

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

EARBUS FOUNDATION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VALUES, MISSION & VISION



Open & Honest



Loyal & Supportive



Brilliant

Earbus Foundation of Western Australia's mission is to reduce the incidence and impact of middle ear disease (Otitis media) in Aboriginal and at-risk children in Western Australia to achieve parity with non-Indigenous children.

The Foundation exists to support all children and their families who may be at risk of developing Otitis media or hearing loss.

Our Vision is that current and future generations of Indigenous children can succeed at school unhindered by the debilitating effects of Otitis media and its impacts upon their ability to learn and achieve their full potential.

Our Vision also extends to early detection, prevention and access to diagnostic services of hearing loss for newborn babies.

Our Core Values are the centre of all our internal and external interactions and are fundamental to everything we do. These values are the non-negotiable, unchanging heart of our organisation. We stress the critical importance of all employees living these values and representing these values to the public we serve.

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Sue Beath
Chairperson

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

2022, Earbus Foundation's ninth year of operation, came and went with the acceptance that working with Covid is very much our new normal.

Due to the structures and procedures put in place by the Foundation, informed at every stage by guidelines and mandates developed by the State Government and Department of Health and followed meticulously by the entire Earbus team, Aboriginal families and communities were well protected and services were delivered without interruption across the state.

Earbus clinicians continue to follow stringent policies before, during and after every trip to ensure their safety and wellbeing - as well as that of the children, families, and communities Earbus serves - is maintained at the highest level.

In times of uncertainty such as these recent years, maintaining trust can be a challenge. I am delighted to have received feedback from communities directly that families know they can rely on Earbus to be there when we say we'll be there. I am grateful to the team, under the leadership of CEO and co-founder Paul Higginbotham, for not letting our Aboriginal families down.

The Foundation's vision that current and future generations of Indigenous children can succeed at school unhindered by the debilitating effects of Otitis media and its impacts upon their ability to learn and achieve to their full potential is visible in the outcomes recorded by region. Middle ear disease and hearing loss continue to reduce in many sites, some well below the World Health Organisation benchmark of 4%. Where incidence rates are not yet at our 4% target, children are being closely case-managed, in collaboration with local Aboriginal Medical Services and allied health agencies, so as to reduce the impact of their condition on their ability to learn through listening.

"Families know they can rely on Earbus"

I am always impressed by the reports Earbus provides to schools after each clinic, which include strategies to support each individual student in the classroom to increase their engagement and minimise barriers caused by middle ear disease and hearing loss. Taking action like this does more than provide a practical component to each child's wellness plan. It shows some of our state's

most vulnerable kids that they are worthy and that Earbus, their teachers and their community believe in them and their potential to live a life unencumbered by this insidious disease.

As we head towards 10 years of service delivery in 2023, I would like to acknowledge my fellow Board members, including Indigenous members Deputy Chair Dr Julie Owen and Greg Narrier, the Earbus Leadership Team, and our clinical and non-clinical staff, each and every one of whom works tirelessly to help Aboriginal kids get well, hear well and live well. Thank you all for your efforts.

And to those individuals, trusts, foundations and corporations who support our work, thank you does not seem enough to convey how much your commitment as a funding partner means. In addition to allowing us to remain in communities for whom our services are essential, you are also enabling Earbus to expand to those who have all but lost hope. On behalf of the children and families we serve, thank you for your trust, advocacy and support.

Sue Beath

Kariyarra Elder
Chairperson, Earbus Foundation



CEO REPORT

Earbus Foundation is approaching 10 years of delivering high-quality ear health programs for Aboriginal children and has now reached 120+ sites across regional and remote Western Australia.

Since our initial year of services, in 2014, we have seen and treated over 12,000 Indigenous children (and some adults) who – without Earbus – may have had to wait years for help. Our reach has steadily extended from an original 12 sites in the Pilbara and Goldfields regions to ten times that number of locations. Rapid growth has brought challenges around sustainability and impact.

“The Reciprocity Foundation works with homeless youth in New York City. Like many other nonprofits, it works tirelessly to make a deep and highly focused impact on a relatively small population. Its founders believe that transforming the lives of 90 young people in a profound and long-lasting way is more meaningful than working with thousands of young people in a superficial way. They worry that if an organization like theirs attempts to expand—by opening new locations in New York State or across the United States—it likely will dilute its impact and reduce its overall sustainability.”

(Gugelev A & Stern A, What's your End Game? Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2015)

Paul Higginbotham
Earbus CEO & Co-founder

Earbus Foundation has expanded steadily and strategically to reach more and more children without ever reducing the quality or frequency of our regional visits. It is our “bite-size chunks” strategy – making sure we have not compromised existing programs by introducing new ones. I believe we have succeeded in expanding without reducing our impact or jeopardising our sustainability.

However, in early 2020 we introduced two new programs funded by corporate sponsors – one into the Tom Price-Paraburdoo area of the southern Pilbara funded by Rio Tinto and a similar reach into Newman and Jigalong, funded by BHP. This massive – and sudden – expansion did produce two missteps. We introduced a raft of new managers and did not have the resources to properly develop and support them while at the same time recruiting new clinical staff to deliver the service into these new communities. Note the date – early 2020!

“Earbus Foundation has expanded steadily and strategically to reach more and more children without ever reducing the quality or frequency of our regional visits.”

We were quickly caught up in pandemic lockdowns, intra-state border closures, reduced travel options and community closures.

Upon reflection we miscalculated on two fronts. Firstly, we underestimated the impact an influx of new staff would have on our core culture. Secondly, we defaulted to a more hierarchical structure when our original focus was to build a flat organisation close to clients. From mid-2021 and throughout 2022 our focus has been on re-establishing our cultural settings, re-elevating our values to centre stage, and flattening the structure to make sure our clinical leadership is in direct contact with kids, families and communities.

At the end of 2022 I am excited by where we are now and the quality of professionals and support staff we have been able to recruit. I also thank Knowledge Society for their work – funded by Lotterywest – in redefining how Earbus works, documenting our processes and setting up new internal structures to allow for devolved decision making and responsibility. I acknowledge Anne Goodall and Emma Cahill from Knowledge Society for their outstanding contribution and insights.

Earbus Foundation managed its way through 2 years of closed borders by enunciating a very clear set of principles upon which we would rely for decision-making during this time. Pre-eminent was the decision to listen and respect Aboriginal communities and be guided by what they told us they needed during this time. We donated and delivered supplies of tissue, soap and

sanitiser into vulnerable communities across the state at a time when these were in short supply. We found ways to continue our clinical trips, even if this meant driving instead of flying. We collapsed our teams to minimum staffing to reduce risk and allow for manageable social distancing.

After the upheavals of 2020 and 2021 we may have thought that state borders opening in March 2022 signalled the complex world of Covid was behind us. Instead, this year brought new hurdles, particularly around staffing and recruitment. Finding, recruiting and retaining quality staff became something of a nightmare and we spent much of the year under-staffed, over-tasked and quietly desperate to fill gaps. I was delighted when Jane Jenkins joined us as our first full-time Business Manager. Kassy Hayden moved into the role of Outreach Program Coordinator and made the position her own by mastering the steep learning curve remarkably quickly. Catherine Zeevaarder stepped up with aplomb to a leadership role with our team of outstanding nurses.

We farewelled Konrad Mills and wished him the best as he explored new career directions. Konrad was our very first employee, back in 2014 and it is impossible to overstate his contribution to Earbus Foundation. Across data, IT, telecoms, office systems and much more Konrad was an integral member of the Earbus family, and I thank him for his enormous input into shaping who we are. I also thank Suzie Costello for her role in running programs and services since May 2016, most recently in her second stint in charge of the Newborn Hearing Program.



Paul at the launch of the Earbus Audiology Booth in Kwinana

“Our greatest achievement this year - as in the previous two – was undoubtedly in keeping faith with all the children, families, and communities across the state by keeping our teams on the road, our clinical trips running and our relentless focus on the ear health of children.”

Scott Higginbotham designed the Earbus logo, all our brochures, Annual Reports, websites and other collateral, originally pro bono before joining the team as a paid employee. Scott’s design work is truly extraordinary, and it is no surprise that he has been pulled away by emerging commercial success.

Our greatest achievement this year - as in the previous two – was undoubtedly in keeping faith with all the children, families, and communities across the state by keeping our teams on the road, our clinical trips running and our relentless focus on the ear health of children. Throughout the whole of Covid we have cancelled fewer than a handful of trips into regional and remote WA. Truly amazing! I also recognise and applaud the senior management of Ramsay and St John of God Hospitals for their unwavering support to allow us to maintain access throughout the surge in Covid cases once the borders finally opened. An especial thanks to Dr Shane Kelly for his stalwart backing as a long-term advocate for Newborn Hearing Screening. It was also gratifying to have the support and counsel of Child and Adolescent Health Services NBHS team as we worked

closely to make sure our services stayed aligned and our communication channels stayed open.

Our staff are mission-focussed, totally committed and compassionate professionals who embody our core values of openness and honesty, loyalty and supportiveness and brilliance. I thank our Board and all our volunteers for their unselfish and important contribution to our important work, especially our Chair Sue Beath for her leadership and wise counsel. Dr Lara Shur has spent the year filling gaps and covering contingencies in addition to her day job as Director, Clinical Services and Outcomes and she has my grateful thanks and admiration.

Finally, to our esteemed patron, Professor Harvey Coates AO our best wishes for a well-earned and distinguished retirement from clinical practice. The beacon that Harvey lit still burns brightly and shows us the way to ending the scourge of ear disease in our Aboriginal communities once... and for all.

Paul Higginbotham
Earbus CEO & Co-founder



Minister for Indigenous Australians, Linda Burney and Assistant Minister to the Prime Minister, Patrick Gorman visit the Perth Metro Earbus



Every Earbus is adorned with artwork by local children



Stella Freitag, Rio Tinto Superintendent Pilbara Inland Communities, with Paul, Nurse Catherine Zeevaarder and Captain Starlight

FACTS ABOUT OTITIS MEDIA

Aboriginal children have the **worst ear health** of any people in the world, with prevalence rates 10 times that of non-Indigenous children. ¹

Ear disease often results in an avoidable hearing loss in early childhood, and children who can't hear, can't learn.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) specifies that rates of Otitis media above 4% in children constitutes a "massive public health problem" requiring urgent attention (WHO/CIBA Foundation, 1996).

Costs to the community of middle-ear disease (OM):

- lost well-being (estimated between \$1.05b and \$2.6b a year);
- productivity and other non-financial costs (\$67 m annually); and
- the total top-down health system expenditure on OM (\$391.6m a year in 2008). ²

Costs to WA education systems arise from children suffering educational and developmental delays, low levels of literacy and numeracy, school absences, behaviour issues and disengagement, leading to increased risk of contact with the juvenile justice system. Around 74% of juveniles in

detention in WA are Aboriginal children, a massive overrepresentation. High rates of recidivism can lead to life-long entanglement in the justice system.

Aboriginal children in Australia experience an average of 32 months of middle-ear infections between the ages of 0 and 5 years, compared to just three months for non-Aboriginal children. ³

OM is highly treatable, but left undiagnosed and untreated it has multiple flow-on effects that ultimately perpetuate the very poverty that gives rise to the disease in the first place, thus continuing the cycle. With effective treatment, children can avoid sustained hearing loss and have their opportunities to learn and succeed at school fully restored.

As various Australian Senate Committees have heard:

"...hearing impairment is a significant contributor to the causal pathway that represents a failure basically of education and health to deal with those issues and they get picked up by the justice system...hearing loss may not cause criminal

activity, when considering the stigmatizing effects of hearing impairment on self-concept, educational attainment and social skills, there is a causal link to criminal activity." ⁴

"There is a crisis in Aboriginal ear and hearing health in Australia. Aboriginal people suffer ear disease and hearing loss at up to ten times the rate of non-Aboriginal Australians, and arguably the highest rate of any people in the world" ⁵

REFERENCES:

- ¹ - Senate Inquiry of the 42nd Australian Parliament – "Hear Us: Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia" 2010 p xv
- ² - Report by Access Economics Pty Ltd for Glaxo Smith Kline, The Cost Burden of Otitis media in Australia, February 2009
- ³ - Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008, p134
- ⁴ - http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac_ctte/hearing_health/report/c08.htm#anc4
- ⁵ - Senate Community Affairs References Committee, 2010, p.xva

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

OPERATING RESULTS

In 2022 Earbus Foundation returned a net loss of \$180,624, the second year the Association has traded negatively since services commenced. The significant diminution in the amount of grants for which we were eligible continued as many philanthropists and trusts focussed on the Covid pandemic and related mental health issues.

