



Presentation Title: What changes outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children? Learning from the LOCHI Study

Keynote Presenter: Prof. Greg Leigh AO, PhD, FACE

Abstract:

Developments in multiple fields over several decades have created the opportunity for vastly improved developmental, educational, and social-emotional outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children. Among advances in fields such as linguistics (including the linguistics of sign languages), psychology, audiology, and education, have been two outstanding developments that continue to shape more positive outcomes for children. The introduction of programs of Universal Newborn Hearing Screening (UNHS) and the increasing availability and accessibility of cochlear implantation have fundamentally changed the nature of expected outcomes for deaf and hard of hearing children.

This presentation describes and discusses findings from the Longitudinal Outcomes of Children with Hearing Impairment (LOCHI) Study, which includes more than 450 deaf and hard of hearing Australian children whose hearing losses were identified variously through newborn hearing screening or later paths to confirmation and intervention. Discussion will focus on outcomes in language and communication development, literacy, and social and emotional development; the factors that influence and impact those outcomes; and the implications of those findings for practice in early intervention and school education.