

Tinnitus and Dr. Philippe Fournier

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Philippe Fournier not only has a great sounding name but he is an amazing guest editor for this issue of CanadianAudiologist.ca focusing on the elusive topic of tinnitus. I call it elusive because not all tinnitus is the same; in fact, if anything, the opposite is true – every case of tinnitus is different. For any researcher or clinician to get a handle on tinnitus, its assessment and its treatment, would be a herculean task. Combine this with the fact that tinnitus can and does change with the wind – in some situations it is bothersome to a person, and in others, less so. There is no tinnitus meter, or even an objective test result that correlates with tinnitus. It's no wonder that a PhD student or researcher would rather study the output of a hearing aid or the delay of an evoked potential rather than tinnitus – at least there are pretty graphs and actual real numbers associated with these subject areas. Personally, I was not convinced that tinnitus was “real” until Dr. Dick Salvi was able to demonstrate it on an MRI scan of the brain, but there it was!

But, having said all of this, I admire anyone that seeks to formally study this area of auditory dysfunction. There is not a cure, but an implicit belief that the more we know about tinnitus, the better will be our treatments, all for the benefit of the front-line clinician and their patients.

Philippe has put together 9 articles by some stellar researchers in this field including James Henry, Pawel Jastreboff, Sylvie Hébert, and Rich Tyler. And just watch the journals in our field for the rest of the upcoming group of researchers in this issue of Canadian Audiologist. I predict that they will become just as well-known as others who have been studying tinnitus as their life's work.

And just as impressive as the line-up of dedicated researchers we have a line-up of front-line clinicians who see a wide range of patients including many with complaints of tinnitus. For this issue, we have contributions from Rex Banks, Dany Pineault, Maha Atrach, Ronald Choquette, Dominique Wright, and Calvin Staples. (Calvin and his wife Tegann incidentally had a new baby boy during the writing of the article.... with the great name Chase!)

And now that the Federal Bill C-81 has finally passed (see Chris Sutton's item in the Happenings section) we need to get to work and help develop policies and standards which hopefully will be picked up as Provincial legislation as well.

I hope you are all having a pleasant summer season and staying hydrated on your favourite hydration (and wearing a hat and sun screen). I hope to see you in October at the annual meeting of the Canadian Academy of Audiology in Halifax, Nova Scotia.