Total income for 2022 was \$2,623,386 with expenses reaching \$2,804,010. During the year some staffing adjustments took place; our monthly wages bill fell steadily from a high of \$200,000 to \$150,000 as we strove to minimise the impact.

Overall, staff salaries have reduced by natural attrition from \$2,195,699 to \$1,695,749. This was achieved without mass redundancies or firing of employees. Salaries remain the largest expense, but this is unavoidable as we are a service organisation.

Contractor expenses reduced from \$225,817 to \$206,661. Travel expenses reduced from \$320,580 to \$317,796 due to the end of the Kimberley program but the saving was substantially offset by huge flight cost increases since travel resumed after lockdowns.

We were again fortunate that the previous years had shown a surplus so, despite the loss, our cash reserves have allowed the Foundation to maintain services, which is the main focus.

Future expenses have been tailored to deal with reduced income so we should return to surplus this accounting period.

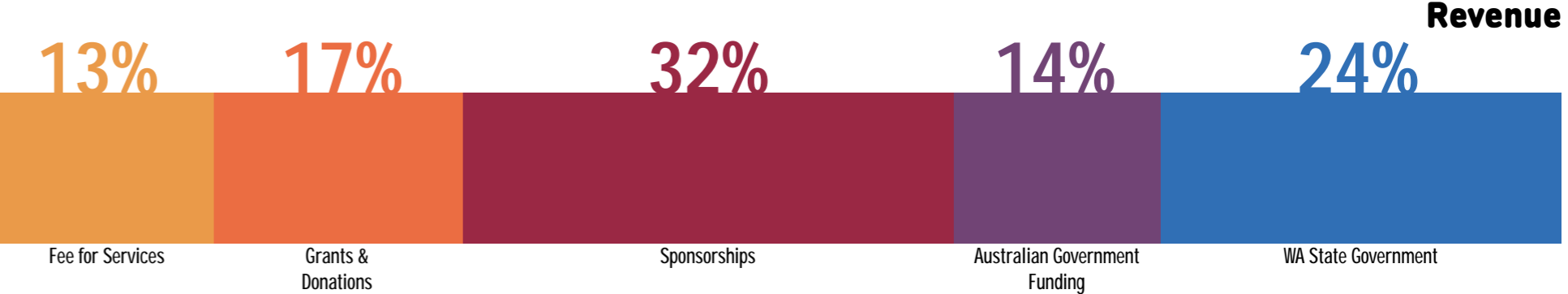
Current accumulated cash assets stand at \$1,605,545.

CAPITAL ASSETS

Audiology and medical equipment continued to be funded by grants and donations throughout the year. Non-current assets stand at \$849,669, down slightly from the previous year's \$927,485.

FUNDING SOURCES

Earbus holds contracts with both state and federal governments; provides contracted audiology services to WA Country Health Service; generates significant fee income from testing and assessment services at its Perth office (and elsewhere); and attracts philanthropic support from individuals and charitable trusts. The Neilson Foundation has been the largest individual contributor, with generous and much appreciated six-figure donations of in each of the past six years.



We thank our Auditors HTG Partners for their diligence, professionalism, and advice. Earbus Foundation's Annual Audited Financial Statements are lodged with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission and can be downloaded from their website at www.acnc.gov.au

DIRECTOR, CLINICAL SERVICES & OUTCOMES



Dr Lara Shur
Director of Clinical Services & Outcomes, COO & Earbus Co-founder

Our clinical services continued to reach some of the most vulnerable communities and populations in Western Australia in 2022. The dedication of Earbus staff in upholding our clinical standards and providing services to meet community needs and expectations cannot be overstated. Earbus staff displayed resilience, courage, determination, and compassion – they are a phenomenal group of professionals. The care shown to all clients starts before those clients enter the door - we aspire to always treat our clients as we would like to be treated ourselves.

Challenges in 2022 were many; recruiting and retaining exceptional people; keeping our Earbus values front and centre, so clients experience authentic relationships and genuine compassion and understanding; and funding challenges in the post-Covid environment. In WA, much of the year did not feel 'post-Covid' and yet we have continued to see people from all walks of life, both close to home in Perth as well as far-reaching corners of the state. No services were cancelled even when staff needed to be replaced due to the virus, or when flights were delayed or cancelled last minute.

On every occasion, the redoubtable Earbus capacity to come up with Plan B, C, D or E came into effect so that clinical service provision remained regular, dependable and high standard.

My thanks to those who chose our services as paying clients at the Hear Today Clinic, as they assist us to help families that are unable to pay. Our Perth-based Hear Today Clinic provides ethical and professional family-centred services and this captures the ethos of all clinical staff working at and in partnership with Earbus - audiologists, nurses, Nurse Practitioners and ear screeners working collaboratively with many external partners to achieve outstanding results for so many children and families in WA.

Our remote and metro outreach programs, newborn hearing screening, Hear Today Clinic and adult hearing aid fittings provide a breadth of clinical practice not experienced in many workplaces. Telehealth services continued to support our work in regional areas.

In the latter half of 2022, our nursing team undertook preparatory work on a formal health promotion framework for 2023.

"I continue to believe that the Earbus Outreach Program demonstrates remarkable outcomes and results worthy of being replicated across the nation."

Nurses Maree, Laura, Catherine and Dee developed an amazing resource for use in schools, to be launched on World Hearing Day in March 2023. This interactive health promotional work has previously been undertaken informally by clinical teams, however this new program will make it more accessible for children and communities.

This year we completed the documentation of our Clinical Governance Framework, which captures the underpinning principles, policies, structures and guidelines of how we work and the standard of the services we provide. The clinical team have been mentored and guided under our Clinical Governance Framework by Earbus Clinical Patron, Professor Harvey Coates AO.

We continued to provide culturally safe places for children and families in all regions, evident by the high consent rates across programs. Part of embedding cultural safety is having audiology students from University of Melbourne join our teams on the road so that learning can be transferred to future generations of audiology clinicians. UWA Audiology were supported with Perth-based student placements at our Hear Today Clinic and Metro outreach programs in the second half of the year.

We have also had 7 students from UWA each complete 100-hour internships at Earbus via the McCusker Centre for Citizenship, which added to our investment in future West Australians; and Notre Dame University had an internship placement of 225 hours with Earbus to round out the year of student involvement.

Our partner organisations are pivotal to our outcomes, with each bringing opportunities to learn from each other. This year, our partner organisations included Wirraka Maya Health Service Aboriginal Corporation in Hedland; South West Aboriginal Medical Services; Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Services; Royal Flying Doctor Service; Starlight Children's Foundation; regional and remote schools; Department of Education; BHP Pilbara Education Partnership Early Years Strategy team; Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia; Department of Child Protection & Family Services; Leonora Pharmacy; the team at Pilbara Pharmacy Services, especially Cameron and Matt; Gumala Aboriginal Corporation; Nintirri Centre and Guardian Pharmacy in Tom Price.

It's important to acknowledge the outstanding clinicians who dedicate time to work with us for the benefit of kids in the regions. ENT specialists Dr David Hall, Dr Anton Hinton-Bayre and Professor Harvey Coates AO have each invested time in seeing children who otherwise could wait years to see an ENT surgeon. They have also assisted by upskilling clinical staff, and we are truly appreciative of their service to community and to Earbus.

Earbus' team of audiologists has continued to provide audiology services to communities in Newman, South

Hedland and the Kimberley under contract with WA Country Health Services. These clinics are invaluable in ensuring that information is shared between organisations so that duplication is avoided, and those requiring services receive them in a timely way.

Earbus clinicians have continued to support the Ears2Learn Program, a collaboration with Connecting Community for Kids run by partner organisation Goodstart Early Learning, a not-for-profit early learning and childcare kindergarten. Ear screener Reggie Van Heythuysen provides basic ear health screening to children under 4 years of age across the Perth Metro region. Children requiring follow up treatment and educational support for ear health are seen by the Metro Earbus team to allow a seamless service provision to these families.

Thank you also to our regular volunteer, Karen Moller, who has previously worked as a GP in our outreach program. Since retirement, Karen has regularly volunteered to assist with the deluge of paperwork that returns to the office following each trip.

I take this opportunity to thank each member of our clinical team for their ongoing dedication; open and honest communication; loyalty and support to our clients and stakeholders as well as to Earbus Foundation and the work we do; and for their brilliance at a professional and personal level.

Dr Lara Shur Au.D
Director, Clinical Services & Outcomes;
COO & Co-founder



REGIONAL PROGRAMS

over **135,000**km travelled

100+ visits and **16,090** consults
to **85** schools and communities

7,954

Screens



3,748

General or
Nurse Practitioner
consults



4,255

Hearing Tests



128

Ear, Nose & Throat
consults



3,402

Individual
Children



77%

Overall
Consent Rate



PROGRAM REPORT

ALCOA EARBUS PROGRAM

2022 marked our fifth year in partnership with Alcoa Australia.

We welcomed 352 new children to the program, reaching 810 kids this year across 30 sites. The prevalence of hearing loss in the region dropped from 12.9% in 2021 to 9.9% and the rate of Chronic Suppurative Otitis media (CSOM) halved from 1.2% to 0.6%. CSOM is a continuing and sometimes very painful inflammation of the middle ear which can include the mastoid cavity.

Rates of mild conductive hearing loss (CHL) reduced from 9.9% in 2021 to 7.7% in 2022. Conductive hearing loss is preventable, caused by a blockage in the outer and or middle ear; it can go undetected for long periods of time and can have devastating impacts on social, language and educational outcomes.

Earbus Clinical Patron, Professor Harvey Coates AO joined the team for ENT consultations in the first half of the year. This specialist service helps reduce the burden on families attending appointments or being waitlisted for lengthy periods of time. In the second half of 2022, Sanacha Naidoo joined the team as a part time Outreach Screener. Sanacha is an Audiometrist and can support the program by providing hearing checks to children.

Alcoa Earbus Program Coordinators were involved in the Waroona Interagency Group throughout the year. The Group meets to provide a local network for communication and information between agencies to collaborate on issues of community safety and wellbeing. We are grateful for the invitation to participate and contribute towards an integrated approach to healthcare in the region.

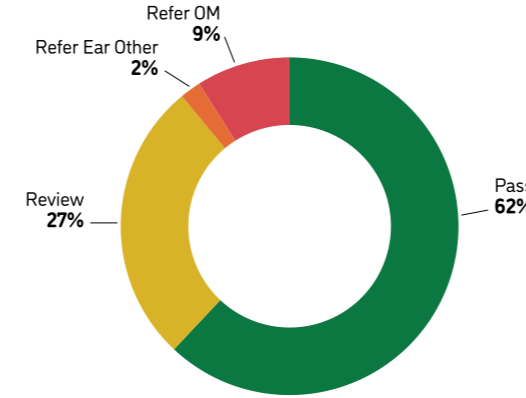
Alcoa Australia Senior Partnerships Advisor, Sally Fairnie and Community Relations Advisor, Amber Stevenson joined us to see the program in action at Bright Futures Kwinana in August. They were able to view a clinic firsthand and see exactly how the team operates, from ear screening through to audiology.

Subsequently, Earbus Partnerships Manager Karen Hickling and Nurse Maree Hunter were invited to the Pinjarra Refinery 50th Anniversary event, which was a unique opportunity to showcase the Alcoa Earbus Program to local stakeholders and share with the community the importance of ear health and early intervention.

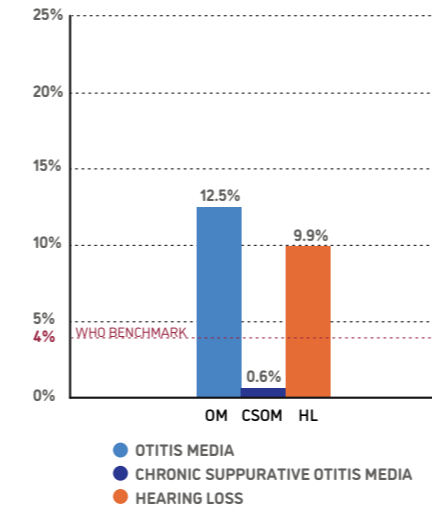
“We are proud to have partnered with Earbus since 2018 to provide important and culturally appropriate ear health services to Indigenous and disadvantaged children in the Kwinana, Peel and Upper South West regions of Western Australia. Under the mantra “if you can’t hear, you can’t learn”, Earbus is working to reduce the incidence of middle ear disease to the World Health Organisation benchmark of less than 4%.”

