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MED-EL

Building a hearing inclusive society through awareness, innovation and policy change

Hearing loss is one of the most under-recognized public-health challenges of our time. Far beyond an individual sensory impairment, untreated hearing loss contributes to social isolation, reduced quality of life, reduced employability, and a range of serious comorbidities including cognitive decline and depression. Despite transformative advances in hearing-aid and hearing-implant technologies global uptake remains strikingly low. Stigma, limited awareness among the general public and professionals, and insufficient understanding of clinical pathways continue to prevent millions from accessing the support they need.

This presentation highlights three essential drivers of change: raising awareness, accelerating technological innovation, and implementing effective policy measures. A strategic policy approach must rest on four pillars: increased public and professional awareness of hearing loss as a societal and health priority; early detection and prevention through national screening programs across the lifespan; expanded access to hearing care and life-changing technologies; and greater investment in research, including epidemiology, long-term outcomes, and public-health impact.