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REPORT ON THE 17TH CONGRESS OF EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF AUDIOLOGY SOCIETIES (EFAS), 14–17 MAY 2025, VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Piotr H. Skarzynski[1,2BE], Aleksandra Chodkiewicz[1BE], Emilia Czaplicka[1E], Artur Lorens[3E], Adam Walkowiak[3E], Anna Ratuszniak[3E], Katarzyna B. Cywka[4E], W. Wiktor Jedrzejczak[5E]

[1] Teleaudiology and Screening Department, World Hearing Center, Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, Warsaw/Kajetany, Poland
[2] Institute of Sensory Organs, Kajetany, Poland
[3] Implants and Auditory Perception Department, World Hearing Center, Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, Warsaw/Kajetany, Poland
[4] Oto-Rhino-Laryngology Surgery Clinic, World Hearing Center, Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, Warsaw/Kajetany, Poland
[5] Department of Experimental Audiology, World Hearing Center, Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, Warsaw/Kajetany, Poland

Corresponding author: Aleksandra Chodkiewicz, Teleaudiology and Screening Department, World Hearing Center, Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing, Mochnackiego 10, 02-042 Warsaw, Poland; email: a.chodkiewicz@ifps.org.pl

The Congress of the European Federation of Audiology Societies (EFAS) is a unique event offering opportunities to gain new knowledge, exchange experiences, and showcase research findings and achievements in audiology. It provides a platform to explore research directions and address patient needs. From 14 to 17 May 2025, Vienna hosted the 17th Congress of EFAS. This year's congress focused on the most important and recent developments in the field of audiology.

Key topics included the impact of artificial intelligence on audiology and the growing area of telemedicine, such as telefitting, which has gained prominence post-pandemic. Other widely discussed subjects included advancements in hearing implants, results of inter-center studies, bimodal hearing, and therapeutic approaches in audiology.

The Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing was represented by Piotr H. Skarzynski, Artur Lorens, Aleksandra Chodkiewicz, Emilia Czaplicka, Anna Ratuszniak, Adam Walkowiak, Katarzyna B. Cywka, and W. Wiktor Jedrzejczak.

At the opening ceremony, Prof. Georg Sprinzl welcomed all participants and outlined the congress's themes. Workshops were also held on the first day, covering topics such as auditory processing disorders and screening tests for children in primary schools.

On the second day, Prof. Piotr H. Skarzynski chaired a panel on the treatment of partial deafness, during which Prof. Artur Lorens and Dr. Adam Walkowiak presented their work. The findings from various research centers garnered significant interest, as did the possibilities of processor fitting for partial deafness and the role of steroids in preserving residual hearing. The panel involved interactive discussion, encouraging the chair and attendees to ask questions.

In a subsequent session, Prof. Piotr H. Skarzynski presented his work on *Outcomes of cochlear implantation in patients with far-advanced otosclerosis who had previously undergone stapes surgery*. This attracted considerable interest due to the complex nature of the condition and the large cohort of patients involved.

In a session on artificial intelligence, Prof. W. Wiktor Jedrzejczak presented his work, *ChatBot AI in audiology*, discussing the potential applications of ChatBot technology in modern audiology. Prof. Artur Lorens delivered a presentation on *Cochlear implantation in children with single-sided deafness*, demonstrating the benefits of cochlear implants for children with congenital and acquired SSD.

Dr. Kelley Graydon presented a study, *Does early conductive hearing loss impact longer-term listening ability?* Her research examined a group of children with a history of otitis media and associated hearing loss. At the time of the study, all children had normal hearing test results. However, the findings revealed a correlation between conductive hearing loss and deficits in listening skills, highlighting the need for early intervention in children with conductive hearing loss and the importance of screening programs to aid diagnosis. In a session on objective hearing measurements, Dr. Adam Walkowiak presented his study *Does impeded biomechanics influence cochlear implant hearing preservation?*

Participants in the panel discussion *Partial deafness treatment with EAS*. From left: Andro Košec, Andreas Büchner, Astrid Magele, Silke Helbig, Adam Walkowiak, Artur Lorens, Piotr H. Skarzynski

Aleksandra Chodkiewicz gave two presentations: *Normative values for tests of auditory processing disorders in children aged 6 to 12*, which garnered significant interest due to the large number of patients studied, and *Hyperbaric oxygen therapy as an adjunct to glucocorticosteroids treatment for sudden sensorineural hearing loss*. This work sparked a discussion on the necessity of adopting unified criteria for the treatment and rehabilitation of patients with sudden hearing loss.

In the session on *Screening and diagnostics*, Dr. Jorge Burdiles-Aguirre shared the results of hearing screenings conducted among primary school students in Chile. She emphasized the critical need for screening in this group due to the lack of regulations and the high prevalence of hearing loss identified during pilot studies.

During the session on hearing implants, Emilia Czaplicka presented an intriguing case involving a patient with Treacher–Collins syndrome who was fitted with a bone conduction implant. Given the rarity of using bone conduction implants in such patients, her presentation captured the attention of participants, who asked numerous questions.

On the third day, Dr. Anna Ratuszniak presented her study on *Improving hearing performance in middle ear implant users: a comparison of the Samba2 and previous Vibrant Soundbridge audio processors*. Her findings showed that the use of the new Vibrant Soundbridge (VSB) processor significantly enhanced audiological outcomes and patient functioning. In the same session, Emilia Czaplicka presented the results of using bone conduction implants in patients with single-sided deafness, highlighting the importance of these devices for patients unable to use traditional CROS systems or cochlear implants due to anatomical abnormalities.

Dr. Jocelyn Phillips delivered an engaging presentation on *Barriers and facilitators to teleaudiology infant diagnostic testing*. She emphasized the need to develop remote diagnostic models to identify hearing disorders in newborns during pandemics and the need to access diagnostic services.

In the *Hearing implants* session, Aleksandra Chodkiewicz shared results on the cochlear implantation in young children with profound hearing loss and congenital CMV infection. She underlined the significance of treating hearing loss in this group due to the additional burdens these patients face, which complicate daily functioning. In the same session, Prof. Artur Lorens presented his study, *Subjective benefit after cochlear implantation in different groups of patients*. Using data from the APHAB questionnaire, he demonstrated that cochlear implants improve the quality of life and functioning across various groups of patients with different types and degrees of hearing loss.

On the final day, Dr. Adam Walkowiak presented his preliminary study on *The impact of stimulus burst duration on electrically evoked stapedius reflex thresholds in pediatric CI users*. He highlighted the importance of these measurements in optimizing CI fittings, especially for patients whose behavioral responses are unreliable.

The closing ceremony was conducted by Prof. Vinay Swarnalatha Nagraj, president of EFAS. He thanked all panelists and participants for their presentations and active engagement throughout the congress.

The next EFAS congress will take place June 2–5, 2027, in Odense, Denmark.