Sally Fairnie, Alcoa Australia Senior Partnerships Advisor

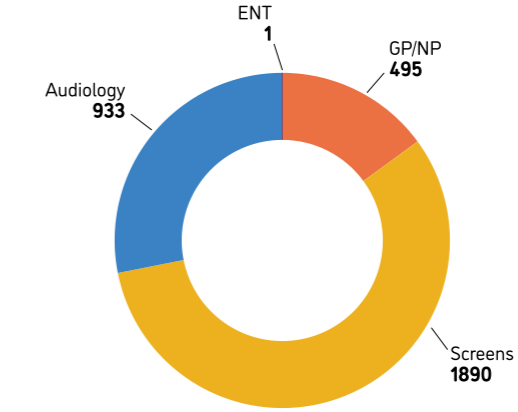
3,319 CONSULTS
66% PEAK CONSENT RATE



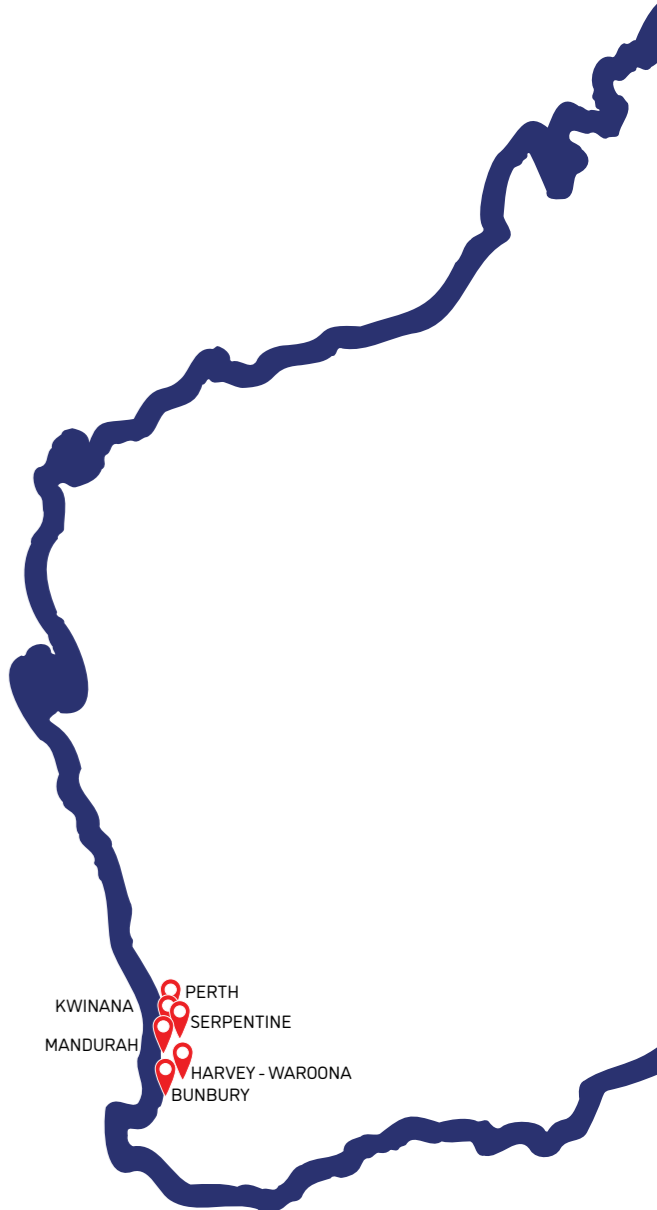
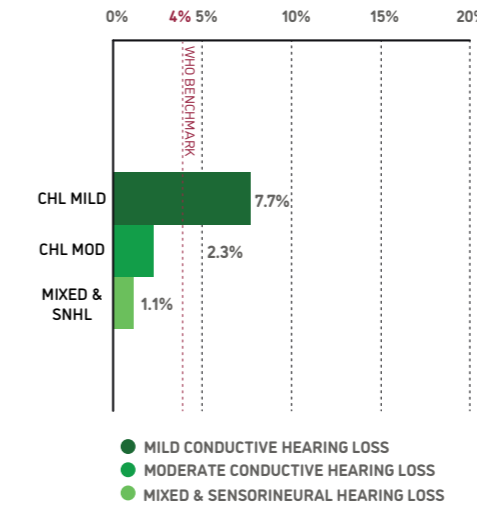
PREVALENCE OF EAR DISEASE & HEARING LOSS



810 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN
352 NEW CHILDREN



TYPES OF HEARING LOSS



PROGRAM REPORT

ESPERANCE

2022 was a rewarding year in the Esperance region. The program visited schools, daycares and kindergartens across the localities of Esperance and Norseman. Earbus clinicians conducted six clinical visits, each of one week in duration, to six individual sites. The team also provided services by appointment to eight vulnerable children not attending school. 107 new children joined the program this year.

We welcomed Graduate Audiologist, Simon Ly to the region as well as Nurse, Laura Ing. Simon and Laura have brought new perspectives to the region and were able to maintain consistently high screening numbers throughout 2022 at an average of 31 screens per day.

Prevalence of Otitis media (OM or middle ear disease) in the region dropped from 21% in 2021 to 18.1% in 2022, with rates of hearing loss also dropping considerably from 19.2% to 13.5%.

Many thanks to all our participating schools, who have continued to welcome and support us. A special mention to AIEO Sharon Moir, who shows unwavering dedication to her students and ensures the Earbus program meets the needs of each child.

ENT Surgeon, Mr David Hall continues to collaborate with the team and supports surgical intervention for

those identified through the program. We are incredibly grateful for Mr Hall's generosity and commitment to Earbus over many years.

Thank you to WA Country Health Services' Esperance Population Health Team for their clinical assistance and local knowledge. Earbus acknowledges the support of the Rural Health West Outreach program, which is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. This program assists with funding for several visits each year.

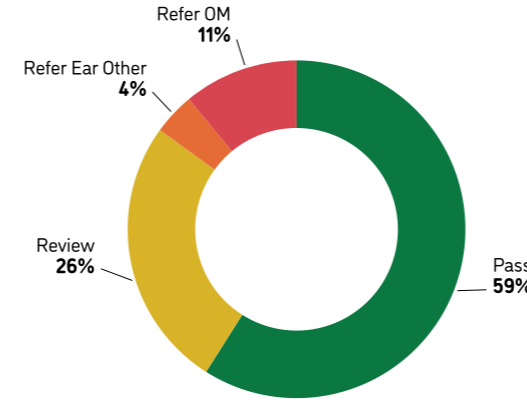
We are very grateful to IGO Limited for their ongoing support in the Norseman community in particular, without which we would not be able to deliver our services.

"I unequivocally view the role of the Earbus team as essential in helping to improve the lives and future prospects, hopes and dreams of our students. I am personally very appreciative of this service, especially when my teachers receive the timely post visit summary with recommendations, any follow up required and important class seating strategies required for optimal learning."

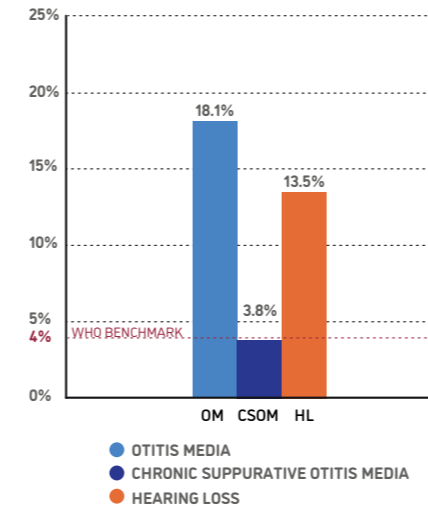
"I look forward to our school's ongoing partnership with Earbus."

**Gareth Palmer, Principal
Esperance Primary School**

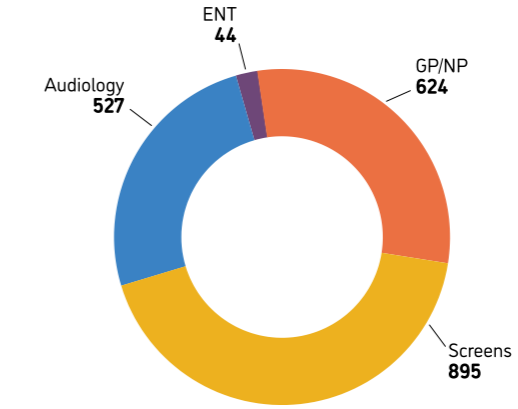
2,090 CONSULTS
95% PEAK CONSENT RATE



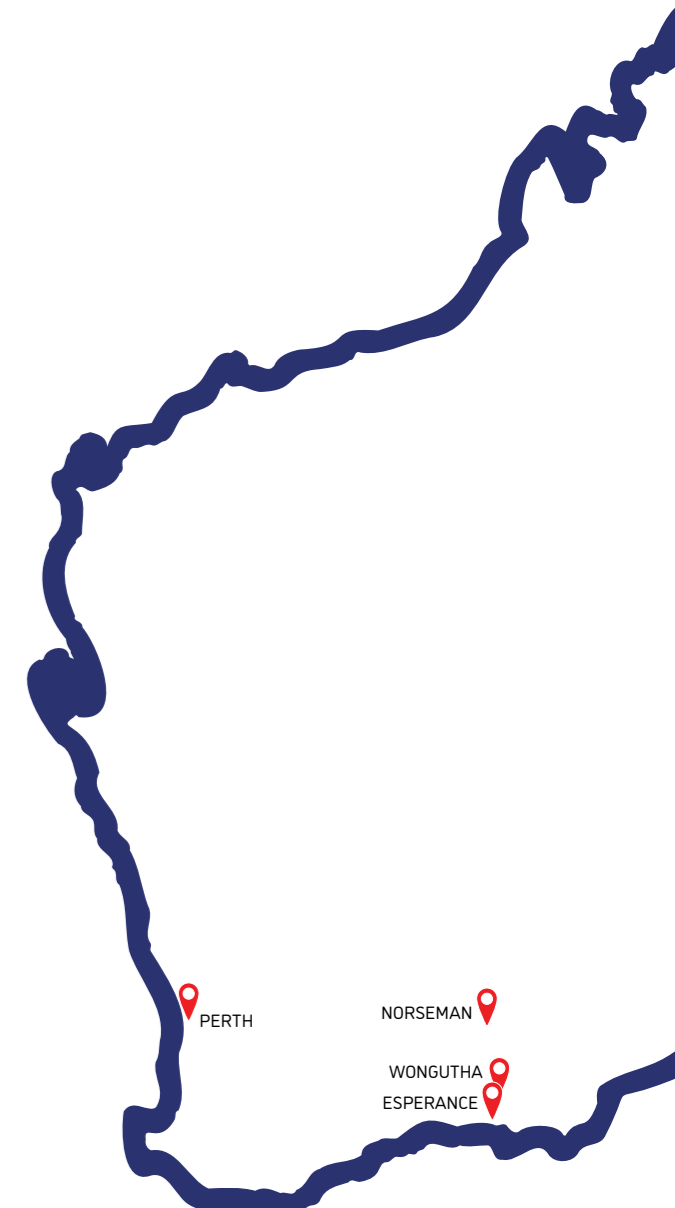
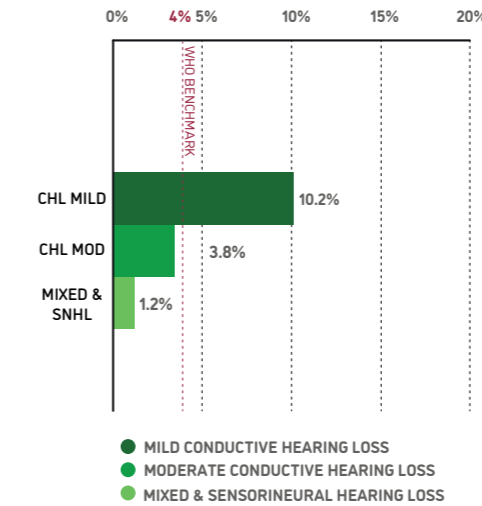
PREVALENCE OF EAR DISEASE & HEARING LOSS



342 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN
107 NEW CHILDREN



TYPES OF HEARING LOSS



PROGRAM REPORT GOLDFIELDS

The prevalence and incidence of middle ear disease in Goldfields communities has dramatically changed since services began in 2014.

