



Francis Slabber & Associates

Registered Audiologists

"Professionals who Care about your Hearing"

THE HEARING CLINIC

30 CONSTANTIA RD
WYNBERG, 7800

021 - 797 7948

Monday - Friday

TOKAI VILLAGE

VANS ROAD

021 - 715 5623

Tuesday & Thursday

VALYLAND CENTRE

FISH HOEK

021 - 782 3322

Monday - Friday

19 BELVEDERE RD

CLAREMONT

021 - 797 7948

Mon / Wed / Fri



Hear & Now Autumn 2015

It is now almost a year since we moved our Wynberg rooms from the old house on Waterloo Rd to our new home on Constantia Rd. It's been an eventful year to look back on. The new location has offered us so much more in every imaginable way and we have settled in beautifully. A

highlight was our first ever Open Day. By the end of the day we had some exhausted audiologists, many well-informed and well-fed visitors and a waiting list for our next free screening day. The talks went well too, so please pass on suggestions for topics. We will most definitely do it again.

Over the years, we have systematically upgraded all of our rooms to make them more functional, accessible, tasteful and practical for our purposes. Bit by bit, each of the rooms went through a move and a transformation and we are happy to announce that we are done – for now!

Tokai moved from the hot and noisy spot on the corner underneath the Cattle Baron Restaurant to our own spacious offices inside Tokai Village in 2007. It finally received a facelift in 2011 and was the first of the offices to offer a fully stocked Assistive Listening Devices display. It also serves as our base for rehabilitative services such as Tinnitus treatment, auditory training, communication etiquette classes and even family counselling!



The Claremont practice was born in a hole in the wall at the Kenilworth Medicross and happily moved to Openways Surgery on Belvedere Rd in 2008. Elisha has been holding the fort there ever since and these rooms finally had a make-over in 2013. With easy access from Pinelands, Rondebosch, Newlands and Claremont, it has become very popular and busy.



Fish Hoek has had a number of transformations over the years. In 2004 it was a dark and dingy trifle of bits and pieces upstairs at the Valyland Centre. Two years later we had an opportunity for air and wheelchair access so we moved downstairs to the shop next to the Post Office. In 2010 we moved again to the more spacious, more functional space next to Sandi's Bistro. It has now also been made pretty and you can even contribute to our Santa Shoebox effort by knitting a few scarf rows while waiting to see Nadine or Beth. Let's see how many scarfs we can complete this year.

We love all our rooms and working spaces and hope that you find them just as satisfying.

Did you Know?

On average, people with hearing loss wait 7 - 10 years before they do something about it. Generally it's because of a lack of understanding of the problems and solutions offered, lack of support from family/friends and the stigma surrounding hearing aids. During this time, people live with a problem which is hugely frustrating to all involved yet generally quite easily diagnosed, and with the right guidance, successfully, and tastefully, managed.



Support for those living with hearing loss is available through a variety of channels, depending on what suits them best:

1. Hear2day is a resource and action group for persons with hearing impairment where support is given by peers with similar issues. They meet every 12 weeks and it is a wonderful way of meeting, socializing and sharing information with people who understand the challenges involved in living with hearing loss.
2. Road to Independence (RTI) endeavors to empower and train those living with hearing loss and those living/working with people with hearing loss. It offers workshops, individual support and family counseling that covers everything from the impact of hearing loss and employment equity to tax issues and disability grants.
3. Aural Rehabilitation is a service offered by our trained Audiologists where individual and specific needs are addressed, family frustrations tackled and specialized Auditory Training is done.

Through The Hearing Clinic's involvement with some NPO's we are able to offer assistance in any of the challenges that hearing impairment may cause. Whether its help with the legalities of the Human Rights Bill or learning how to listen to music again, or if your family need to understand what you are going through, please ask your Audiologist for help. She will help you or refer you to one of the projects that we support including Hear2Day, RTI, AHLAD, SAHI or SA Hearing. These NPO's are not Government/Lotto funded and rely solely on sponsorships and donations. They address only issues arising from hearing impairment, so if you are looking to support causes which make a differences to real people leading real lives with real frustrations, please consider donating or bequeathing funds to one of them. We do.

