



Dear users of hearing instruments, dear hearing care professionals,

While the development of the pandemic is still volatile, EHIMA member companies are taking all necessary steps to guarantee the provision of products and services to hearing care professionals and to people living with hearing loss, all over the world. We do this while giving highest priority to the health and safety of users of hearing instruments, hearing care professionals and employees.

### **The entire market is severely impacted**

Imposed measures of social distancing and lock downs severely impact the hearing healthcare market. The entire hearing eco-system from independent hearing care professionals to larger players and component suppliers are hit hard by the pandemic. Whether big or small, all need support to get through the crisis and, therefore, appreciate the help and support packages put in place around the world to support industries like ours. It is paramount for people with hearing loss that their support system of manufacturers and professionals is enabled to continue operating so that no one is suffering from a lack of care.

### **Hearing care should not be delayed**

Maintaining and regaining hearing health is indispensable under the widely imposed conditions of social distancing or social isolation. Caring for hearing loss without delay is paramount in order to stay informed and connected. In times like these it becomes even more evident that hearing health is an essential, vital prerequisite for a healthy, safe and socially embedded life.

People living with hearing loss should therefore not hesitate to seek professional help, whether it is counseling, fitting or the repair of hearing instruments. Delaying necessary treatment may lead to the further deterioration of a hearing impairment and to an increase of other health risks, such as cognitive decline and dementia.

Users of hearing instruments who are unable to visit a clinic or hearing care provider, may find relief in tele-health or tele-audiology services, which enable access to hearing health professionals without leaving their home.

### **We support guidelines by professional associations**

EHIMA member companies and their partners - ENT doctors, surgeons, audiologists and hearing care professionals - not only follow their respective government's health regulations - they go several steps further. EHIMA supports all professional associations which provide their members with additional guidelines on hygiene and safety, such as AAA (Romania), [Akustika & HS](#) (Switzerland), [ANA](#) (Spain), [APA](#) & [APtA](#) (Portugal), [BIHA](#) (Germany), [BSHAA](#), [BAA](#), [BSA](#) & [AIHHP](#) (UK), [CEUPA](#) (Belgium), [DKA](#) & [NVAB](#) (The Netherlands), [FIA](#) (Italy), [HAHAA](#) (Greece), [ISHAA](#) (Ireland), [MAA](#) (Malta), [PSPS](#) (Poland), [UNSAF](#) (France) and [VHÖ](#) (Austria).

**We minimize additional risks**

While we work hard to guarantee the continuous provision of hearing health treatment for all people in need, we acknowledge that many of our customers, users and partners are in vulnerable positions right now. We therefore seek to reduce as many risks of exposure to the virus, as possible. Since convening in large groups of people will, for the foreseeable future, constitute a preventable health risk, EHIMA members unanimously agreed to suspend their participation at national and international trades show until the end of the year 2020.

We remain fully committed to continuing our relentless efforts and support of hearing care professionals and people living with hearing loss throughout and well beyond the current, difficult situation.

Søren Nielsen

President of the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association  
on behalf of all EHIMA member companies