


Hear things differently



Annual Report  
2023 – 2024





“When you see his reactions to hearing you, you fully realise what it means.”

*Fynley's dad Josef*

*Fynley and Meadow*

*Front cover: Elijah, Josef, Fynley, Meadow and Ashleigh enjoy living on their rural property.*

LIZ ROBSON – DISTANT SEA

## Loving the experience of growing up in the country

Three-year-old Fynley loves exploring his family's rural property – climbing trees, jumping on the trampoline and digging are among his favourite activities.

As a newborn, Fynley failed his hearing test twice and he was diagnosed as profoundly Deaf when he was nine weeks old.

By that stage, parents Josef and Ashleigh had realised something was amiss as he didn't react when his older siblings Meadow (6) and Elijah (9) were racing around and yelling at the top of their voices around him.

Josef and Ashleigh are grateful for all the support they have received, and they reflect now on how Fynley's first year involved a whirlwind of change that was overwhelming at times.

No-one in their respective families had been born Deaf before. They knew of cochlear implants, but nothing about the science and technology that would make such a difference for their son.

In that first year, Fynley also had unrelated surgery for another condition. Ashleigh didn't return to her architectural design job after maternity leave and instead became a contractor, working full time from home with flexible hours so she was able to support Fynley in all his medical appointments.

Josef switched his police officer role from full time to part time and, soon after, they moved from the outskirts of Christchurch to a rural lifestyle block in North Canterbury.

The couple decided to go ahead with bilateral cochlear implants when Fynley was seven months old to ensure the best outcomes possible for him in his early communications.

It was just as important to them to commit to learning sign language.

"It's difficult being the advocate for your child and knowing what choice is going to be the right one," Josef says.

Ashleigh says, "Fynley was born Deaf and that's part of who he is. We can never rely solely on technology to communicate with him. If it fails, then at least we've got sign language as a backup."

They are grateful to the Southern Cochlear Implant Programme for the



Fynley

extensive education and support the team has given them, especially Sonja, their Habilitationist. They greatly appreciate the help of Mr Phil Bird, the surgeon who reassured them and alleviated all their fears about Fynley's implant surgery. Their Adviser on Deaf Children from the Ministry of Education is another special person they thank.

Ashleigh describes Fynley's switch-on as an amazing, unique special moment. They have a video to show his beautiful reaction to their voices. "His eyes widened and he had a huge grin. You'll never experience something like that again," she says.

"When you see his reactions to hearing you, you fully realise what it means," Josef says.

When Fynley was two and a half, he had caught up to the spoken language level of his peers.

Josef, Ashleigh, Meadow and Elijah are learning New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) through First Signs and appreciate the amazing help of their teacher Debra. Fynley's grandmothers and aunts are also learning. It's important to them to have NZSL as a second language to support Fynley.

"He's just getting to that older stage now where he can communicate more freely with us. We can actually ask him questions and he can respond and understand what we're saying to him," Ashleigh says.

"It's nice to be at a stage that every morning he wants to put his ears on and he notices if we're delayed," she says.

Josef says, "Nothing holds him back. He can do everything every other child can."

"Fynley is already cheeky enough to know that when his processors are disconnected, he can turn away and ignore his parents," Josef jokes.

They have persevered to keep his processors on as much as possible. Ashleigh has sewed colourful fabric headbands to help hold them on his head. She kindly makes extras for other children with cochlear implants.

Ashleigh and Josef enjoy participating in the Deaf community and learning from other families with shared experiences. Early on they joined a Facebook group of parents of children with cochlear implants and they find that support very beneficial.

Fynley calls his cochlear implants his 'ears'. Ashleigh shares a funny story that when they were at preschool they were naming facial parts and when it came to 'where's your ears', Fynley's location was a bit higher on his head than the other kids!

As Fynley gets older, they're looking forward to being able to ask him more about his experiences with the implants and what it's like to take his ears off.

## Chief Executive's report

Welcome to the SCIP Annual Report for the 2023-24 year.

The past year has been characterised by uncertainty and change. In November 2023 a new coalition government was formed. The new government signalled a need to reduce costs in the state sector and Whaikaha – the Ministry of Disabled People – from whom we receive 80% of our funding. Like other agencies, the Ministry has been subject to scrutiny over cost pressures in the last few months. Nevertheless, we maintain a positive working relationship with Whaikaha, and funding remains in place at existing levels.

We saw some staff changes this year with most notably the retirement of Jill Mustard our Clinical Manager. Jill had been with the programme from inception over a period of more than 20 years. Jill will be missed. Pip Wilding – previously Audiology



Neil Heslop, CEO

lead – has stepped into this role. We have also added Audiology and Rehabilitation staff to our Lower Hutt clinic to meet demand.