The three key markers used to track change are rates of middle ear disease (Otitis media or OM), Chronic Suppurative Otitis media (CSOM) and Hearing Loss. Rate of middle ear disease has fallen from 29% and now sits at 17%. Rate of CSOM was 7% and is now 4.6%. Rate of hearing loss started at 20% and is now 16%. Pathology remains high in the region with new children entering the program continuously over this timeframe. One of the school Principals in the area reported, "We are happy that our students and their families can access a service like Earbus, as these types of services can be difficult for some families to access in our area."

We thank all those involved in helping us achieve our aims and further our mission, including longstanding funding partners AngloGold Ashanti, Macmahon and Minara Foundation. We also acknowledge Rural Health West for their continuing support and local agencies, including Wanslea, Connected Beginnings and WA Country Health Services.

Earbus clinicians visited 14 individual sites in 2022 and 122 new children joined the Earbus program.

Consent rates for the region peaked at 85%, thanks to staff at each school and high community engagement. The ongoing support of teachers, principals, deputy-principals and AIEOs, particularly with family engagement, helps our team ensure high-risk children and young people are able to access services to receive the intervention they need.

The Goldfields team, together with the Director of Clinical Services & Outcomes, have supported the Connected Beginnings Tuning in: Better Hearing Committee initiatives this year. This forum allows for the effective collaboration of services in the region. Program Coordinator, Kassy Hayden and Nurse Renee Speedy attended the 'Connected Beginnings: Our dream, our future, our path' art exhibition event. This was a wonderful opportunity to meet local stakeholders and strengthen relationships outside of the usual clinical setting.

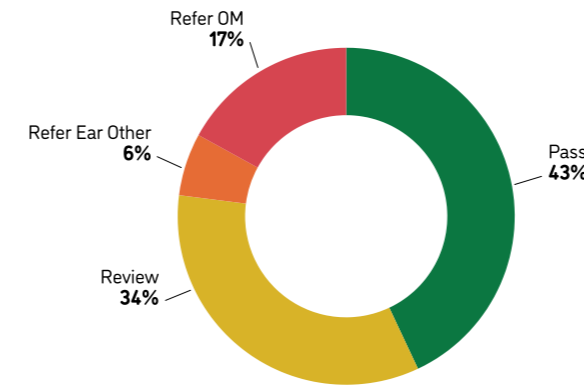
Kalgoorlie-Boulder Community High School, first seen by our clinicians in 2021, continued to be part of our service delivery in 2022 thanks to specific funding from AngloGold Ashanti. Whilst we have some work to do with consent rates for this site, we have been humbled by the reception thus far from children and teachers alike.

2022 saw us struggle to appoint a regional screener, a challenge we saw across the health sector in a tough market, however we were able to maintain services through incremental screening visits from Nurse Laura Ing, who will be delivering Health Promotion messaging in the region in 2023. Usually based in the Esperance-Norseman region, Laura's visits complemented the work of Nurse Renee in building familiarity and rapport amongst schools and families. This has seen trust in the region maintained at a high level.

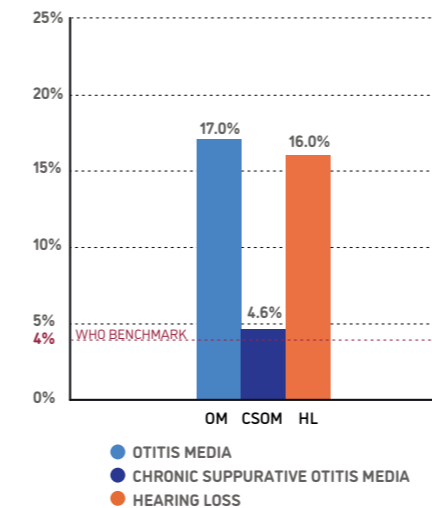
"Earbus has had a tremendous impact on the ear health of our students, speech and oral language, particularly in the early years. We have seen the positive impact in educational outcomes specifically in phonemic awareness. The team that visit our school are professional and provide outstanding care to students and their families."

**Sally Fowler, Principal
East Kalgoorlie Primary School**

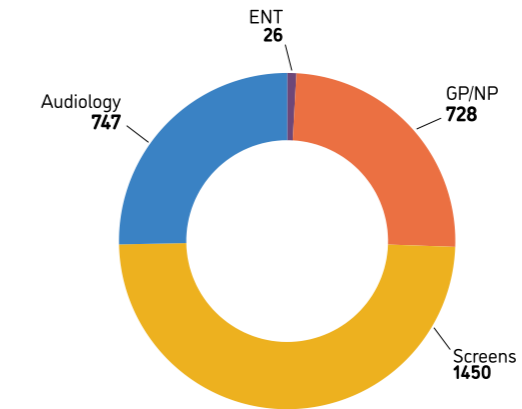
2,951 CONSULTS
85% PEAK CONSENT RATE



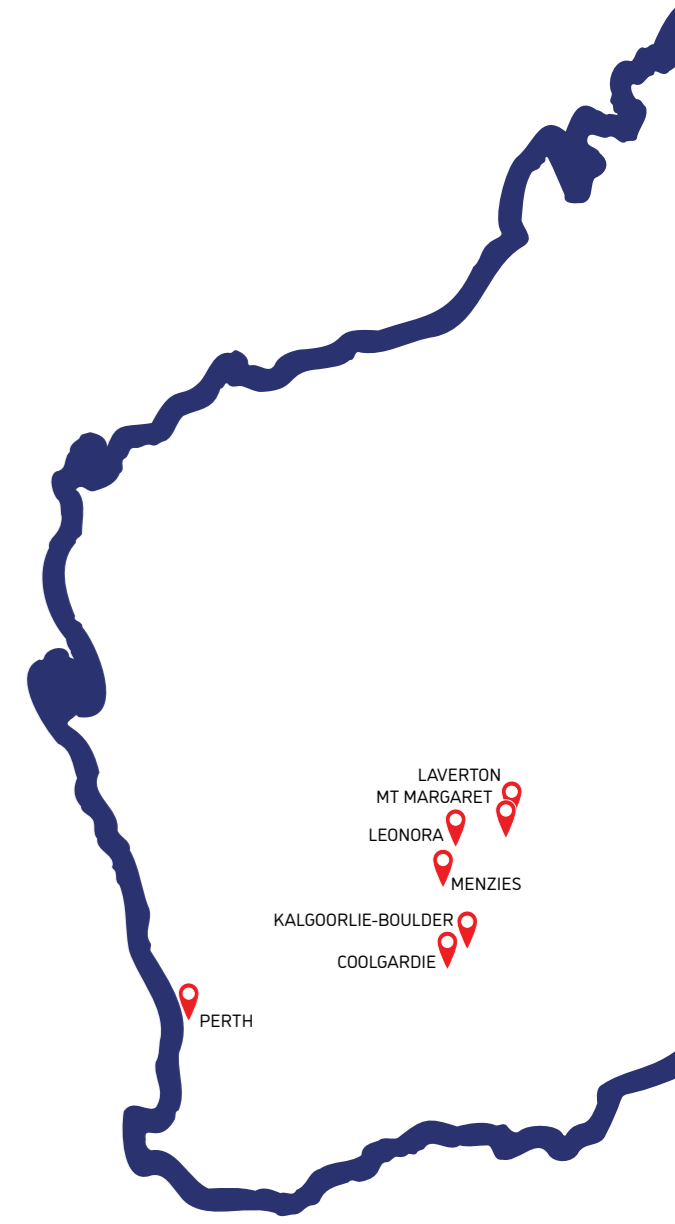
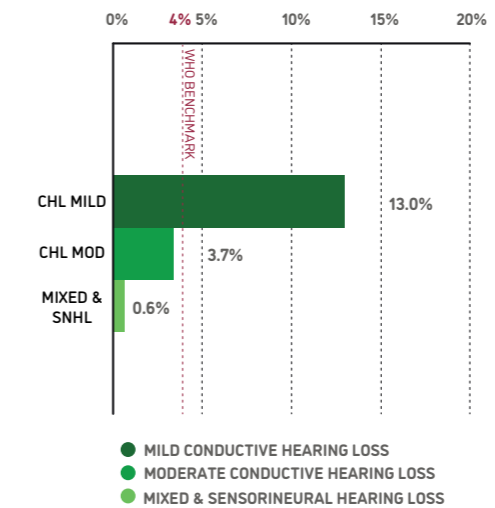
PREVALENCE OF EAR DISEASE & HEARING LOSS



624 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN
122 NEW CHILDREN



TYPES OF HEARING LOSS



PROGRAM REPORT

METRO

2022 was the fourth year of our Metro Earbus Program. This program delivers ear health and audiology services to schools, daycares, kindergartens, parent centres, family centres and early learning centres across the Perth Metro and surrounding areas.

We focus on schools in the Midland area and South Metro corridor. The Metro Earbus Program also delivers services to Brookton and Pingelly communities in the Wheatbelt, as well as Edmund Rice College in Bindoon.

We were delighted to have our Clinical Patron, Professor Harvey Coates AO, join the team for ENT consults in the first half of the year. Professor Coates was able to support families in need of intervention who were at risk of being waitlisted for an extended period of time in the public health system.

In the second half of the year, we welcomed Audiometrist Sanacha Naidoo to the team in her role as part time hearing screener. Sanacha works across the Metro and Alcoa Earbus Programs.

We acknowledge our longstanding relationship with schools in the Perth Metro community, including Moorditj Noongar Community College, whose children's artwork adorns our Metro Earbus. We were thrilled to be invited

to a NAIDOC Week event hosted by the school, as well as their end of year Christmas Concert and Graduation.

The Ears2Learn program, a collaboration between Earbus Foundation, Connecting Community for Kids (CC4K) and Goodstart Early Learning, provides screening and treatment for children from 0-4, a vital stage in early childhood development. We thank CC4K and Goodstart for their ongoing commitment to improving the wellbeing and development of children and families across Cockburn and Kwinana.

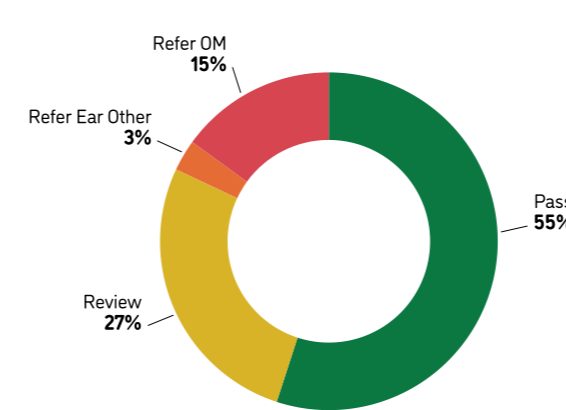
"For years we have been concerned about the ear health of our children - both the physical health, sometimes significant discharge is obvious, and the impact on their hearing and consequently learning.

We are a rural based school, approximately 150km from the nearest ENT specialist. One of the biggest barriers to addressing these issues is access to audiologists and ENT specialists ... Access to the Earbus, where are all assessments are made on site at once, with a range of health professionals, has been a huge breakthrough.

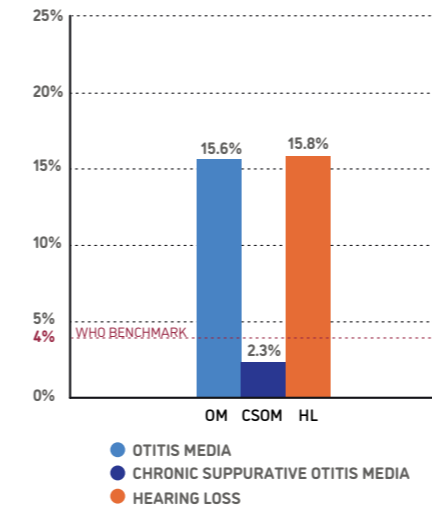
In addition to highlighting which children have needed follow up, an unexpected positive side effect has been the instant advice we have received to aid us in the classroom setting. I cannot recommend this service highly enough."

