at older ages, highlighting the importance of timing in hearing intervention.

10) Lenire Tinnitus Device Shows Success in Real-World Clinical Study

A clinical study published in *Nature Communications Medicine* reported that treatment with the bimodal neuromodulation device Lenire was associated with statistically significant and sustained

reductions in tinnitus symptom severity in a cohort of adults with chronic tinnitus. The findings add to the growing body of peer-reviewed research examining non-pharmacologic, device-based approaches for tinnitus management.

HearingHealthMatters.org is Looking Ahead…

As 2025 comes to a close, these most-read stories reflect a field increasingly grounded in evidence, precision, and long-term impact. This year's coverage highlighted continued momentum in inner-ear therapeutics, growing clarity around the links between hearing loss, tinnitus, and broader health outcomes, and a steady shift toward earlier, more proactive intervention across the lifespan.

At the same time, developments in policy, diagnostic science, and accessibility technology reflected a broader shift toward earlier intervention, improved diagnostic clarity, and more inclusive listening environments.

As the field looks ahead to 2026, hearing healthcare appears increasingly focused on translating emerging evidence and therapeutic innovation into clinically meaningful, real-world applications that support long-term health and quality of life.

November 21, 2025

www.gasbusters.ca

At last week's Toronto's City Council meeting, a motion was passed by Councillor Dianne Saxe that drew directly on the work and persistence of Gasbusters—proof that collective advocacy works. A huge thank-you to everyone who emailed their support of this initiative. Your actions mattered.

The motion directs that, on days when Toronto's Air Quality Health Index reaches high or very high-risk levels (7–10), City operations, businesses, and residents will be encouraged to refrain—where practical and feasible—from using two-stroke gas-powered leaf blowers and other devices with similar polluting effects. Council has also requested that the Chief Communications Officer coordinate messaging across the City's communication channels to ensure this guidance reaches residents and businesses.

This result represents a meaningful breakthrough, both for air quality and for community noise levels. Going forward, when the Medical Officer of Health issues a Special Air Quality Statement on high-pollution wildfire smoke days, the City will now include more explicit guidance encouraging Torontonians not to use gas-powered leaf blowers. This is a modest but important step in the larger effort to transition away from these highly-polluting and noisy devices, and it creates a valuable foundation for future progress with Toronto City Council.

"Awareness of the damage caused by noise and pollution from gas leaf blowers and related garden equipment is a vital component in creating public pressure to limit or eliminate their usage.

For further information, and to join Gasbusters, please visit

https://www.gasbusters.ca

All the best,
Gasbusters Organizing Committee