As a registered charity the programme attempts where possible to “give back” to

stakeholders and patients. For the last few years, we have secured grants that provide for limited parts subsidies to our adult patients, as well as a hardship fund, and 2023-24 was no different.

In 2023-24 we continued to provide an annual scholarship to cochlear implant recipients embarking on training or study. Through the generosity of other benefactors, we also continue to provide a small number of charitable implants for adults who don't achieve sufficient priority for a ministry-funded implant.

This year we continued attempts to improve equity for regional patients who must travel to our Christchurch or Wellington clinics. To date this has mostly been by expansion of visiting clinics, but we also have a Telehealth remote clinic operating regularly in Taranaki in partnership with the Hearing Therapy service of Your Way – Kia Roha. This service, overseen by Aretha Mulder in our Wellington office, has proved invaluable and we hope to develop further Telehealth clinics in 2024-25.

Technology improvements from suppliers also allow us to connect with patients remotely via mobile phone apps – providing further opportunities for timely and local access to services when necessary. In 2024-25 these remote services will expand and be offered as adjuncts to our usual in-clinic appointments.

In 2021 funding for adults increased from 20 to 60 per annum. This helped meet the needs of a large waiting list that approached 190 people. However, this year as in the past, referral rates for adults continues to outstrip funding with roughly three times as many referrals as implants available for this group. In 2024-25 we will continue to advocate on behalf of unfunded patients as the adult waiting list continues to grow again.

I would like to thank the staff and Board for their continued support. Our achievements would not be possible without their input and efforts. I look forward to the challenges in the 2024-25 year and to being of service to our cochlear implant community.

Ngā mihi nā

**NEIL HESLOP**  
Chief Executive



Belinda van der Monde and Jill Mustard with the 20th Anniversary book.



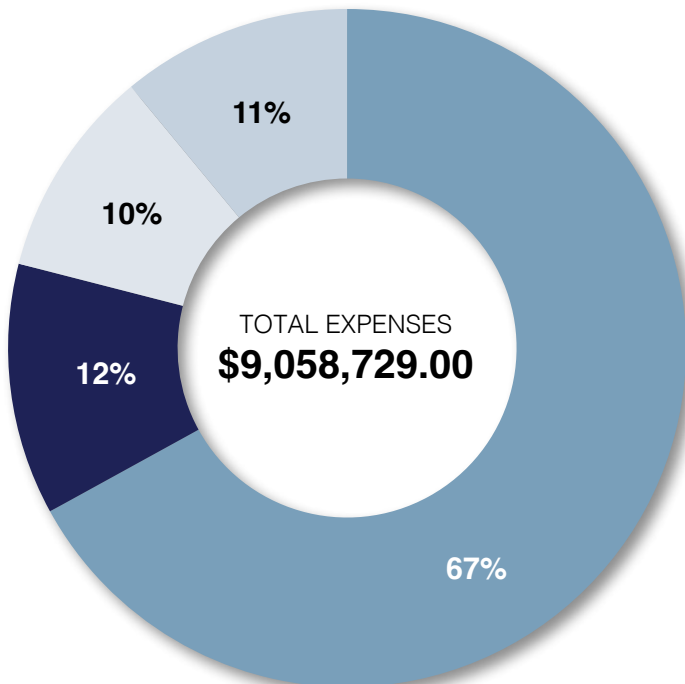
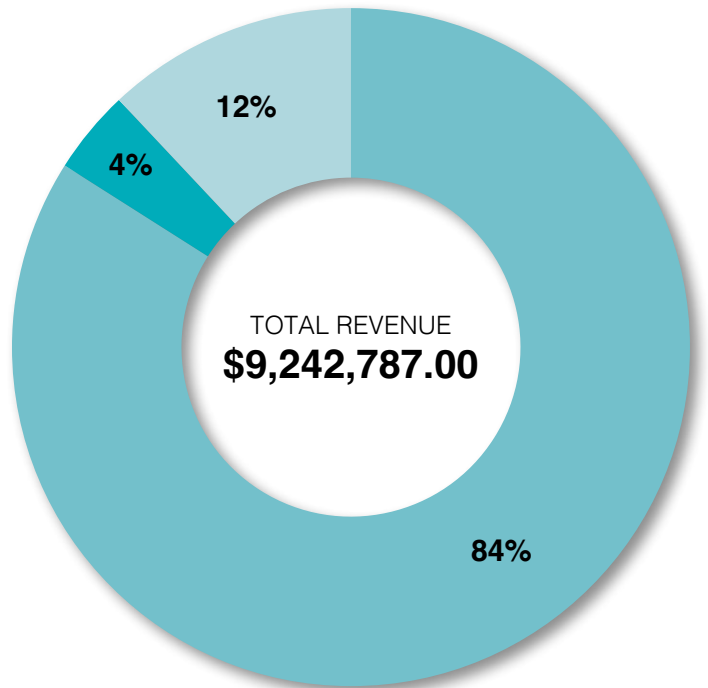
Jess Haigh from Christchurch won the Southern Hearing Charitable Trust scholarship and was congratulated by (from left) Hamish Pringle and Jonathan Davidson, representing the sponsor Forsyth Barr, SCIP CEO Neil Heslop and SHCT Board Chair David Kent.