**Kris Dewson Hall, Deputy Principal
Brookton DHS**

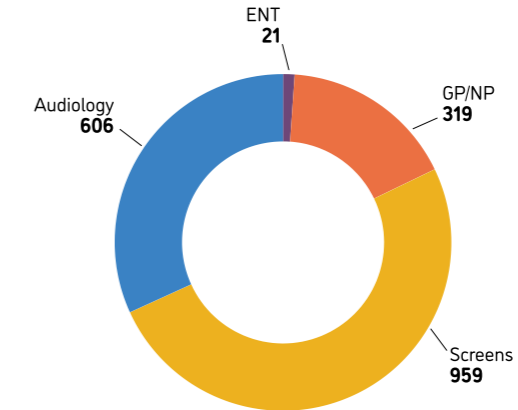
1,905 CONSULTS
73% PEAK CONSENT RATE



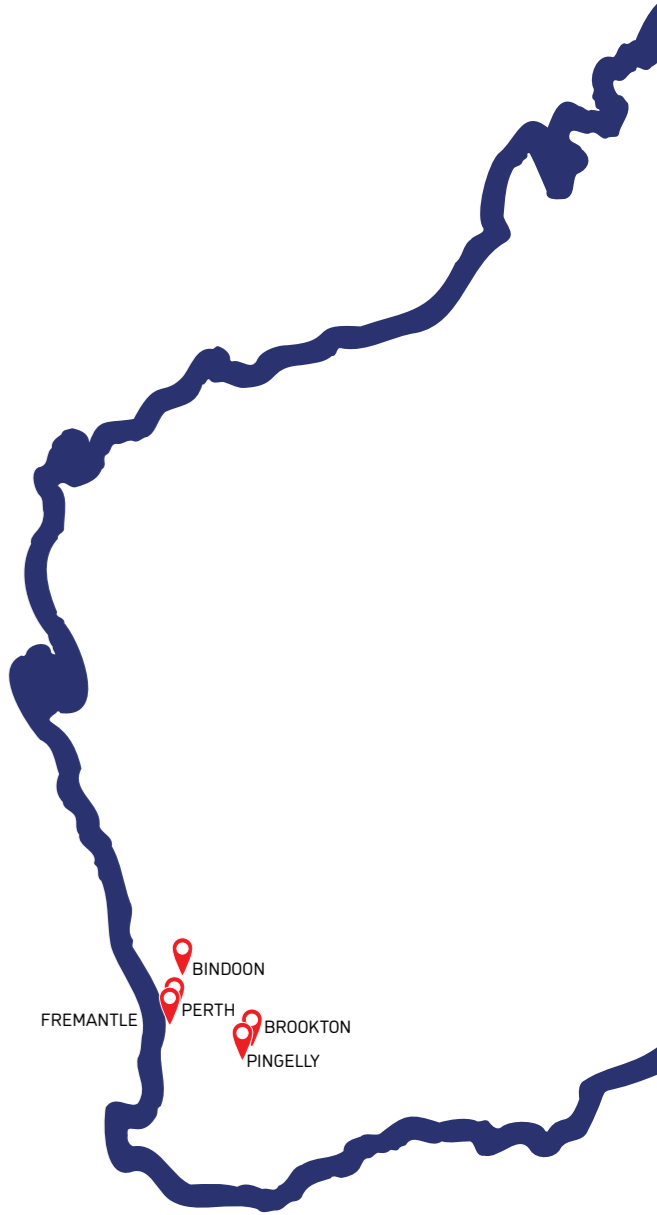
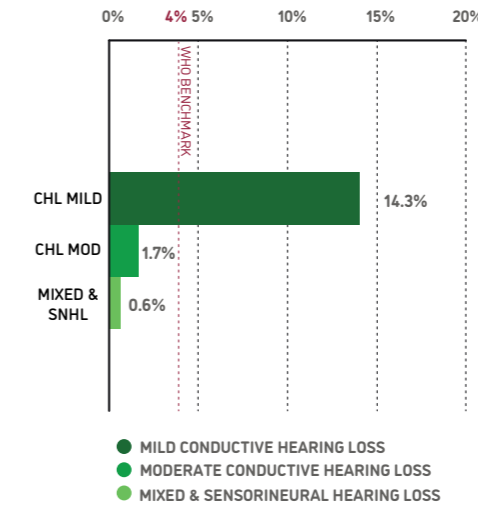
PREVALENCE OF EAR DISEASE & HEARING LOSS



469 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN
195 NEW CHILDREN



TYPES OF HEARING LOSS



PROGRAM REPORT

PILBARA CENTRAL

After establishing strong and positive rapport with schools and children in 2021, we found the region remained welcoming, supportive and keen for our visits in 2022. Schools continued to work hard to increase consent rates and maximise Earbus visits, enabling our clinicians to screen 75 new children throughout the year.

The region has recorded some very positive clinical outcomes, including significant drops in the prevalence of middle ear disease (Otitis media) and hearing loss. Specifically, Otitis media (OM) dropped from 19.6% in 2021 to 12.2% in 2022 and hearing loss reduced from 23.9% to 19.4%. In the same period, Chronic Suppurative Otitis media (CSOM or chronic middle ear disease) reduced from 6.9% to 1.7%, well below the 4% World Health Organisation benchmark.

The team made their first visit to Karalundi College, approximately 55Kms north of Meekatharra. This is an independent co-educational boarding school of up to 60 Aboriginal students in Years 7 through 10. Initial contact with the school occurred in 2021 in Perth, where the team provided services to the College whilst students were on camp in the Swan Valley. Teachers and students have been very welcoming and have shared meals with the team and generously provided pro bono accommodation.

The children and young people boarding at Karalundi College are from all over WA, so it was wonderful to see some students were already familiar with Earbus services from other regions. Some students had been enrolled at a school participating in the Earbus program in prior years. As well as visiting the College directly in 2022, Earbus again provided services to students in Perth when they were visiting the city on a school trip.

We are thankful for our partnerships with allied health agencies in the region. Hearing Australia joined us on a trip to fit several hearing aids. Earbus Foundation and Hearing Australia have been partnering for some years and this partnership allows families to receive rehabilitative services seamlessly.

Our new collaboration with BHP Pilbara Education Partnership saw them offer support with bringing children to Earbus clinics, ensuring completion of consent forms and providing other family supports as necessary.

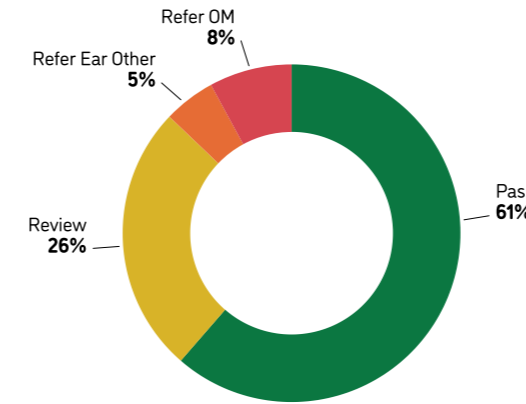
Earbus acknowledges the support of Anna Buchanan, Registered Nurse at The Newman Neighbourhood Centre and Jo Meneilly, School Health Nurse at WA Country Health Services' Pilbara Population Health, with follow up of referrals, assisting our team in keeping kids on the treatment pathway.

A big thank you to all the staff from South Newman Primary School, Newman Primary School, Newman Senior High School and Karalundi College as well as the team at Oasis, our accommodation partner in Newman, and the pharmacists and staff at Boulevard Pharmacy. We remain grateful for the assistance of Puntukurnu Aboriginal Health Service, with particular mention to Louise Titus.

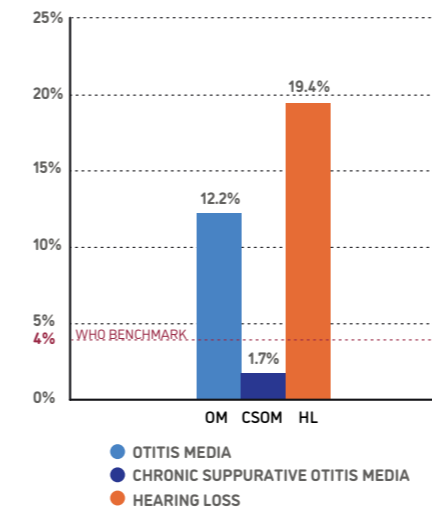
"Since Earbus Foundation has been working in our communities, in that time I have seen positive changes. Reports from teachers had been coming back on how the children weren't responding to them ... teachers said the kids weren't listening properly. But Earbus were able to determine that it was not that they weren't listening, it was because they weren't hearing properly. That's what Earbus picked up straight away."

Community Elder, Newman

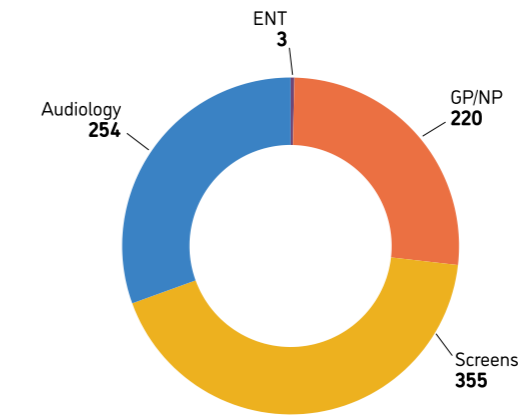
832 CONSULTS
59% PEAK CONSENT RATE



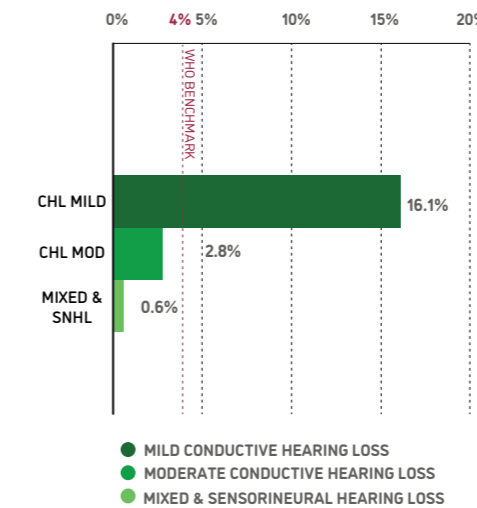
PREVALENCE OF EAR DISEASE & HEARING LOSS



180 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN
75 NEW CHILDREN



TYPES OF HEARING LOSS



PROGRAM REPORT PILBARA EAST

2022 was a year of change in the Pilbara East.

Nurse, Maree Hunter joined the team, working alongside Audiologist, Stephen Wong to provide services to communities across the region. Screener, Symone Ishak joined the team to drive the Earbus and assist with screening children in larger communities.

During the year, this core team was accompanied by Nurse Practitioners Helen Dawe, Ludmila Kosheleva, Leanne Laurie and Stephanie Dowden, who each provided medical treatment for children with ear pathology, or children who had been identified as needing clinical treatment following screening.

The strong relationships built over many years in this region by Nurse Audiometrist and Earbus co-founder, Dee Parker and Nurse, Michelle Andrew were continued by the new team in 2022. These relationships have been integral to service delivery and positive program outcomes.

We are appreciative of the ongoing support from school and community nurses, AIEOs, Principals, Deputy Principals, and school officers, all of whom play an instrumental role in following up high priority children and assisting families to attend specialist appointments. This has been vital to ensuring the services reach the

kids who need it most, and that clinical management pathways are followed. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in hearing loss in the region from 27.4% in 2021 to 19.8% in 2022. We also note that the rate of Chronic Suppurative Otitis media (CSOM) has dropped from 5.1% to 4.5%, pleasingly close to the WHO benchmark of 4%.

We are grateful for the tremendous specialist support and assistance from ENT Surgeon, Mr Anton Hinton-Bayre, who provided surgical intervention to children in the program at Hedland Health Campus. Mr Hinton-Bayre has worked with Earbus for many years and works extensively across Western Australia as well as in Perth.

We acknowledge our valued partner organisations: Silverchain, Pilbara Pharmacy, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Starlight Children's Foundation, Roy Hill, Fortescue Metals Group, Steadfast Foundation and Novo Resources.

