

PRESS RELEASE  
*For Immediate Release*

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### **Aim for Better Hearing at Mill Neck Center for Hearing Health**

Explaining the purpose behind the recently appointed Assistive Listening Devices room at Mill Neck Services Center for Hearing Health, Dr. Susan Antonellis likens it “test driving” before purchasing. Antonellis, a New York State-licensed, ASHA/AAA-certified audiologist and the Center’s Operations Manager, says we “hear” with our ears, but we “listen” with our brains. Hearing aids help distinguish sounds, but our listening abilities can still be affected by hearing loss and the natural aging process.

Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) can help in challenging environments where hearing aids may not do the job adequately. In addition, there is a good deal of computer software to assist in helping retrain the brain’s listening abilities by boosting listening skills and applying communication strategies. This is especially helpful in large gatherings or where there is background noise or music. A tour of the new ALD room reveals a number of new technologies useful for aural rehabilitation, where participants learn how to manage hearing loss, make the most of hearing devices and enhance quality of life through better hearing.

Currently the ALD room at Mill Neck features: Caption Call and Cap-Tel, two phone systems with amplification and captioning. These phones are free to individuals with documented hearing loss. The Center for Hearing Health can order either of these phone systems, as well as other assistive devices. “TV Ears,” is a wireless headset that allows you to control TV volume for your hearing needs, without subjecting others to sound changes. Two iPads were shown, one with

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apps for adults, one geared toward children. Like many apps, some are free. “Hear Coach,” for adults, helps train your ear for different listening environments. Others include “Oticon Medical” and “Ibaldi Lite”, an English/Spanish app that helps practice lipreading. Hear Coach and Oticon Medical also have exercises for children, along with “Simon Says” and “Planet Hearwell.”

LACE (Listening and Communication Enhancement) software, according to Antonellis, “is like physical therapy for the ears.” Indeed, the literature for LACE notes that “just as physical therapy can assist in rebuilding muscles to compensate for injury or weakness, auditory rehabilitation helps develop strategies to deal with situations when hearing is inadequate.” LACE is appropriate for those with wearing hearing aids or just acquiring them. It is even useful for improving listening skills when first noticing hearing difficulties. LACE is for home use. The software discs are available for sale at the Center for Hearing Health. The program features different communication situations, or tasks (such as Rapid Speech and Word Memory), each about 20 minutes. Your progress is tracked by how you respond to them.

Antonellis mentioned helpful websites, among them, The Listening Room. The site is appropriate for both children and adults. “It’s especially useful for kids. It helps with recognition of various sounds, including vowel sounds,” she said. She concluded by saying, “Many people think just having hearing aids is enough. There is so much more out there that can really help improve your hearing quality. Keeping your brain active helps your hearing. That’s the idea behind auditory rehabilitation: retraining your brain to listen.” She emphasized that the Center for Hearing Health is available to assist you, with many options available depending on individual needs. Antonellis encouraged visiting the Center to learn how you can obtain optimal hearing health.

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Part of the Mill Neck Family of Organizations, founded in 1947 by Lutheran Friends of the Deaf, Mill Neck Services Center for Hearing Health at the Mildred and Frank Feinberg Community Center is located on Mill Neck Manor’s campus. The Center features separate, state-of-the-art adult and pediatric testing areas. Services also include dispensing hearing aids, distributing

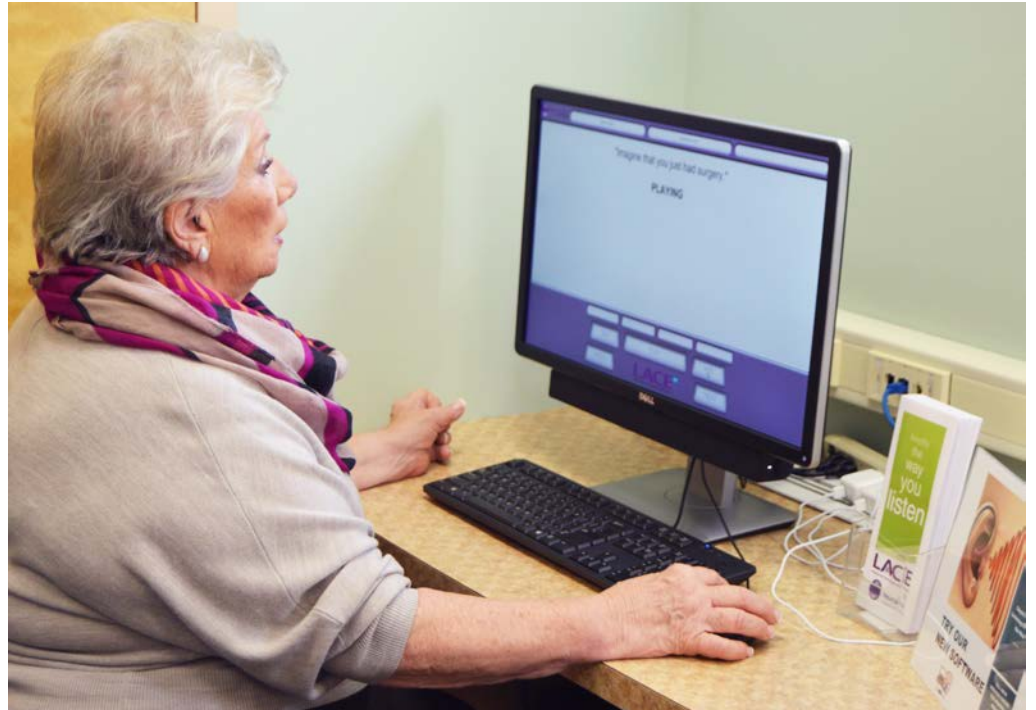
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assistive listening devices and providing amplification adjustments. Free hearing screenings are offered by appointment. The Center accepts most major insurances. If you or someone you know is experiencing less than optimal hearing, please call 516-628-4258 for an appointment.

Caption: The Mill Neck Services Center for Hearing Health now features a room equipped with the latest assistive listening devices that are helpful for those with hearing loss.



Caption: Marianne Artinian, Administrative Assistant at the Center for Hearing Health demonstrates LACE software.



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