## Financials

Revenue and expenses as at 30 June 2024\*

### REVENUE

Revenue from providing goods or services	<b>\$7,821,428.00</b>	(84%)
Donations, fundraising and similar revenue	<b>\$344,884.00</b>	(4%)
Trading revenue from providing goods or services	<b>\$1,076,475.00</b>	(12%)



### EXPENSES

Contract payments	<b>\$6,074,702.00</b>	(67%)
Operating expenses	<b>\$1,088,587.00</b>	(12%)
Trading costs	<b>\$928,510.00</b>	(10%)
Other expenses	<b>\$966,930.00</b>	(11%)

\* subject to audit



## Charity auction

The generosity in our community was evident at SCIP's 20th anniversary charity dinner and auction held last year on 21 September at Rydges Hotel in Christchurch.

A significant **\$53,850** was raised by the auction with the proceeds going to the regional outreach clinics SCIP runs.

A big thank you to the businesses and supporters who provided fantastic donations of auction items and to the successful bidders for their philanthropy. Thanks also to everyone who supported SCIP with their attendance.



SCIP staff Nikki Cleine, Belinda van der Monde, Jill Mustard and Tracey Enright



Reece Barr, Matt Hazlett, Lee Ingram and Sonya Hazlett



Claire Green and Neil Heslop



Maria Tyrie and Mary-Anne Adams



Katrina Menzies, Here Katiai, Wendy Dallas, Lenette Moore, Leslie Cooper



SCIP's 20th anniversary charity dinner and auction held at Rydges Hotel in Christchurch.



*Fynley and his siblings with their pet lamb.*

## Message from the Board Chair

As Chair of the Southern Hearing Charitable Trust (SHCT) Board, the annual report is an opportunity for me to reflect and look back on the continued growth and success of our programme. To be part of an organisation which can reconnect people to the world of sound and to offer all of them new sounds, new opportunities and new life is a real privilege and one which our Board remains proud of.

One of the highlights of the year was the celebration of our 20 years with the dinner and auction being a huge success and enabling our message to be delivered to a wider audience. At the 2023 AGM in October we farewelled our Treasurer Keith Yardley, who had held the role since our inception in 2003. Keith's passion, commitment and financial



*David Kent, Board Chair*

knowledge given to the programme was acknowledged and recognised separately at an event in December. We will always value his input and his 20 years of service volunteering.

On behalf of the SHCT Board, I wish to take the opportunity to express our sincere thanks to Chief Executive Neil Heslop and to all the

staff at SCIP for their commitment and support to the programme. We are indeed fortunate to have such support and without your expertise and dedication we could not function. I also acknowledge and thank all our surgeons in Christchurch and Wellington – your skills and support are vital.

As Chair, I once again thank my fellow Board members for your guidance and especially your time, commitment, and support over the past 12 months.

Finally, to all our supporters both corporate and individuals, thank you for your tremendous support – your donations have been warmly welcomed and are hugely valued. You have helped change people's lives and enabled us to offer them new opportunities – thank you.

Ngā mihi nā

**DAVID KENT**  
*Board Chair*

“The cochlear implant has helped me to communicate with people. The benefit for me is being able to go to meetings now and hear what’s going on.”



TIM CUFF - NELSON CREATIVE

John Harwood



## Community service in Nelson at the heart of recipient's life

John Harwood was awarded a Queen's Service Medal (QSM) for community contribution in Nelson, and being able to participate in committee meetings is an important part of the 89-year-old's social life.

Unfortunately, his progressive hearing loss in recent years meant attending and being involved in community groups was difficult.

"I had lost 92% of hearing in my right ear and only had 2% left in my left ear. It was getting to the stage I didn't bother going out to things as I wouldn't be able to hear much anyway," John says.