Our new collaboration with BHP Pilbara Education Partnership saw them offer support with bringing children to Earbus clinics, ensuring completion of consent forms and providing other family supports as necessary.

We thank Wirraka Maya Health Service Aboriginal Corporation and WA Country Health Service (WACHS)

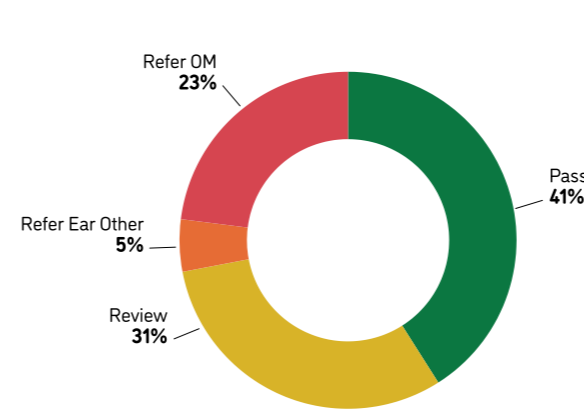
in the Pilbara, who have both worked collaboratively with Earbus Foundation over many years to ensure that optimal services are delivered to children across this region. Wirraka Maya's cultural knowledge and counsel is invaluable.

Earbus Foundation acknowledges the support of the Rural Health West Outreach program, which is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care.

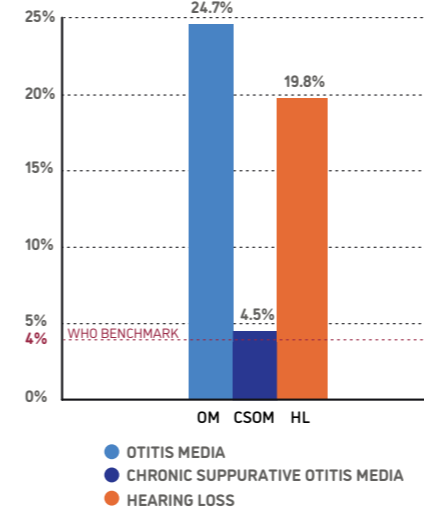
"The Earbus team is an integral component of the processes we undertake to ensure student success in school. Without regular screening, the hearing issues that many of our students acquire would go undetected. Strategies to overcome these issues would, therefore, not be put in place to ensure the best possible chance for student success."

**Lee Pereira, Principal
South Hedland Primary School**

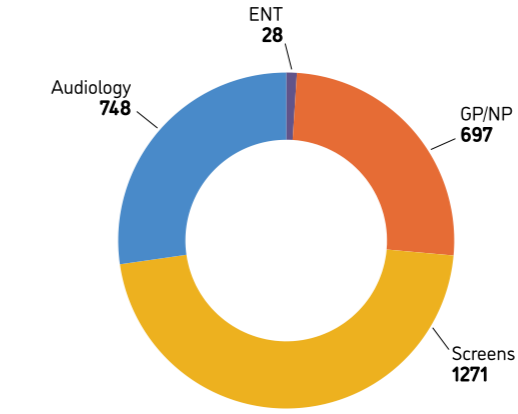
2,744 CONSULTS
80% PEAK CONSENT RATE



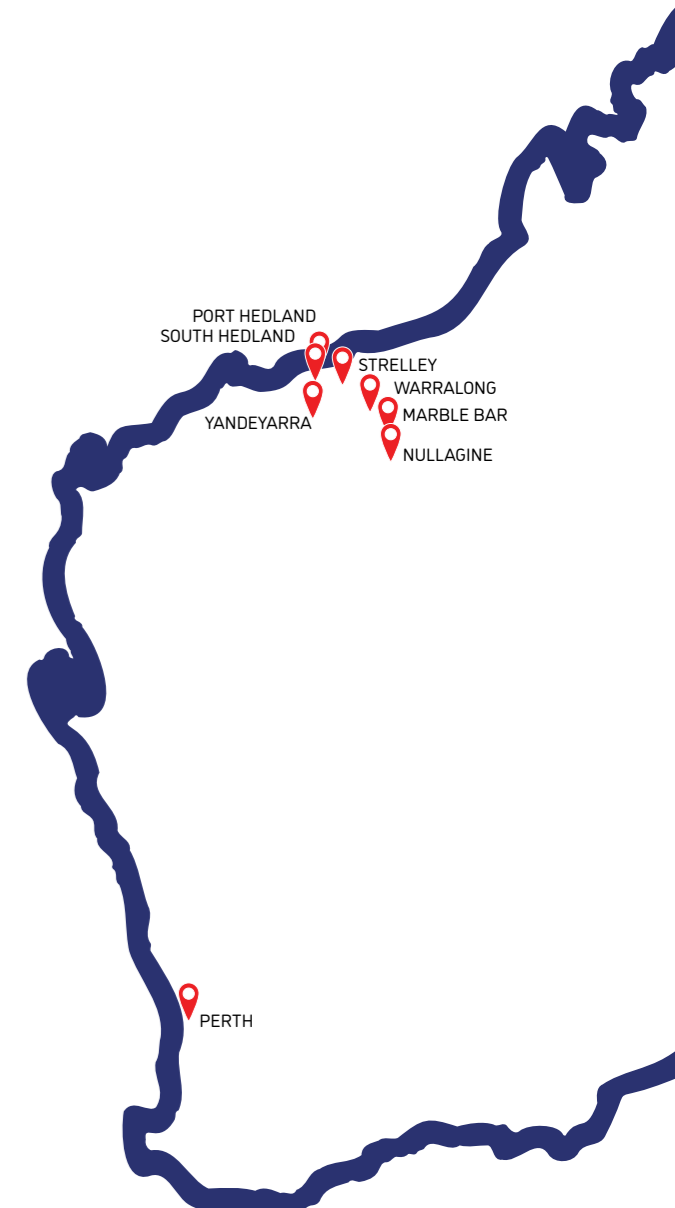
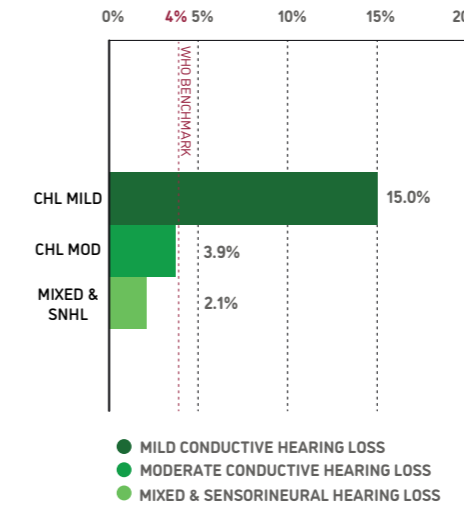
PREVALENCE OF EAR DISEASE & HEARING LOSS



668 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN
207 NEW CHILDREN



TYPES OF HEARING LOSS



PROGRAM REPORT PILBARA SOUTH

When the state's borders opened in the first quarter of 2022, a high number of Covid infections spread across this part of the Pilbara. This resulted in increased absenteeism and many other challenges for the clinical team. However, the Pilbara South team are very familiar with the region and communities. Audiologist, Adelina Duncan and Nurse, Catherine Zeevaarder maximised every visit by leveraging local relationships to expand our impact.

One example of this was adding a streetside park-up to our visit schedule in collaboration with Nintirri Centre and their 'Fun Box' team, enabling children previously not engaged in school to access health care services via the Earbus mobile ear health clinic. The 'Fun Box' team assisted with family interactions and consents, further building trust and delivering success in treating not only ear disease, but also some potentially serious health concerns, including possible heart conditions. These park ups will continue in 2023 as it has made it possible for Earbus clinicians to provide ongoing support to many children who had previously been very challenging to see.

127 new children joined the Pilbara South Earbus program in 2022, with a peak consent rate of 80%. The prevalence of hearing loss in the region dropped by 2% in 2022. Chronic Suppurative Otitis media (CSOM)

increased by 1% and rates of Otitis media climbed from 15.8% to 19.7%, indicative of the impact of Covid and unwell children in the region.

The team continue to treat children holistically. Through regular health checks, we were able to provide toothbrushes and toothpaste when required and ensure families and schools knew about the dental issues we had identified. With the nearest dentist 350Km away, it is crucial children have access to dental hygiene tools whilst they wait for the school dentist to arrive.

We are humbled to always be welcomed and supported by the playgroups and schools we visit. A big thank you to Loveena Brown and Andrea Harris from Gumala 3A Playgroup in Wakathuni, and the staff from Tom Price Primary School, North Tom Price Primary School, Tom Price Senior High School and Paraburdoo Primary School.

We acknowledge ongoing support from the Child and Community Health Team, especially Nurse Kylie Galbraith, and for the outstanding support and advocacy from Sylvia Winkler, Helen Darby and Annie Du Preez at Nintirri Centre. We are excited to be able to expand our services to the new Nintirri Childcare Centre in 2023. We are grateful to have a 'home' at which to base ourselves in the region thanks to the generous provision

of accommodation from longstanding partner, Gumala Aboriginal Corporation.

These collaborations, along with generous support from funding partner, Rio Tinto, have proven vital to Earbus meeting the needs and improving health outcomes for children in this region.

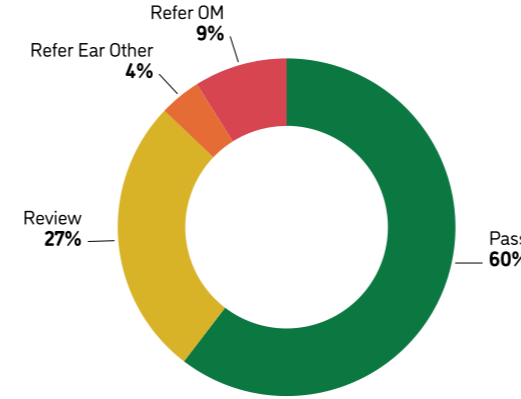
"I like that it's every month – it's the one service you can count on."

"They do really well. They go to Wakathuni, go to the schools, they might go to the park. So let's say the kids aren't at school, they manage to pick them up at other places... Earbus meets them wherever we are and wherever we ask them to meet them."

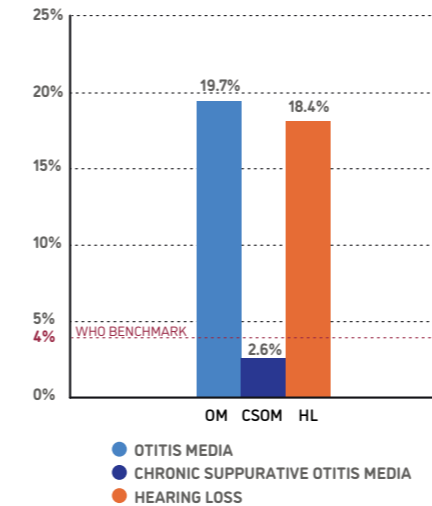
"They might come to after-school activities – that has been extremely useful otherwise those kids would have fallen through the gaps."

