

# CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY, BOSTON, USA, 28–31 MARCH 2012

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The American Academy of Audiology’s annual meeting – AudiologyNOW! – took place between 28 and 31 March 2012 in Boston, USA. More than just an audiological conference, it was also a workshop and an exhibition of the latest audiological equipment from manufacturers. The meeting is one of the largest of its kind in the world.

The first day of the conference was largely devoted to thematic workshops. The most important one was dedicated to noise-induced hearing loss and covered themes such as causes of the disorder, its prevention, and treatment. Workshop topics included good governance in audiological practices, measurement of hearing aids using in situ methods, middle ear implanted devices, methods for ear wax removal, and topics related to impaired balance.

Another element of the conference was the opportunity to listen to lectures and presentations by exhibitors about new technologies in audiology, notably by manufacturers of conventional hearing aids and of implanted prostheses that make use of bone conduction. Of course, the nature of these events was somewhat commercial, but there was no shortage of reliable and objective presentations of research results, and a lively debate about solutions.

The main conference themes took place at several rooms simultaneously. Although topics varied widely, there was great interest in the treatment of tinnitus and other hearing disorders linked to them such as hyperacusis and misophonia. Some time was devoted to the issue of pediatric prostheses and the use of wireless systems in this and older age groups.

A lot of attention was paid to compression systems used in cases of significant hearing loss at high frequencies. Participants listened to lectures related to the use of smartphones in audiology, their current applications in hearing tests and education, and their help in the use of listening devices. All this is a new direction, which in coming years is likely to change the way we communicate with patients. Smartphones will also of course facilitate communication between practitioners.

The conference also had a national dimension: there was no lack of lectures on the environment in which U.S. audiologists find themselves, their problems running a practice, legal and ethical aspects, and even codes used in medical procedures.