Hearing loss means you become a bit of a recluse, the Nelson widower believes.

The cochlear implant John received in January 2024 reignited his social interactions.

"The cochlear implant has helped me to communicate with people. The benefit for me is being able to go to meetings now and hear what's going on.

"I can now listen to the radio in the car and work out the tunes. I can hear what's being said too, which I wasn't able to do before," he says.

Being able to watch television again is another benefit. He also enjoys reading, doing puzzles and following sport.

Nelson College won the title of top South Island 1st XV rugby team this year and John Harwood was proudly cheering on his former school from the sidelines.

Afterwards, John typed up an email on the win for his former 1st XV teammates from 1952 and 1953 and sent it off to keep them in touch.

For the last five years he has enjoyed attending every game and reporting to his friends. They have appreciated the opportunity to reconnect with their school.

John was married to his wife, Nola, for 62 years. Now a widower, he has three daughters, a son, 10 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. He lives in the Oakwoods retirement village in Richmond.

John's life has focused on the Nelson-Marlborough region and he was honoured with a QSM in 2014.



At the game John met up with Justin Morrison, the grandson of one of his former Pelorus rugby teammates.

His community service included being President of the New Zealand Hearing Association Board and spending 45 years as a judge, referee and examiner for South Island Shearing Sports in Nelson/Marlborough, for which he is a life member.

When he was no longer shearing and farming, being involved in the sport kept him connected to the industry.

John is a Life Member of the Nelson A&P Association, having volunteered there for over 40 years. He's also a Lions' Life Member and was recognised for his service to the Nelson Hearing Association and the Richmond Citizens Group.

Professionally John was a sheep and beef farmer and one of his successes was turning around a swampy block at Mawheraiti on the West Coast into a productive farm for the Lands and Survey Department.

He moved back to Nelson for family reasons and worked at the freezing works, as a general handyman, and floor sanding and carpet cleaning from Murchison to Collingwood. There are many public buildings in the region which had its floors resurfaced and varnished by John.

John believes his hearing loss is a culmination of a few things. One factor is his compulsory military

training when he was younger including time on the rifle range which made his ears ring for days afterwards.

Another contributor was many years of farm work with no earmuffs. When he later worked in the freezing works, he first learned of hearing loss in his left ear.

As his hearing subsequently deteriorated, he got hearing aids. But they became less effective with time.

The first sounds he recalls at his cochlear implant processor switch-on were the rustling of paper and the surprise of clearly hearing someone speak.

John is astounded he can now hear his stomach rumbling when he's hungry and the gurgle of running water.

While his brain is in the early stages of adjusting to the cochlear implant, he is very pleased with progress.

John urges anyone who is considering having the surgery to put aside any misgivings. He was worried about taking the place of someone younger and more deserving on the waiting list, but in retrospect he understands now his hearing aids had not been helping properly for years.

## GRANTS & TRUSTS



## Fundraising report

The 2023 year was an important one for the Southern Cochlear Implant Programme (SCIP) as we celebrated our 20th anniversary. We marked the occasion with a book showcasing 20 SCIP patients covering the past 20 years and a charity auction. The enormous support we had for the 20th anniversary charity auction swelled our donations by just under \$60,000 – an outstanding result.

In the last financial year, SCIP was again fortunate to receive support from various organisations and individual donors throughout the regions where SCIP delivers its services.

Our partnership with Mutual Credit Finance (MCF) is now in its seventh year. MCF continues to support SCIP through an annual donation of \$20,000 and in other non-monetary ways. The Christchurch-based organisation supported the SCIP 20th Anniversary and continues to be an active participant in the annual Loud Shirt Day event.



*Belinda van der Monde,  
Community Relationship Manager*

Speaking to the recipient user groups is one of the most enjoyable parts of my role. In this last period, I attended five Cochlear Implant (CI) User Group meetings in Napier, Christchurch, Nelson, Cromwell and Gisborne. It was the first CI User Group meeting held in Gisborne and there was a fantastic turnout. While in the regions, I also have the opportunity to meet personally with people to discuss

their generous wish to leave a gift to SCIP in their will.

The SCIP Supporters Database has been growing steadily since its inception in 2020. We now have over 700 members – an increase of 200 people this year. The database is a vehicle for keeping in touch with our CI users and supporters of SCIP on what is happening to our fundraising and other relevant news.

In 2020, SCIP implemented a Financial Assistance Grant for our patients. Its aim is to provide financial assistance to individuals on SCIP's programme who are struggling to meet costs to maintain their CI or to attend required appointments. Since its inception, the grant has assisted over 80 CI users. If you would like to know more about the Financial Assistance Grant, please speak to your Audiologist.