South Pilbara Community Members

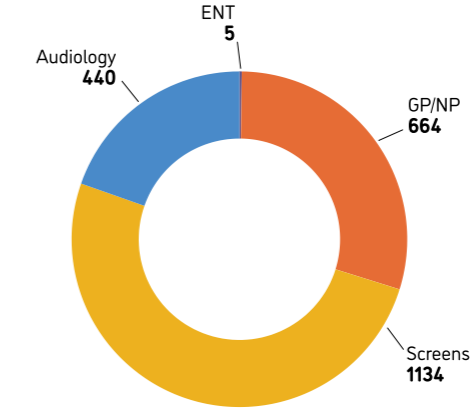
2,243 CONSULTS
80% PEAK CONSENT RATE



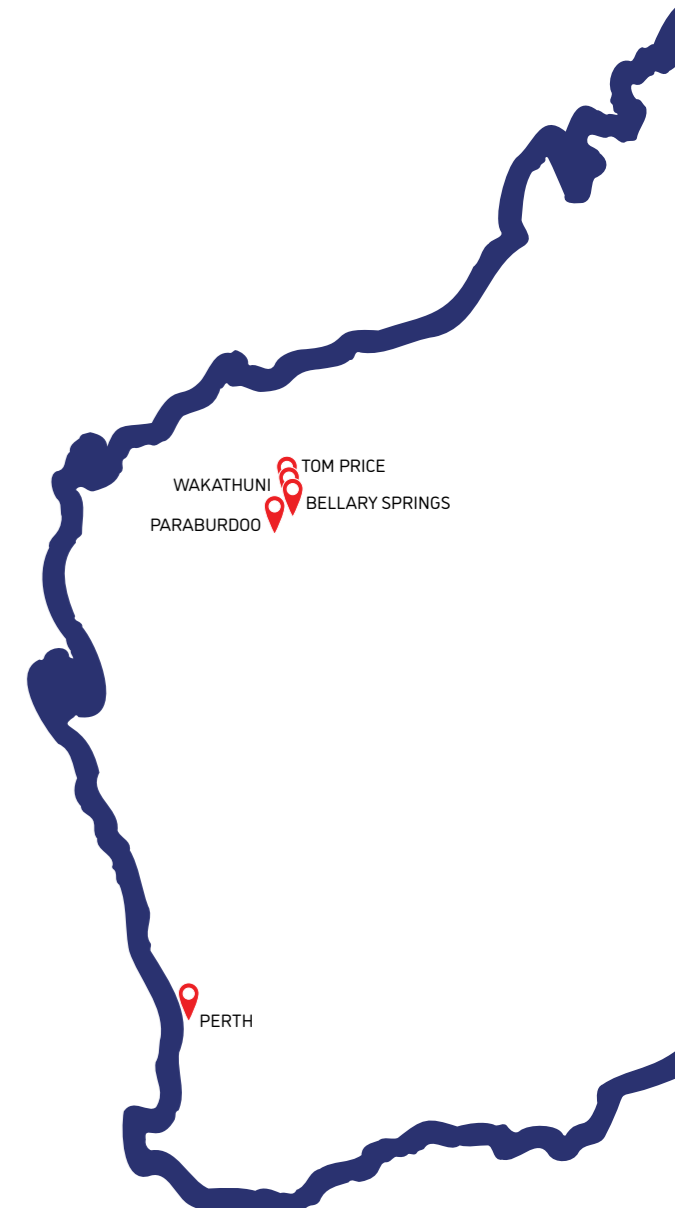
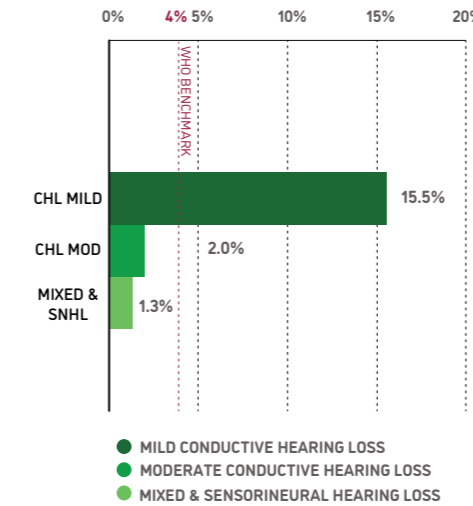
PREVALENCE OF EAR DISEASE & HEARING LOSS



304 INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN
127 NEW CHILDREN



TYPES OF HEARING LOSS

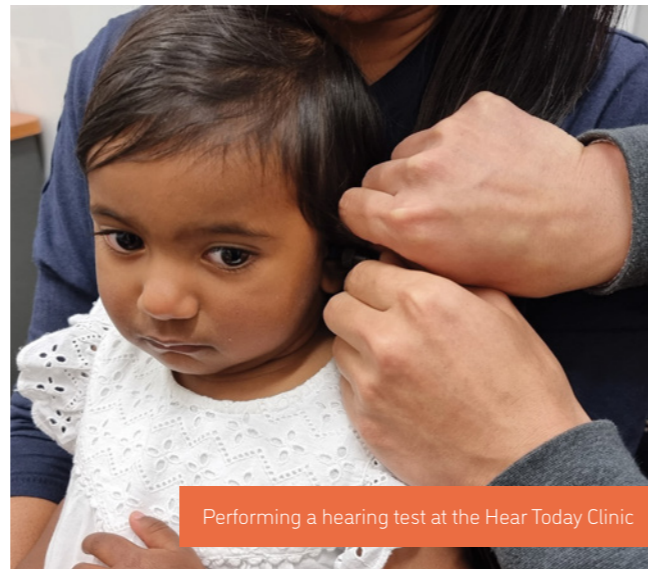




Kids often engage in reading or play while waiting for their clinic appointment



The Goldfields Earbus back at our Kalgoorlie base at sunset after a day of clinics



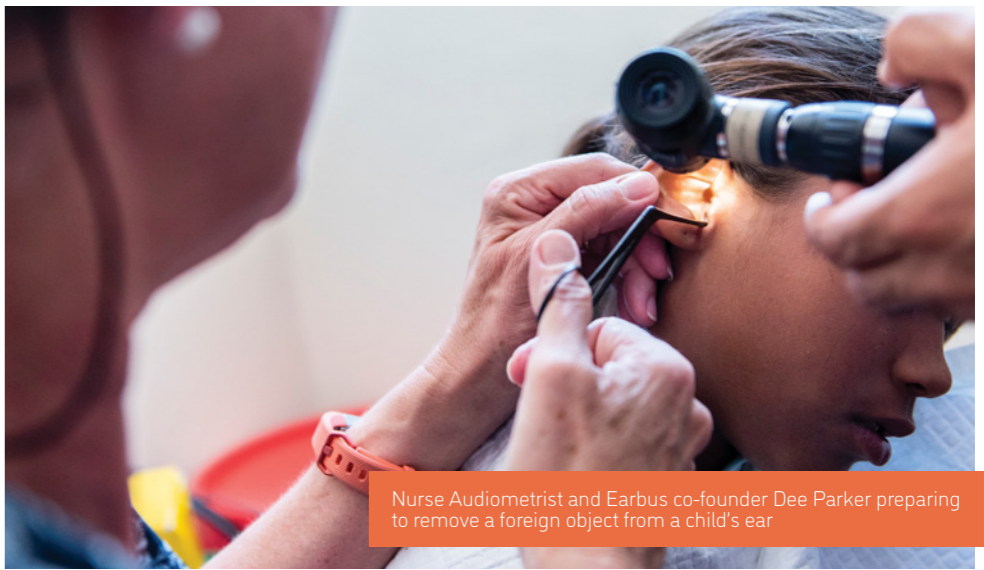
Performing a hearing test at the Hear Today Clinic



Audiologist Simon Ly distracts a child while fellow Audiologist Stephen Wong screens



Nurse Practitioner Ludmila Kosheleva does a health check on a child at a Goodstart Early Learning Centre



Nurse Audiometrist and Earbus co-founder Dee Parker preparing to remove a foreign object from a child's ear

PROGRAM REPORT

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING

The Newborn Hearing Screening Program delivers services to WA families who choose to birth at private maternity hospitals. Parents always check fingers and toes at birth, but most families don't even consider a hearing issue.

Collaboration with our partner organisations of St John of God Healthcare (SJOG), Ramsay Health Care and the Children and Adolescent Health Service (CAHS) resulted in 7,632 babies being screened for hearing in one of the seven private hospitals across Perth, Bunbury and Geraldton. These services continued uninterrupted throughout 2022 during a time when our hospitals had significant Covid restrictions. We acknowledge the terrific teamwork by everyone involved.

The Perth-based Hear Today Clinic provided pivotal support to the screening program by offering outpatient screening services, diagnostic testing and follow up hearing assessments to babies across the metropolitan area. In addition to this, our Bunbury Clinic supported families in the Southwest who needed outpatient appointments to have their newborn baby screened.

The Newborn Hearing Screening Program performed just under 7,800 screens in 2022. 53 babies referred for Diagnostic Assessments following their screening. Our clinic diagnosed 11 infants with Permanent Childhood Hearing Impairment (PCHI), and 11 with conductive hearing loss.

The Newborn Hearing Screening team consists of 5 longstanding screeners and Deb, Shohreh, Mandy, Janine and Symone have contributed their expertise and amazing experience working with newborns to ensure the program's success. Screeners Lucy and Calvin, Audiometrist Sanacha and Nurse Maree joined this team and, together with our four audiologists, ensure every newborn is offered a potentially life changing screen. The efforts and dedication are reflected in the capture rate of 98%.



A newborn hearing screen in progress

PROGRAM REPORT

HEAR TODAY CLINIC

The Hear Today clinic – Perth's only private specialist paediatric clinic - provides a level of service unlike any other. Our clinic is family-centred with children and families welcomed into an environment that puts children at ease. This is not a sterile "clinic", it's a place that all are welcome.

The Hear Today Clinic provides ethical and high quality hearing services. Children who have hearing issues, which may impact on their speech and language development, are identified early so that they can receive appropriate treatment.

One family we saw in 2022 had grommet surgery for their child within just 3 weeks of their Hear Today appointment. Mum has reported a massive improvement in hearing and speech and language development as a result and thanked the audiologist who facilitated this outcome.

"Mum has reported a massive improvement in hearing and speech and language development..."

Each paediatric audiologist at the Hear Today Clinic specialises in testing children of all ages, many of whom have difficulties that can make traditional testing stressful for families. We routinely test children from birth onwards and the focus of our assessments is ensuring each child has a positive experience.

In 2022, the Hear Today Clinic saw more than 1,400 appointments. These included 351 full hearing assessments and 29 auditory processing assessments. The Hear Today Clinic also provides Infant Diagnostic Testing for babies referred through the Newborn Hearing Screening Program. 53 babies referred to Hear Today for diagnostic hearing tests. The Clinic diagnosed 11 children with a permanent childhood hearing impairment.

Families who discharge prior to a newborn hearing screen in hospital can make an outpatient appointment at the Hear Today Clinic. In 2022, 597 babies attended for their newborn screen at Hear Today, located centrally at 35 Brewer Street in Perth.

Testing children all day, every day isn't the only thing that makes the Hear Today Clinic unique in WA. Children in regional and remote areas often have no access to services because of their geographical location or, often due to their socio-economic status. Earbus Foundation is dedicated to ensuring that hearing services are available to all children, not only those who can afford them.

This means that families attending our Perth-based clinic help to support service provision to other children across WA - every paying client helps us provide services to those not able to pay.

The Hear Today Clinic has also provided hearing aid fitting to adults in regional and remote WA. Often these West Australians have had to fly to Perth to receive their hearing services. We now offer this service in Perth, Port Hedland, South Hedland, Nullagine, Tom Price, Paraburdoo and Newman as well as other regions where our clinical teams travel.

STARLIGHT COLLABORATION

Since 2015, Earbus has collaborated with Starlight Children's Foundation to improve health outcomes for children living in regional and remote communities in Western Australia.

Captain Starlight visits Indigenous communities in partnership with Earbus clinicians to provide positive distraction during testing and treatment, and to create an atmosphere of fun and play. This encourages children and young people to attend and helps make the clinical experience a positive one.



Captain Starlight accompanying Earbus

Starlight joins the Earbus team on visits to the Pilbara, Goldfields and Southwest regions as well as metropolitan schools. While the Earbus team focus primarily on clinical appointments, Captain Starlight engages with the kids and entertains them while they wait to see a GP, screener or audiologist. This helps reduce any boredom and anxiety children and young people may experience around accessing health services and enables screening and treatment teams to operate as efficiently as possible.

Starlight National Programs Manager, Jo Dann, said: "Starlight recognises how important hearing is to a child's long-term health, social and emotional wellbeing, and educational outcomes. We know a happy childhood makes the world of difference to lifelong psychological wellbeing, sense of self, social connections and healthy behaviours."

Earbus Director of Clinical Services & Outcomes, Dr Lara Shur, said: "Earbus highly values our continuing collaboration with Starlight Children's Foundation in delivering early intervention and detection programs to children across Western Australia."

"Captain Starlight provides excellent support, particularly if we have to do prolonged treatments, such as a 20-minute wax softening process where the children need to sit still.

If the Captains aren't there, it means we have to sit with the child for 20 minutes, but with Starlight, they read a book to the child, do magic tricks or just chat. They fill those gaps and allow our team to continue working flat out."

Earbus Team Member



"I love going on Earbus trips.

No matter what happens, we are working towards the same goal – seeing as many kids as possible and getting the job done."

