

For Immediate Release

MED-EL Convenes Global Hearing Implant Researchers for Age-Related Hearing Loss Workshop in New York

January 12, 2017 – (New York, NY) – More than 100 leading scientists and hearing health experts from around the world will gather starting today for a two-day scientific workshop sponsored by global hearing implant leader MED-EL. The multidisciplinary meeting will include ENT surgeons who specialize in older adults, research audiologists and rehabilitation therapists from the world's top universities and research centers. During the scientific exchange, attendees will discuss ongoing research and identify needs of candidates and users with the ultimate goal of improving the lives of older adults who live with hearing loss.

The World Health Organization estimates that 164.5 million people over the age of 65 (or one third of the 65+ population) live with disabling hearing loss.ⁱ

"Hearing loss is a hidden disability that affects a growing number of older adults, many of whom leave their hearing loss untreated," said Ingeborg Hochmair, CEO and founder of MED-EL. "MED-EL employees around the world strive every day to advance technology that will help overcome hearing loss as a barrier to communication. We foster training, education and research so that professionals are even more effective in treating older adults with hearing loss. This workshop is a wonderful opportunity for professionals from many fields to engage with each other and share their findings on age-related hearing loss."

"Conditions of aging that have been associated with hearing loss – such as dementia, social isolation, depression and an increased risk of falls – have devastating physical, emotional and financial consequences to individuals and society as a whole," said Barbara E. Weinstein, PhD, professor and Founding Executive Officer, CUNY Graduate School and University Center, and expert in the field of geriatric audiology. "Helping to restore hearing, communication, social participation and the promise of once again living an engaged life, can have far-reaching effects for the quality of life of older adults living with hearing loss."

Worldwide, the population is aging at an unprecedented rate and life expectancies are higher than ever before. Increased attention is being paid to the urgent need to facilitate independence among older adults for as long as possible – from a personal, community and public health standpoint. Recent scientific discoveries surrounding the connections between hearing loss and mental and physical health are compelling. The promise of restoring hearing and giving life back to years of older adults is an exciting and multi-faceted research topic.

The MED-EL workshop will include topics on cognition and age-related hearing loss, outcomes in older adults with hearing implants, neurobiology, neuroplasticity, clinical aspects, anesthesiology and surgery, and rehabilitation.

"We're proud to support this meeting, which offers experts the opportunity to share their research on the topic of age-related hearing loss. MED-EL is celebrating 20 years of helping people with hearing loss in the US, and meetings like this will advance our field and prepare us for the next 20 years and beyond," said Raymond Gamble, President and CEO of MED-EL North America.

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About MED-EL

Austria-based MED-EL Medical Electronics is a leading provider of hearing implant systems with 29 subsidiaries worldwide. The family-owned business is one of the pioneers in the industry. The two Austrian scientists Ingeborg and Erwin Hochmair developed the world's first microelectronic-multichannel cochlear implant, now considered the modern cochlear implant, which was implanted in 1977. The cochlear implant was and remains the first replacement of a human sense, the sense of hearing. In 1990 the Hochmairs laid the foundation for the successful growth of the company when they hired their first employees. To date, the company has grown to more than 1,700 employees around the world.

MED-EL offers the widest range of implantable solutions worldwide to treat various degrees of hearing loss, including cochlear and middle ear implant systems, and the EAS (combined Electric Acoustic Stimulation) hearing implant system. In July 2016, MED-EL acquired the technology for a novel non-surgical bone conduction system from the Swedish medical device company Otorix, further expanding the number of people who can benefit from innovative hearing technology and reinforcing MED-EL's mission to overcome hearing loss as a barrier to communication. People in over 100 countries enjoy the gift of hearing with the help of a product from MED-EL. www.medel.com

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ⁱ World Health Organization. Hearing Loss in Persons 65 and Older.

http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/news/GE_65years.pdf?ua=1 Accessed December 6, 2016.