As always, our vision for our CI Users is new sounds – new experiences – new life!

Ngā mihi nā

**BELINDA VAN DER MONDE**  
*Community Relationship Manager*

## CORPORATE SUPPORT



## Fundraising acknowledgements

In 2023-24 the Southern Cochlear Implant Programme (SCIP) was supported by organisations and donors who helped us deliver our services to people affected by hearing loss.

Through their generosity, we can continue to assist our patients toward new sounds, new experience, and new life.

Please note, in September 2023, SCIP held its first auction to celebrate its 20th anniversary. This accounts for the increase in donations received overall.

GRANTS 2023-24		
ORGANISATION	GRANT	PURPOSE
NZ Community Trust	\$15,000	Audiologist salary
Jones Foundation	\$2,500	Clinical Coordinator salary
ANZ Staff Foundation	\$15,000	Audiologist salary
Aotearoa Gaming Trust	\$20,000	Rehabilitationist salary
The Lion Foundation	\$50,000	Towards operational costs
Rātā Foundation	\$20,000	Audiologist salary
St George's Hospital	\$50,000	Implant a waiting list patient
Pub Charity	\$25,000	Spare part costs for adults
NZ Community Post	\$10,000	Courier services
Christchurch Casinos Charitable Community Trust	\$1,000	Towards operational costs
One Foundation	\$20,000	Essential repairs costs
<b>Grant total</b>	<b>\$228,500</b>	

**DONATIONS**  
received in the last financial year totalled  
**\$197,975**

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**ONE BEQUEST RECEIVED**

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**ANNUAL CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP FOR COMMUNICATIONS**  
**\$20,000**



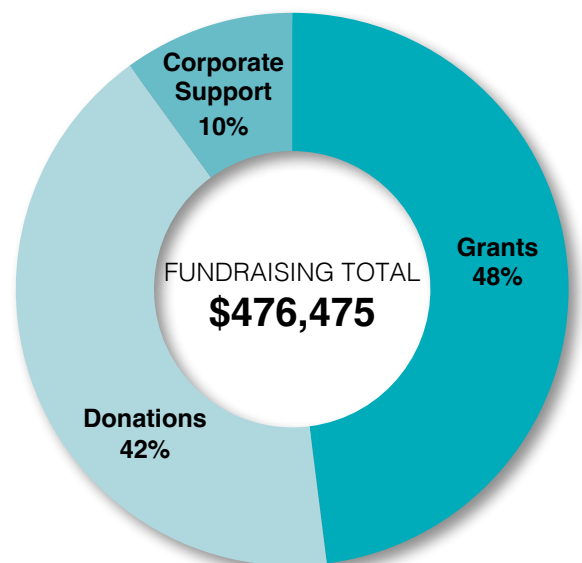
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**ANNUAL CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP FOR SCHOLARSHIP GRANT**  
**\$5,000**



### 2023-24 FUNDRAISING SUMMARY

Grants – various	\$228,500	48%
Donations	\$197,975	42%
One Bequest pledged	no amount specified	
Corporate Support –		
<i>Mutual Credit Finance – Communications</i>	\$20,000	4%
<i>Mutual Credit Finance – SCIP 20th Anniversary Book</i>	\$5,000	1%
<i>Forsyth Barr – Scholarship Grant</i>	\$5,000	1%
<i>Forsyth Barr – SCIP 20th Anniversary Book</i>	\$5,000	1%
<i>Duncan Cotterill – SCIP 20th Anniversary Book</i>	\$5,000	1%
<i>Cochlear Ltd – SCIP 20th Anniversary Book</i>	\$10,000	2%
<b>Fundraising total</b>	<b>\$476,475</b>	



# Clinical report

## Referrals

The number of referrals received remained steady over the past 12 months, with a total of 174 new adult referrals. We received 20 new referrals for children.

Our clinical team is dedicated to raising awareness of the benefits of cochlear implants, with the aim to increase referral numbers to reflect the community need. We continued to hold training events for community Audiologists and other hearing health professionals to address the barriers for referral. We also hosted exhibition booths at the Conference for General Practice 2024 and The New Zealand Audiological Society annual conference to update practitioners on our referral criteria and recipient outcomes.

## Age at implant

SCIP remains committed to providing services to recipients of all ages. In



Pip Wilding SCIP Clinical Manager

the past year we provided cochlear implants to 113 adults and children.

The age at implant for children ranged from 6 months to 14 years, with 42% of children implanted under the age of 12 months.