Captain Starlight

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

MARCH

Extension of Newborn Hearing Screening contract

APRIL

Rio Tinto renews its support for our Pilbara Program for a **third year**



MAY

Initial visit to Karalundi College to **screen and treat** boarding students from all over WA

JUNE

Shadow Health Minister **Libby Mettam** and MLC **Donna Faragher** visit Earbus



JULY

Professor Harvey Coates AO retires from a distinguished career of clinical practice



AUGUST

Our first **full-time Business Manager**, Jane Jenkins, joins Earbus Foundation

SEPTEMBER

Earbus Foundation passes **100,000 occasions of care** milestone

SEPTEMBER

New **Federal Minister Dr Anne Aly** visits Earbus HQ and team

OCTOBER

Albemarle and Hatch confirm funding for **new customised East Pilbara Earbus**

NOVEMBER

Earbus completes **migration of our IT systems** to the cloud with support of IQPC



PATRONS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PROFESSOR HARVEY COATES AO

Harvey Coates AO DM MS FRCS(C) FRACS DABO is an Honorary Distinguished Research Associate at the Telethon Kids Institute. After undergraduate training at the University of Queensland, he completed his otolaryngology training at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. He was consultant ENT Surgeon to Princess Margaret Hospital for 38 years before retiring as well as Clinical Lead in the Kimberley. He has worked with the World Health Organisation for three years.

He is co-founder, with two colleagues, of the first paediatric ENT society in Australasia in 1985, and former Chair of the Aboriginal sub-committee of the Australian ENT Society (ASOHNS). He has been consulting with Aboriginal Medical Services since 1993.

Professor Coates has published over 100 papers and 18 book chapters and was on the editorial boards of two major journals in his specialty. He is patron of Better Hearing Australia (WA), Deafness Council WA, Earbus Foundation of WA and EON Foundation.

He has been awarded the Fiona Stanley Medal (2001); Lions William R Tresi Humanitarian Award (2002); Dr Harry Blackmore Award (2004); ASOHNS Society Medal (2013); Inaugural Royal Australasian College of Surgeons ATSI Health Medal (2015). In 2005 he was appointed Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for service to medicine in the field of paediatric otolaryngology as a clinician and researcher, to Indigenous health; and to the community through contributions to major medical research and educational organisations.

WENDY DUNCAN

Former Member for Kalgoorlie, Wendy Duncan, was born in Kalgoorlie and grew up on a pastoral station in the Goldfields. She was educated by School of the Air and recalls time spent gathering bush tucker with local Aboriginal women as among her most precious memories.

Her passion for politics and concern for human rights was awakened by a year on a Rotary Exchange scholarship in South Africa during the apartheid era. She cites Nelson Mandela as one of her strongest influencers. Seeing the neglect of regional areas by government, Wendy became involved in the Nationals, rising to be its first female State President. Working alongside Brendon Grylls, she helped develop the Royalties for Regions policy. Entering Parliament in 2008, Wendy successfully held three seats – two in the Legislative Council and one in the Legislative Assembly, retiring at the 2013 election.

Wendy was the first female Leader of the Nationals in the Legislative Council, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Regional Development, and Deputy Speaker in the Legislative Assembly.

A passionate advocate for regional development with a particular focus on the health and well-being of those in more remote areas, Wendy was the founding chair of Headspace Kalgoorlie-Boulder and actively campaigned on issues of FASD and Aboriginal child health. She has been a passionate supporter of Earbus Foundation of WA since its inception.

CHAIRPERSON

Ms Sue Beath has been involved with Earbus for over a decade, initially in her role as Manager of Indigenous Education for the WA Education Department. Sue has worked in both urban and regional settings supporting thousands of Aboriginal children and overseeing AIEO staff supporting those children in classrooms. A Kariyarra Elder from the north-west of Western Australia, Sue joined the Earbus Foundation Board of Directors in 2019 and became Chairperson in April 2020.

Specialty Areas of Expertise: Education, Health, Aboriginal Culture, History and Communities

SECRETARY

Mr Paul Higginbotham is originally a Teacher of the Deaf, working in the field of hearing impairment since 1982. Paul holds multiple education degrees, has held senior leadership roles since 1991 and in 2012 was the recipient of the Harry Blackmore Award for outstanding leadership in the field of childhood hearing impairment. After 15 years successfully transforming a Perth-based NGO into a centre of excellence, he co-founded Earbus Foundation in April 2013 and was Board Chair until April 2015. Paul is the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of Earbus Foundation.

Special areas of expertise: Education, Hearing Loss and Special Needs, NGO/NFP Funding and Fundraising, Journalism, Government Relations

DEPUTY-CHAIR

Dr Julie Owen is originally from Adelaide but has lived and worked in regional WA for 30 years. She has extensive qualifications, experience and engagement in Aboriginal health, education and women's issues. Julie has teaching qualifications, a Masters in Population Health and counselling degree and was the first Aboriginal graduate from UWA's School of Population Health, completing a PhD in Aboriginal Health. This is Julie's second appointment as a Board member, re-joining the Board in April 2019 and becoming Deputy-Chair in April 2020.

Specialty Areas of Expertise: Education, Health, Aboriginal Culture, History and Communities

BOARD MEMBER

Mr Greg Narrier has had a long career working in the area of Aboriginal issues including work with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission that took him to Canberra in the 1990s. He has spent recent years teaching young Indigenous offenders to drive and gain their driving licences in order to support their rehabilitation and reengagement. Returning to his Noongar roots, Greg joined the Earbus Foundation board as soon as he took up WA residence again in July 2020

Specialty Areas of Expertise: Aboriginal Culture, History and Communities, Governance, Education and Training

TREASURER

Mr Steve Shur is an Insurance Broker with 44 years' industry experience. From 1989 to 2000 he ran Stephen Shur Investments in South Africa, a successful general insurance brokerage in Johannesburg. He migrated to Australia in 2000 and is currently senior Account Executive at Trident Insurance Group. Steve holds a Diploma of Financial Services and is responsible for advising his clients on insurance cover and their legal obligations and risks. A founding member of Earbus Foundation, Steve's second stint on the Board commenced in April 2020.

Specialty Areas of Expertise: Finance, Governance, Insurance Risk, Corporate Relations

BOARD MEMBER

Dr Lara Shur has an undergraduate Honours degree in Speech & Hearing Therapy, a master's degree in Audiology, a Clinical Doctorate (AuD) in Audiology and a Graduate Certificate in Business Management. Previously Manager of Clinical Support WA & NT for the Dept of Health & Ageing's Office of Hearing Services, she was responsible for running the newborn hearing screening program in WA's private hospital sector before joining Earbus as well as private audiology services and cochlear implant programs for children. Dr Shur's career began in South Africa, where she reached the position of Senior Audiologist & Speech Therapist at a large public hospital in Soweto.

Specialty Areas of Expertise: Health, Evaluation and Research, Clinical Governance and Training, Regional Services



EARBUS TEAM, CONSULTANTS & VOLUNTEERS

Earbus values the dedication and commitment of our board, leadership team, staff, volunteers, interns and consultants in working towards our mission of reducing the incidence and impact of Otitis media (OM) in Aboriginal and at-risk children in Western Australia to achieve parity with non-Indigenous children.

CO-FOUNDERS

Paul Higginbotham
Dee Parker
Dr Lara Shur

PATRONS

Professor Harvey Coates AO
Wendy Duncan

Screener Calvin Williams and Nurse Catherine Zeevaarder share a laugh on the road

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sue Beath Chair
Dr Julie Owen Deputy Chair
Paul Higginbotham Secretary
Steve Shur Treasurer
Greg Narrier
Dr Lara Shur

LEADERSHIP

Suzanne Costello Manager, Paediatric Hearing Services
Kassy Hayden Program Coordinator, Outreach
Karen Hickling Partnerships Manager
Paul Higginbotham Chief Executive Officer
Megumi Hiraka Finance Manager
Jane Jenkins Business Manager
Daniel Larranaga Stakeholder Relations Manager & Cultural Mentor
Konrad Mills IT & Data Management
Dr Lara Shur Director, Clinical Services & Outcomes & COO
Catherine Zeevaarder Nurse Manager

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

Milly Brashaw Administration Officer, Outreach
Jess Harris Graphic Designer
Jacinta Hayden Administration Officer, Outreach & Hear Today Clinic
Chontae Hayden Program Coordinator, Outreach
Scott Higginbotham Marketing Design Officer
Raj Kaur IT & Data Officer

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

James Mapaye Administration Officer, Accounts
Lucy Muir Program Coordinator, Outreach
Silvana Principe Administration Officer, Equipment
Bonnesha Smith Receptionist, Hear Today Clinic
Shirley South Administration Officer, Hear Today Clinic
Tylah Webster Administration Officer, Hear Today Clinic

SCREENING & TREATMENT

Deanne Allen Newborn Hearing Screener
Michelle Andrew Registered Nurse
Kellie Busher Nurse Manager
Amanda Del Dosso Newborn Hearing Screener
Lucy Fitzpatrick Newborn Hearing Screener
Deb Howe Newborn Hearing Screener
Maree Hunter Registered Nurse
Laura Ing Registered Nurse
Symone Ishak Newborn Hearing Screener & Administration Officer, Hear Today Clinic
Carlos Jimena Newborn Hearing Screener
Ludmila Kosheleva Nurse Practitioner
Shohreh Meshgin Newborn Hearing Screener
Adrienne Mortimer Registered Nurse
Sanacha Naidoo Nurse Audiometrist
Isabel Smith Registered Nurse
Renee Speedy Enrolled Nurse
Janine Tassicker Newborn Hearing Screener
Kelly Trow Newborn Hearing Screener
Calvin Williams Screener & Administration Officer, Outreach

AUDIOLOGY

Adelina Duncan Paediatric Audiologist
Tim Kop Paediatric Audiologist & Program Coordinator, Outreach
Simon Ly Graduate Audiologist
Dr Rachel Meddings Paediatric Audiologist
Lucy Mitchell Paediatric Audiologist & Program Coordinator, Outreach
Stephen Wong Paediatric Audiologist

CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Abdurrahman Turaiya Handyman Services
Dee Parker Ear Health Consultant
Joan Garaffolo Cleaning Services
Stephen Kane Maintenance & Repairs
Simply Green Salary Packaging Provider
The Travel Authority
IQPC Managed IT Services

VOLUNTEERS & INTERNS

de Rene Clark Volunteer
Karen Moller Volunteer
Sue Stratton Volunteer
Savva Lazidis Intern
Hoai Le Intern
Irina Maier Intern
Theresa Needham Intern
Adelin Nevermann Intern
Benjamin Revell Intern
Nancy Yao Intern

SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS



Adult Better Hearing WA
Australian Ethical
Dept of Industry, Science,
Energy & Resources
Dept of Treasury

Jennifer Barwick
Erica Beach
Alannah Buddery
John Carison
Daniel Conifer

Nathan Dodd
Marie Hayes
David Healy
Karen Hickling
Stuart James

Christa Lai-Wong
Sanacha Naidoo
Adrian Price
Damon Styan
Elise Wallbank

Meredith Wilkie
La Trobe University
ORBA Travel Brokers
St Mary Magdalene Church
Friendship Group

PARTNERS



AWARDS & RECOGNITION

2016

Prime Super WA Community Group of the Year Award

2017

AIM WA West Business Pinnacle Awards - Emerging Business Excellence

2018

Telstra Business Awards - Social Change Maker (WA) Award

2019

Impact100 WA Major Grant Award Winner
Impact100 Fremantle Major Grant Award Winner

2020

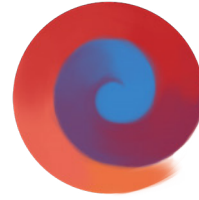
Sunsuper Dreams of a Better World National Winner
Australian Charity Awards - Outstanding Achievement Winner

2021

HESTA Excellence Awards - Outstanding Organisation in Allied Health
Australian Charity Awards - Outstanding Achievement Winner

2022

Australian Charity Awards - Outstanding Achievement Winner



Earbus Foundation of Western Australia

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Perth, WA 6000

E: admin@earbus.org.au

to book your appointment contact us at
T: (08) 9328 4574

www.hearttoday.org.au

www.earbus.org.au

Earbus Foundation acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands on which we work.
We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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