Hearing and the Puff

How does one prevent hearing loss? It's such a simple question, and we have many answers, but of course we don't have all the answers. Our answers are to avoid excessive noise, stop growing older, eat more healthily, exercise regularly, breath clean air and stop smoking! Some easier said than done.

Recent studies from Manchester University in the UK have found that there is a definite link between smoking and hearing loss. Smokers are 1/6th more likely to develop hearing loss than non-smokers. Even passive smoking (smoke from other people) for more than 10 hours a week was found to contribute to the acquisition of hearing loss.

We all know that smoking damages your lungs. What makes smoking affect your hearing is the cardiovascular effects that it has. In other words, what it does to not only your heart, but your entire circulatory system – veins and arteries too. The blood in the body of a smoker has much less oxygen in it than that of a non-smoker. This can seriously damage the tissues and organs that the blood flows to. The cochlea, our most inner organ of hearing, is also susceptible to damage caused by lack of oxygen. We can't survive without it and neither can our ears. Some of the research may even point to the possibility of certain toxins found in tobacco smoke that may be poisonous to ears. This then adds to the damage caused by the lack of sufficient oxygen. The results are similar to the damage caused by ageing, oto-toxic medications and conditions such as Diabetes and Multiple Sclerosis.

The good news is that ex-smokers are no longer at risk of this increased chance of hearing loss. The research does not state how long one has to be smoke-free for, but it does show that people who are no longer exposed are not at any higher risk of acquiring hearing loss than non-smokers. The damage done to the cochlea is of a permanent nature, which makes you wonder about children who grow up in smoker households, but ongoing damage will be avoided when the exposure is stopped. Doesn't that make you wish that ageing was as easily avoided!

Another common complaint of smokers and ex-smokers is the loss of quality of voice. With damage having been done to their lungs, vocal cords and oral structures, they are less able to produce clear voice and speech. This has nothing to do with their own ears of course, but those they speak to, may have difficulty in hearing their voices clearly, which goes to show that it's not always the listener's fault when conversations go astray.

Scientists are currently looking into how diet and exercise may affect our hearing. We are all living much longer than we did 50-100 years ago, so we need to make sure that we do all we can to protect our senses. In the meantime, however, should you stumble upon a miracle cure for ageing, please let us know!

Changes... and News

Battery prices have stayed unchanged for 10 years during which we have tried to negotiate and absorb as much of the constant supplier increases as possible. However, on 1 January 2015 our price for a 6 pack of batteries of any size, increased from R38 to R40. We will continue to negotiate prices and try to avoid futher price increases in the foreseeable future, but our priority is to provide a reliable, well performing battery for use with any hearing aid make or model. Medical Aids no longer pay for hearing aid batteries and we can't claim for any routine maintenance such as tubes, domes or moulds. Some Medical Aids still pay for repairs to hearing aids but they the hearing aid benefits for it.

With most people feeling the financial pinch these days, they are forced to consider repairing before replacing, but the cost of hearing aid repairs has gone up astronomically. This encouraged us to negotiate for longer warranty periods during which manufacturer services are available at no cost and we are proud to announce that we are the first practice in South Africa to now offer extended warranty plans on most brands. Some included it in the purchase price at a reduced rate and others offer it as an optional extra, but the hope is that it will help the hearing aids last longer. However, just in case it goes through the wash, the dog or under foot, keep your hearing aids insured! Warranties do not cover accidents. Also remember that a repaired hearing aid is not "good as new", it is just fixed well enough to work for a while longer!

After a whole baby free year, our lovely Wynberg receptionist is going to add one to the mix! Nicole is expecting in July, so for a few months following, you will encounter a bit of all of us at the front desk. Instead of putting up with a temp, we will all be pulling our weight to bridge the gap. Thank you in advance for your patience!

Francis Slabber

Celeste Leveson

Nadine Jooste

Beth Cockcroft

Elisha Berridge