

## Media Release

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Subject	Joint Venture with Cochlear Ltd.
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### **A New Joint Venture Company for Implantable Hearing Systems**

## **Phonak and Cochlear Combine Key Knowledge**

The Phonak Group and Cochlear Ltd., the Australian Cochlear implant company, have entered into a joint venture to develop innovative products in the field of implantable acoustical hearing systems. These new products will specifically address a current un-met medical need, where current external hearing aids, cochlear implants and middle ear implants (MEI's) cannot provide effective benefits to patients.

The task of the joint venture is to develop a complete product line of implantable acoustical hearing systems, incorporating key elements of each of the parent companies' core technologies. For Phonak, this means new applications for its existing strong expertise in digital sound processing technologies and sophisticated hearing rehabilitation algorithms and components. Over the past few years, Phonak has developed several key components to create an implantable hearing system, and these components, and related technology, have been transferred to the new venture. "Phonak's know-how and market leadership in the field of audiology joined with Cochlear's expertise and core business in implantable hearing devices will offer promising opportunities", said Dr. Valentin Chaperro Rueda, CEO of Phonak Group. "The highly innovative products developed by the joint venture will help Phonak to penetrate new market segments and to strengthen its leading position as the comprehensive hearing system provider".

This new joint venture solidifies the relationship between Phonak and Cochlear which began in March 2001, when the two companies collaborated on the distribution of Phonak's miniaturized FM radio communication equipment to wearers of cochlear implants, further enhancing their hearing ability. This cooperation confirms Phonak's FM technology as the industry standard and further raises its awareness in the ENT doctors' community.

### **About the Companies**

Cochlear Ltd. is the world leader in manufacturing and sale of cochlear implant systems. The company's philosophy is to support recipients and clinics throughout the life-time of every cochlear implant system. This includes upgrades in implants, speech processors and programming software. Cochlear has the highest standards for safety and reliability in the cochlear implant industry. The organization employs over 800 people globally with over 400 of these located in Australia and partners with implant centres in over 80 countries. Further information about Cochlear Ltd. and its products is available at [www.cochlear.com](http://www.cochlear.com).

Phonak Group is a leading manufacturer of hearing systems and specialized FM solutions which can be applied for both hearing instruments and other applications (security, media, sports and tourism sectors). The Group employs over 2,400 staff worldwide and has sales and distribution companies in more than 25 countries around the world. The Phonak Group comprises two hearing instrument divisions, Phonak and Unitron Hearing, as well as Phonak Communications. Further information about Phonak Group and its products is available at [www.phonak.com](http://www.phonak.com).