

Monday, 20 November, 2006



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **New UQ hearing clinic in tune with community**

People seeking relief from hearing disorders now have access to advanced technology and equipment at a University of Queensland public clinic.

The Audiology Clinic at UQ's St Lucia campus today officially launched an expanded service, based on an agreement with one of the world's leading hearing instrument suppliers, Siemens.

The partnership between the not-for-profit UQ clinic and Siemens gives people with hearing problems access to a complete package of testing, rehabilitation, and advanced hearing devices.

UQ Vice-Chancellor Professor John Hay, AC, said the Clinic would help meet the growing demand for treatment of babies, children and adults with hearing disorders.

"Hearing loss affects one in every six Australians and this is projected to increase as the population ages, to one in every four Australians by 2050," Professor Hay said.

"Siemens' generosity enables us to offer rehabilitation services, comprehensive diagnostic assessment, hearing device prescription and fitting, and devices designed to prevent hearing damage.

"The new range of services includes rehabilitation involving the fitting of hearing instruments including customised hearing protection devices. These can help prevent ear infections and noise damage, and help aid communication in industrial settings.

"For people who have hearing problems or wish to prevent them, this is a significant improvement on the Audiology Clinic's past role as a testing facility.

"The new technology will be put to the best use by clinicians who are the product of UQ's outstanding teaching and research," Professor Hay said.

The Audiology Clinic completes a cluster of health and rehabilitation clinics that is unique for an Australian university. The group of four clinics specialise in: audiology; physiotherapy; speech pathology; and occupational therapy.

Professor Hay said the clinics already received more than 30,000 client visits each year, and were a particular benefit to UQ's local and surrounding communities.

“The impending opening of Brisbane’s newest bridge will make it easier for many thousands of residents to access these clinics, which operate on a not-for-profit basis but do not compromise on the quality of expert service,” Professor Hay said.

The clinics are part of the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, which is recognised as the national leader in research in all four disciplines (audiology, physiotherapy, speech pathology and occupational therapy). The clinics also have an essential role in educating future health professionals, giving students clinical experience as well as opportunities for specialised teaching and research.

Siemens is a major international company specialising in the manufacture and distribution of hearing instruments and accessories. It is also donating funding for rural training for a Masters of Audiology Studies student, and a student prize for academic achievement.

**Media inquiries: Marlene McKendry, Health Sciences Communications (0401 996847).**