The age at implant for adults ranged from 32 to 93 years of age, with a median age of 69 years.

on. After controlling for other factors that can affect language development (such as additional disabilities or English as a second language), the results show that 83% of children who reached this milestone over the past 12 months had reached age-equivalent spoken language levels. The other factor that has been shown to be the most reliable predictor of spoken language outcomes for children is consistent sound processor use in the first two years following implantation.

## Bridging the gap

SCIP has a large geographical catchment area which encompasses the entire South Island and the lower North Island. With our main clinics located in Christchurch and Lower Hutt, recipients often must travel large distances to attend appointments, to the point where they spend more time travelling than in the clinic itself. To improve access to our services, SCIP offers the following:

## REGIONAL SERVICES

SCIP's outreach services include Audiology clinics, Habilitation visits, drop-in Rehabilitation Clinics and User Group meetings. This year we provided regional support clinics in Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Palmerston North, Gisborne, Marlborough, South Canterbury, Otago and Southland. We held our first Audiology clinic in Cromwell in April. These clinics have proven to be beneficial and popular, as they are regularly booked to capacity.

## TELEHEALTH

SCIP has offered Telehealth services for annual reviews to recipients based in Taranaki since 2021. We completed four Telehealth clinics in New Plymouth this year. Our Telehealth service is currently being run by Aretha Mulder, our Audiologist based at our Lower Hutt clinic, and is supported by a Hearing Therapist from Your Way – Kia Roha, based in New Plymouth.

## REMOTE CARE

Remote Care is the latest development offered by cochlear implant manufacturers to enhance accessibility and equality throughout the patient journey. It allows

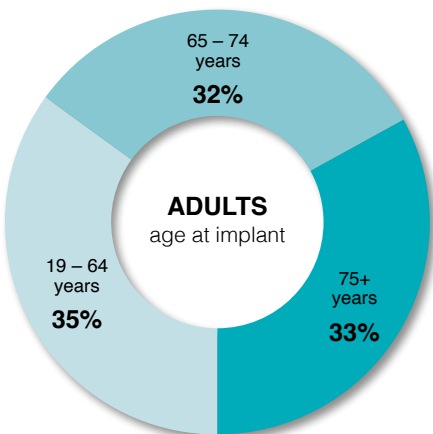
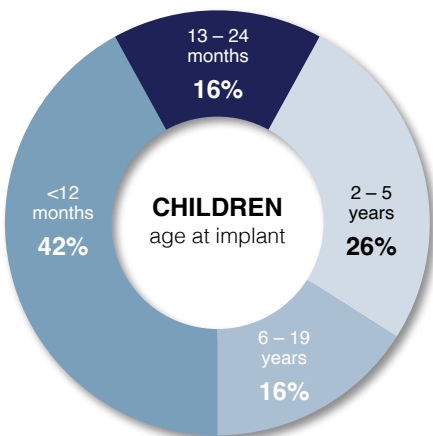
## Outcomes

When reviewing outcomes for users we consider the results of speech perception testing, as well as subjective measures such as self-reported changes in quality of life (QoL).

We typically review outcome measures for adults at 12 months post-implant and compare these to the baseline measures obtained at the pre-implant assessment. There are many factors that influence the outcomes of cochlear implants, including hours of sound processor use per day, the degree and duration of hearing loss prior to implantation and cochlear anatomy. The results for recipients who reached 12 months post implant within the past year are: 90% showed improvements on a word repetition task in quiet and 91% who completed QoL assessment reported improvement.

Spoken language assessments are used to evaluate outcomes for children with cochlear implants. These assessments are undertaken by our Habilitation team at regular intervals, with significant testing completed at five years post switch

