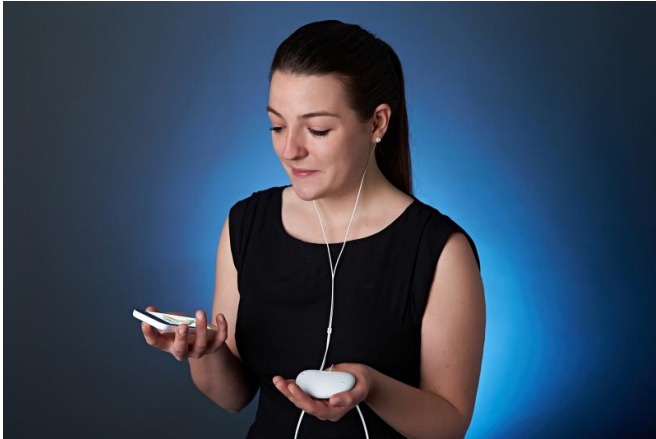


From the bionic ear to the 'audiologist in your pocket'

7 April 2015



The Incus in use. Credit: Blamey Saunders hears.

An Australian company has completed a trifecta of tools to help Australians take care of their own hearing without the stress and expense of audiology visits. It's the product of decades of government-backed research.

- In 2011 Peter Blamey and Elaine Saunders used [bionic ear](#) sound processing to create a high quality hearing aid you could buy online for less than \$1,500.
- In 2013, they created a revolutionary hearing test you can take online for free.
- Today they release the 'audiologist in your pocket': a device that allows you to adjust your hearing aid for the pub, the family or the office using your smartphone.

"Four million Australians would have their quality of life transformed if they got their hearing back. We can't repair the damage caused by portable music, machinery, tractors, and rock concerts. But we can empower you to take control of your hearing and rediscover the conversations you're missing," says Elaine Saunders, co-inventor of the system and co-founder of Blamey Saunders hears, a Melbourne-

based hearing business.

"When we lose our hearing we feel threatened, insecure, alienated. But we don't do anything about it because getting a hearing aid is often seen as being for the elderly," she says.

"Modern [hearing aids](#) are almost invisible in daily use. Now we're removing as many as the other barriers as possible such as cost, usability and accessibility," says co-inventor Professor Peter Blamey.



Ergonomic Incus. Credit: Blamey Saunders hears

"Now you can test your own hearing online, buy your hearing aid online, and adjust it yourself, the way you want it, for the different environments in your life," he says.

The I Hear You hearing system is built on decades of hearing research supported by the Australian and Victorian governments initially on for the bionic ear then via the Hearing CRC and now through Commercialisation Australia and the Victorian government's technology vouchers.



The Incus connected to hearing aids. Credit: Blamey Saunders hears.

The IHearYou system comprises:

- a free speech perception test that replaces the seventy year-old tones test,
- a range of hearing aids sold online and delivered to match your online test results for a third of the price of competing systems – less than \$1,500,
- and the Incus – a pocket-sized device that uses Bluetooth and your smartphone to enable you to readjust your hearing aids to comfortable levels for any environment – from a concert, to a family dinner or a trip to the library.

The Incus device was designed to be minimalist in design to appeal to younger users – though the major benefit is its transportability. It can be carried like a 'personal audiologist' in your pocket. The system also 'future-proofs' hearing aids, allowing you to re-tune as your [hearing](#) changes, and is a template that could save the health system millions of dollars. It was developed in partnership with designer Leah Heiss, product developer Planet Innovation, and made in Dandenong by SRX Global.

More information: Take the test online at www.blameysaunders.com.au

APA citation: From the bionic ear to the 'audiologist in your pocket' (2015, April 7) retrieved 22 April 2018 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-04-bionic-ear-audiologist-pocket.html>

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