



**Audiology**  
Communication and Balance Disorders  
PO Box 800713  
Charlottesville, VA 22908-0713  
Phone (434) 924-2050; Fax (434) 972-0700

**Message to Lions Clubs of Virginia Concerning Hearing Aid Assistance Program at UVA**

As you are aware, through the collaborative efforts of the local Lions Clubs in our area and the University of Virginia Health System Division of Audiology, many hearing-impaired individuals who would otherwise be unable to afford much-needed hearing aids are, in fact, able to be fitted with hearing assistive devices at relatively minimal cost to the patients and their families. This joint program is made possible through the generosity of the local Lions Clubs, the availability of low-cost, but good quality, hearing aids through our vendors, and the ability of our clinical staff to provide the fittings and initial follow-up care without charge to the patients for the time and expertise involved in the delivery of services. We are pleased to be able to work closely with the Lions Clubs in the area to provide these much-needed services to our patients, and our patients and their families are extremely grateful to the Lions Clubs for the opportunities that this program makes available.

It has come to my attention, however, that some of the details concerning the financial aspects of the program—i.e., the actual amount of funding assistance provided by the individual Lions Clubs—are possibly being inadvertently shared with some of our patients through correspondence from the Lions Clubs. As a result, these patients may assume that the cost of a standard hearing aid fitting through our office is in the range of \$175-\$215 (the amount covered through both the Lions Club funding assistance program and the balance owed by the patient). That erroneous assumption may then be passed along to family and friends who will be, at the very least disappointed, if not incensed, when informed of the actual cost of a privately-purchased hearing aid through our office. That cost is, minimally, over \$700; that figure encompasses not only the cost of the device itself, but the time involved in the fitting and two years of follow-up care, the expertise of the audiologists involved in the provision of care, etc. As noted above, the exceptionally low cost of the hearing aids provided to patients receiving funding assistance through the Lions Clubs is the result of a special cooperative arrangement among the Lions Clubs, the Division of Audiology and our vendors and is not available to the general public. I would therefore like to request your assistance in assuring that the financial details of this arrangement not be shared with those individuals applying for funding through the Lions Club program, so that patients, their families and acquaintances are not inadvertently misled.

Please know that we in the Division of Audiology are most appreciative of the generosity of the Lions Clubs in assisting our patients in need. Your kindness and good works are enjoyed on a daily basis by the many patients who have been able to avail themselves of the assistance offered through the Lions Club program. We look forward to continuing our joint efforts in this most worthwhile cause.

Sincerely,  
Janet E. Sturtevant, M.Ed., CCC-A  
Audiology Supervisor