## AGE AT IMPLANT 2023-24



## At a glance

### TOTAL NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS



### 2023-24 IMPLANTS



### WAITING LIST NUMBERS



### NEW REFERRALS



### REPLACEMENT PROCESSORS



### MONEY SPENT ON CHILDREN'S REPAIRS



**\$212,598**

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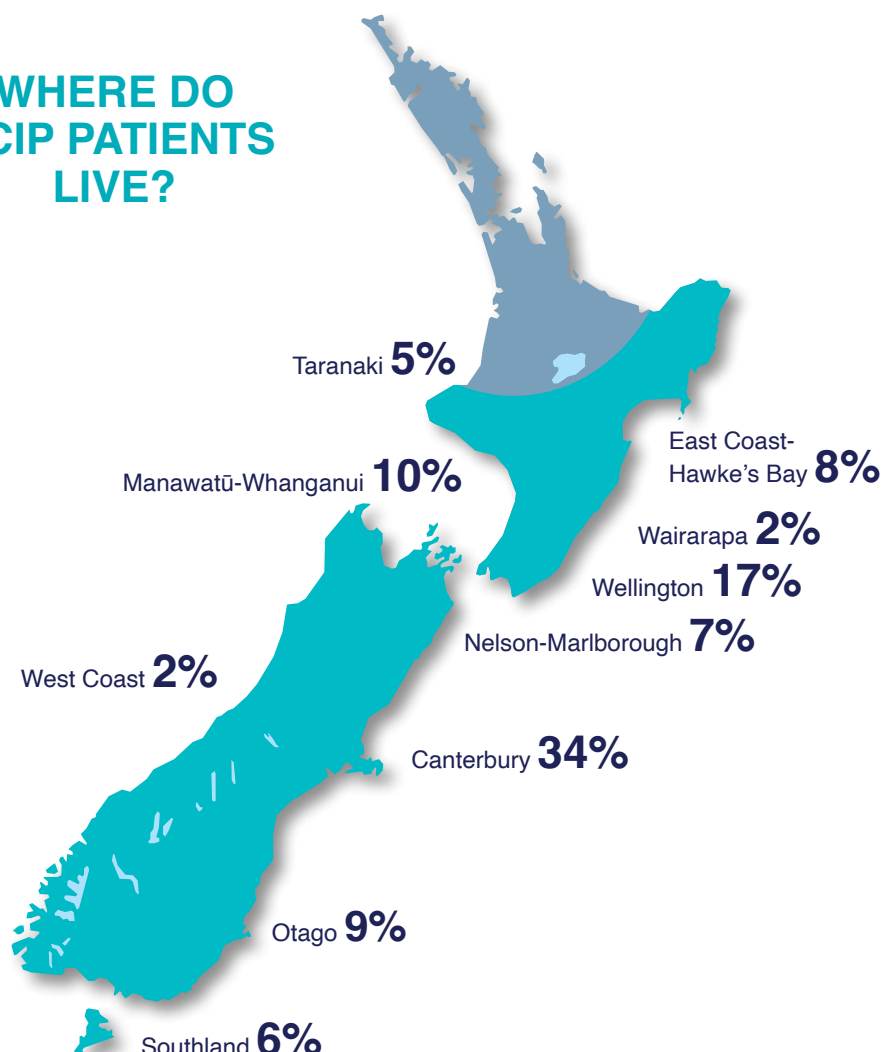
our clinicians to provide timely adjustments, troubleshooting and ongoing support. SCIP has focused on incorporating Cochlear Remote Care into regular practice, consisting of two tools:

**Remote Check** is a virtual assessment tool run via the Nucleus Smart App. Recipients complete a range of activities over 20 minutes. This gives clinicians the information required to triage the need for an appointment, monitor progress remotely, and to provide advice and feedback to recipients without them having to physically attend an appointment.

**Remote Assist** allows the recipient to have a pre-scheduled video appointment and basic MAPping changes via the Nucleus Smart App. It allows clinicians to address the issues that are commonly encountered by recipients.

