

Message from the Editor

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Mirroring our economy in general, the hearing aid industry is gradually coming out of its COVID-related crash and we look forward to greater things in 2024.

I am trying to start with a fresh mind and to get rid of some of the cobwebs from 2023. It was certainly a year of ups and downs with respect to the relationship between hearing loss and cognitive decline. I will be the first to admit some confusion regarding why our industry still seem to have both of its feet planted on the effect side, despite the research not showing a great effect. The evidence so far only shows that hearing aids slow cognitive decline in those that are already at risk for dementia, and not that hearing aids prevent dementia. And in this issue of *CanadianAudiologist.ca*, Dr. Kathy Pichora-Fuller was nice enough to write a short item on a recent Lancet article that was retracted due to a coding error in the researchers' paradigm (DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(23\)00058-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(23)00058-0)). Hearing better will indeed help you function better and with less overall energy expended, but the “smoking gun” of stemming the tide of cognitive decline, has yet to be found.

Other articles in this issue of *CanadianAudiologist.ca* include how vision influences speech understanding in age-related hearing loss, and an overview of a new diagnostic test called the Audible Contrast Threshold (ACT) test which among other things, is language independent. A personal narrative has been written by Erica Zaia, one of the editors of the Striking the Right Balance section, on her journey with vestibular migraines.

Another article discusses and queries why live entertainment venues are so loud. This is part of a larger endeavour to control sound levels in urban settings. This is a difficult balance to achieve for politicians, the residents, and the audiological community. One extreme would be “no sound”, and the other would be unbridled sound levels. Live music in restaurants is part of the dining experience for some and can be a significant distraction for others. Various cities worldwide have tried to strike a balance but I can think of no perfectly balanced example. In New Orleans, for example, there was an attempt to limit sound levels to an enjoyable, but safe level, but the same data and research was used to argue for no sound at all.

We have a few historical overview articles for late-night reading on the history of the CROS hearing aid by Neil Bauman and the history of hearing aids and “other devices” over the last century by Myk Briggs.

This issue of *CanadianAudiologist.ca* has something for everyone!

I hope you all had a pleasant and safe holiday season. And, it's not too early to begin planning for the next annual conference of the Canadian Academy of Audiology to be held between October

6-9, 2024, in Kelowna, British Columbia, right in the heart of the Okanagan wine region.

Best regards,
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