



Media Release

Phonak teams up with Microsoft to improve access to hearing care over distance

Strategic technological partnership enables real-time remote hearing aid adjustments via Microsoft's Azure cloud-based platform

Stäfa, Switzerland, November 6, 2018 – Phonak is proud to announce it has teamed up with Microsoft to introduce Phonak Remote Support Service, a real-time remote fitting solution using Microsoft's Azure cloud-based technology. The new service increases access to hearing care over distance by enabling remote fine-tuning of Phonak Audéo Marvel hearing aids from virtually anywhere in the world. Hearing aid wearers can now communicate by audio and video with a hearing care professional via the MyPhonak app to detail their specific hearing challenge in real-time and real situations. Remote Support Service is the first product of an ongoing strategic technological partnership between Microsoft and Sonova, parent company of Phonak and the world's leading provider of hearing solutions

Improving hearing care accessibility

The popularity of telemedicine is growing, and recent study found a majority of respondents preferred remote appointments over face-to-face meetings with their health care providers.¹ While initial hearing aid fittings are still done in-office, remote follow-up care removes traditional appointment barriers like time and distance. This is especially important for consumers with mobility constraints or who rely on caregivers for transportation.



Phonak Remote Support also improves access by allowing hearing care professionals (HCPs) to deliver remote care to patients who may be travelling or who cannot make it into the office. Real-time audio/video conferencing contributes to a better understanding of client feedback and their specific hearing environments.

“Digital transformation is generating exciting possibilities throughout healthcare, including

hearing care. We understand that consumer expectations are evolving as mobile devices further integrate into our everyday lives and embrace the potential for both our customers and consumers,” said Martin Grieder, GVP Hearing Instruments Marketing of Sonova. “Our strategic partnership with Microsoft gives consumers access to convenient and optimized remote adjustments, while giving hearing care providers an edge by utilizing the latest innovations in distance support and eAudiology.”

The potential for better patient outcomes

In addition to extending care over distance, in certain instances, Remote Support Service may also result in a better quality of care than if the patient was physically in the office. Through the myPhonak app, the HCP is granted special access to the unique sound environment the patient may be struggling with. This “auditory snapshot” would be impossible to recreate in-office. By observing the specific hearing challenge in real situations, the HCP is better equipped to diagnose and make adjustments in real-time, potentially leading to better patient outcomes.

“The partnership with Sonova reflects exactly the kind of collaboration that is particularly close to our hearts: Our technology enables Swiss companies to be a global market leader with innovative solutions,” said Marianne Janik, CEO Microsoft Switzerland. “At the same time, the people at Sonova work very hard to ensure that millions of people around the world can participate in life. This is highly consistent with our vision to empower every individual on this planet to achieve more.”

The Remote Support features come packaged in the easy-to-use MyPhonak app, which is a free download and fully compatible with iOS and Android devices.

Phonak Remote Support and Audéo Marvel will be available end of November 2018 in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom and USA.

For more information, please visit www.phonak.com or www.phonakpro.com

¹ Angley GP, Schnittker JA, Tharpe AM. Remote hearing aid support: The next frontier. J Am Acad Audiol. 2017; 28(10): 893-900.

Media Relations Contacts:

Global

Florence Camenzind

Phone +41 58 928 33 25

Email florence.camenzind@sonova.com

U.S.

John Urbaniak

Phone +1 331 204 2799

Email john.urbaniak@sonova.com

Asia/Pacific

Heidi Zhang

Phone +86 13001271545

Mobile 13001271545

Email heidi.zhang@sonova.com

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About Phonak

Headquartered near Zurich, Switzerland, Phonak, a member of the Sonova Group, was created in 1947 out of a passion for taking on the most difficult hearing challenges. Seventy years later, this passion remains. As the industry’s leading innovator, we offer the broadest portfolio of life-changing hearing solutions. From pediatric to profound hearing loss, we remain committed to creating hearing solutions that change people’s lives to thrive socially and emotionally. We believe in creating a world where ‘Life is on’ for everyone.

At Phonak, we believe that hearing well is essential to living life to the fullest. For more than 70 years, we have remained true to our mission by developing pioneering hearing solutions that change people’s lives to thrive socially and emotionally. **Life is on.**

About Sonova

Sonova, headquartered in Stäfa, Switzerland, is the leading provider of innovative hearing care solutions. The Group operates through its core business brands Phonak, Unitron, Hansaton, Advanced Bionics and AudioNova. Sonova offers its customers one of the most comprehensive product portfolios in the industry – from hearing instruments to cochlear implants to wireless communication solutions.

Pursuing a unique vertically integrated business strategy, the Group operates through three core businesses – hearing instruments, retail and cochlear implants – along the entire value chain of the hearing care market. The Group's sales and distribution network, the widest in the industry, comprises over 50 own wholesale companies and more than 100 independent distributors. This is complemented by Sonova's retail business, which offers professional audiological services through a network of around 3,500 locations in 18 countries.

Founded in 1947, the Group has a workforce of over 14,000 dedicated employees and generated sales of CHF 2.65 billion in the financial year 2017/18 as well as a net profit of CHF 407 million. Across all businesses, and by supporting the Hear the World Foundation, Sonova pursues its vision of a world where everyone enjoys the delight of hearing and therefore lives a life without limitations.

For more information please visit www.sonova.com and www.hear-the-world.com.

About Microsoft

Microsoft is the leading platform and productivity company with the mission to empower every person and organization on the planet. Microsoft Switzerland GmbH is a subsidiary of Microsoft Corporation (Redmond USA). Since the establishment of the branch in 1989, the company has developed into a typical Swiss SME with 620 employees. Microsoft Switzerland is closely connected with the country's economic and political institutions and fosters active social dialogue on the topics of innovation, security and education. The partner network comprises 4,600 local business partners and 14,000 certified product and solution specialists nationwide. Microsoft Switzerland GmbH is headquartered in Wallisellen near Zurich. Further offices are located in Wollishofen, Bern and Geneva. www.microsoft.ch