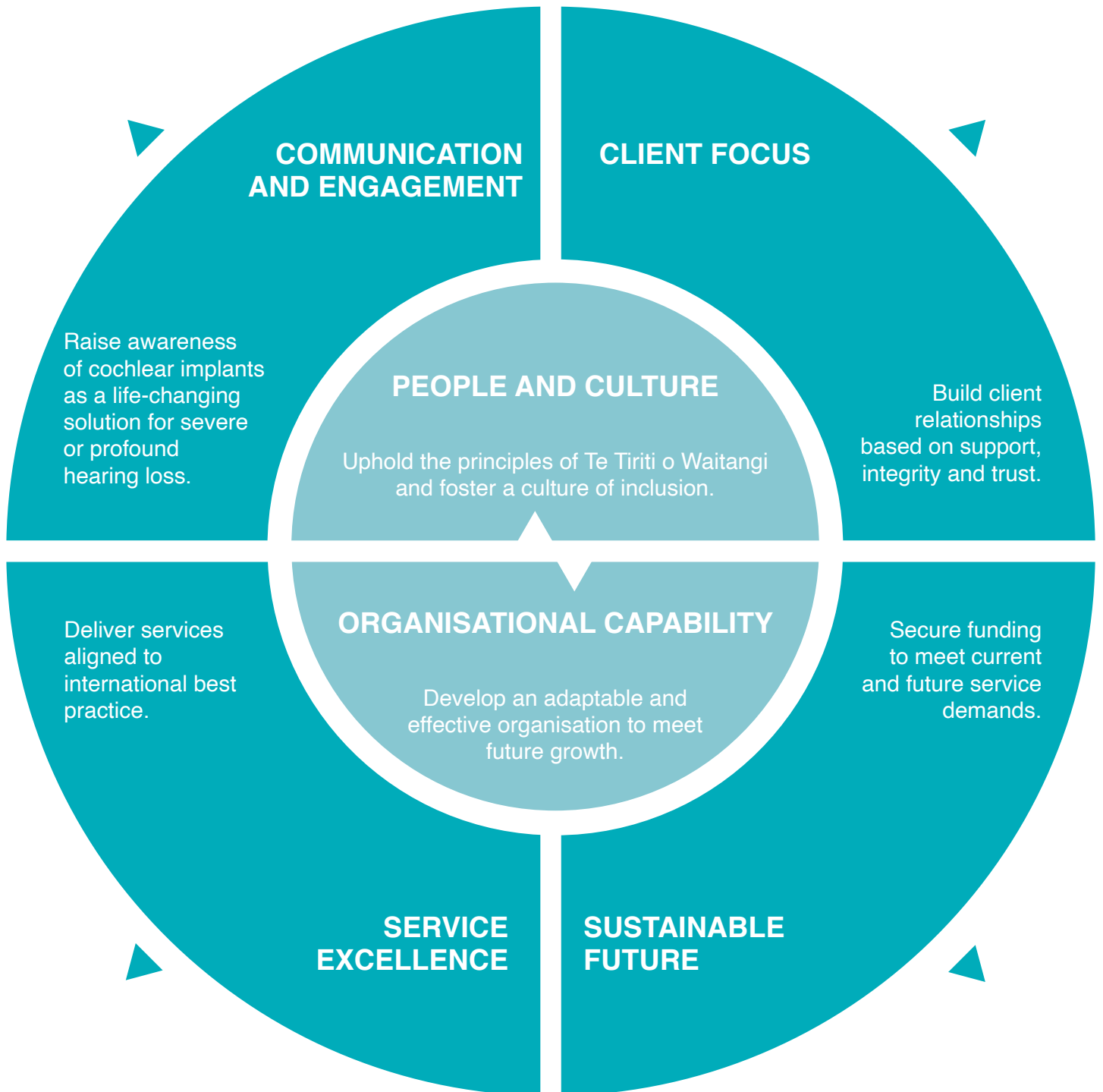
To date, SCIP has enrolled a total of 124 people into Cochlear Remote Care services, completed 186 regular Remote Checks and provided 31 Remote Assist sessions.

### WHERE DO SCIP PATIENTS LIVE?



## OUR VISION

New Sounds • New Experiences • New Life



## OUR MISSION

To provide cochlear implants to those in need so they can fully engage with their whānau and communities.

“My cochlear implant definitely opens up more options for work. I’m keen to get a job and I’ll keep trying until I do.”

*Zak Dawson-Ropata*



*Zak and Max Dawson-Ropata,  
both recipients of cochlear implants.*

# Hear our stories – Kia rongoi mai i a mātou kōrero

A book celebrating 20 years of SCIP through 20 patient stories was created for the anniversary and describes the remarkable impact this wonderful technology has had on the lives of New Zealanders.

These stories commemorate SCIP's work over two decades. Each of the 20 stories is associated with a year in the life of the programme.

The people featured live in communities around the regions SCIP serves, from across the Central North Island to Wellington and the entire South Island.

Thank you to the lovely people who shared their stories as a special way to thank SCIP and commemorate this occasion.

An electronic copy of the book is on our website – <https://scip.co.nz/hear-our-stories/>

Copies of the book can be purchased at SCIP for \$20. Contact [reception@scip.co.nz](mailto:reception@scip.co.nz)



## Our locations

### *Christchurch clinic*

Milford Chambers  
St George's Hospital  
249 Papanui Road  
Christchurch 8014




Freephone: 0800 500 405  
Phone: 03 355 3041  
Txt: 027 355 3041  
Email: [reception@scip.co.nz](mailto:reception@scip.co.nz)

### *Wellington clinic*

JAG Legal Building  
Level 1  
119 Queens Drive  
Lower Hutt 5010

Freephone: 0800 504 405  
Phone: 04 589 9853  
Txt: 027 589 9853  
Email: [scip.wellington@scip.co.nz](mailto:scip.wellington@scip.co.nz)

### *Connect with us online:*

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-  <https://www.facebook.com/SouthernCochlearImplantProgramme>
-  [@scip\\_ci](https://twitter.com/scip_ci)