

12th Annual Tom Davidson Memorial Conference

Friday October 25, 2024

8:30 am – 3:00 PM

UT Conference Center

600 Henley Street, Knoxville, Tennessee



Keynote Speaker: Gail Whitelaw, Ph.D.

Gail M. Whitelaw, Ph.D. is an audiologist, clinical professor, and clinic director in the Department of Speech and Hearing Science at The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH. Dr. Whitelaw is interested in a breadth of areas of audiology, including pediatrics, traumatic brain injury, professional issues, and ethics. She likes the unique aspects of audiology including tinnitus treatment, auditory processing disorders, and functional hearing loss in children and adults. She provides both direct clinical services and precepts doctor of audiology students at Ohio State. She is also the audiology faculty member on the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Other Disabilities (LEND) at the Nisonger Center at Ohio State. Dr. Whitelaw is a past-President of the American Academy of Audiology and a past-President of the Ohio Academy of Audiology.

Presentation: Focus on Functional Hearing Loss

Course Description

This session is focused on patients, both children and adults, who have normal peripheral hearing acuity but report considerable difficulty listening in their daily "functional" environments. The concept of "normal hearing" will be defined. Characteristics of functional hearing loss will be presented. Evaluation options will be discussed. Management and treatment options will be discussed. Case studies will be presented to illustrate the impact that audiology can have on quality of life for these patients.

Learning Objectives

This session will enable learners to:

- Describe the current definition of functional hearing loss
- Define "normal hearing"
- Discuss assessment techniques addressing functional hearing loss
- List approaches to managing and treating functional hearing loss
- Describe the role of low-gain hearing aids in management



Featured Speaker: Lisa Cunningham, Ph.D.

Dr. Lisa Cunningham is the Scientific Director of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), one of the 27 institutes and centers that comprise the US National Institutes of Health (NIH). Lisa was born and raised in East Tennessee. She received bachelor's and master's degrees in Audiology from the University of Tennessee and completed a clinical fellowship in Audiology at Indiana University. She then obtained a PhD in neuroscience from the University of Virginia and completed a post-doctoral fellowship in auditory neuroscience at the University of Washington. Dr. Cunningham's lab at NIDCD conducts basic, translational, and clinical studies on hearing loss and develops therapeutic strategies to safeguard hearing. Of particular interest is the development of therapies to protect the hearing of patients undergoing treatment with therapeutic drugs that treat life-threatening diseases but that also damage the cells of the the inner ear and result in hearing loss.

Presentation: Cisplatin-induced hearing loss: from bench to bedside

Course Description

Cisplatin is a widely-used an effective drug that is used to treat solid tumor cancers in both children and adults. It is the most ototoxic drug in clinical use, causing significant permanent hearing loss in about 50% patients who receive it. In this lecture I will provide an overview of the current scientific and clinical understanding of cisplatin-induced hearing loss and describe recent advances in the development of therapies to protect the hearing of cancer patients taking this lifesaving drug.

Learning Objectives

This session will enable learners to:

- Describe cisplatin-induced damage to cells in the inner ear
- Describe a recently approved therapy aimed at reducing cisplatin-induced hearing loss in children
- Describe an ongoing clinical trial aimed at reducing cisplatin-induced hearing loss in adults



Featured Speaker: Dana Urbanski, AuD, PhD

Dana Urbanski, AuD, PhD CCC-A is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Audiology & Speech Pathology at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. Dr. Urbanski earned her AuD from the Northeast Ohio AuD Consortium and her PhD in Speech-Language-Hearing Sciences from the University of Minnesota, followed by postdoctoral training in gerontology and public health at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Broadly, her research focuses on tailoring and individualizing hearing service delivery to improve hearing aid uptake and acceptance among older adults with hearing loss, with particular emphasis on using over-the-counter amplification to reduce cost and access barriers to hearing care. She is especially interested in optimizing hearing services for older adults traditionally underrepresented in hearing aid research, including those with physical and cognitive differences, as well as individuals from rural areas and other minoritized backgrounds. A key area of her work investigates strategies for customizing hearing devices and their associated services to better support older adults with co-occurring dementia and hearing loss and their family caregivers.

Presentation: Hearing Loss and Cognition: Current Evidence and Clinical Insights for Audiologists

Course Description: There remains considerable attention on research showing an association between hearing loss and cognitive decline, including dementia. In recent years, some audiologists and researchers have advocated for strong incorporation of these findings into clinical practice—from inclusion of cognitive screeners to patient counseling that emphasizes hearing aids as a means of mitigating cognitive decline and/or preventing dementia. On the other hand, others have cautioned that the research evidence is incomplete, and thus should not inform audiologic treatment or patient counseling. What is the current state of the evidence on hearing loss and cognition? Is there a middle ground between these two positions? In this presentation, I will

review what is currently known about the association between hearing loss and cognitive decline, including what is known about whether hearing aid use modifies the risk for cognitive decline and dementia. Drawing on current evidence and classical principles of bioethics, I offer some recommendations for how discussions of hearing loss and cognition can be effectively incorporated into audiology practice.

Learning Objectives

This session will enable learners to:

- Describe the association between hearing loss and cognitive decline
- Discuss potential causal and non-causal factors underlying the association between hearing loss and cognitive decline
- Examine current evidence on the role of hearing aids in reducing cognitive decline
- Identify strategies for integrating evidence on hearing loss and cognition into clinical practice

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Agenda

Morning Session: Gail Whitelaw, Ph.D.

- 8:30-9:00 AM: Registration
- 9:00-9:15 AM: Introduction
- 9:15-9:30 AM: Who are these patients?
- 9:30-10:00 AM: Defining normal hearing
- 10:00-10:30 AM: Assessment of this patient population
- 10:30-10:40 AM: Break
- 10:40-11:15 AM: Management and treatment approaches
- 11:15-11:45 AM: Illustrative Cases
- 11:45-12:00 PM: Questions and Discussion
- 12:00-1:30 PM: Lunch on your own

Afternoon Session Lisa Cunningham, Ph.D.

- 1:30-1:40 PM: Overview of cisplatin-induced hearing loss
- 1:40-1:50 PM: Basic science: Why does cisplatin cause hearing loss?
- 1:50-2:00 PM: Translational science: How can we develop therapies to prevent cisplatin-induced hearing loss
- 2:00-2:10 PM: Clinical science: testing potential protective therapies aimed at protecting the hearing of cancer patients receiving cisplatin
- 2:10-2:15 PM: Questions and Discussion

Dana Urbanski, AuD, Ph.D.

- 2:15-2:30 PM: Evidence for an association of hearing loss and cognitive decline and risk of dementia
- 2:30-2:45 PM: Evidence for hearing aids as a means of reducing cognitive decline and dementia risk
- 2:45-3:00 PM: Recommendations for incorporating the current research evidence into clinical practice, including in treatment recommendations, marketing, and patient counseling



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**University of Tennessee,
Department of Audiology and
Speech Pathology**

This course is offered for 0.45 ASHA CEUs
Intermediate Level

Speaker Disclosures

Gail Whitelaw

Financial Relationships:

Dr. Whitelaw will receive an honorarium from UTHSC Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology for the presentation.

Non-financial Relationships

None

Lisa Cunningham

Financial Relationships:

Dr. Cunningham is employed by the National Institute of Health

Non-financial Relationships:

None

Dana Urbanski

Financial Relationships:

Dr. Urbanski is employed by the University of TN Health Science Center, Department of Audiology and Speech Pathology

Non-financial Relationships:

None