

# NEWS RELEASE



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## *For Immediate Release*

### **NEW PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT HEARING LOSS PREVENTION AND TREATMENT TO APPEAR IN NEW YORK TAXI CABS**

- *Video public service announcement in taxi cabs to help New Yorkers and visitors learn more about hearing loss prevention and treatment*
- *Hearing loss affects more than 48 million Americans nationwide*

**NEW YORK (Nov. 21, 2013)** – Taxi cab passengers in New York will gain a better understanding of hearing loss prevention and treatment courtesy of [a public service announcement](#) (PSA) that began appearing this month.

The video PSA is a joint effort by the New York City Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, the Hearing Loss Association of America and *hi HealthInnovations*. The video will appear in more than 13,200 taxi cabs in New York until Dec. 31.

"Hearing loss is a growing problem in New York and nationwide, so this public service announcement provides people with important tips to help prevent hearing loss and obtain treatment if necessary," said Victor Calise, commissioner of the New York City's Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. "We hope people recognize the risks of untreated hearing loss and take appropriate steps to maintain their hearing health."

The video is available in 30- and 60-second versions and is narrated by Dr. Lisa Tseng, CEO of *hi HealthInnovations*, a national hearing aid company. It includes closed captioning and visual aids to help people, including those with hearing loss, understand the tips related to prevention and treatment. The tips include:

- limiting exposure to loud noises and using ear protection when attending sports events or music concerts;
- following the "60/60" rule, which means limiting the use of ear bud headphones to 60 minutes at a time and at 60 percent of the device's maximum volume;
- recognizing the common signs of hearing loss, such as turning up the volume on the TV or radio to a level that others find too loud; having trouble hearing people on the phone; or difficulty with following conversations in noisy environments;
- talking to a hearing health care provider, or your physician, and schedule a hearing test.

"People in large cities such as New York are constantly exposed to loud noises, which can contribute to hearing loss," said Dr. Tseng. "Hearing loss is associated with several serious health issues, including social isolation, dementia and increased risk of falls, so it is important for people to obtain treatment if they are experiencing the condition."

“Hearing loss is a major public health issue, ranking as the third most common physical condition after arthritis and heart disease,” said Anna Gilmore Hall, executive director of the Hearing Loss Association of America. “We believe these PSAs will help people recognize the signs of hearing loss and take immediate action.”

"Passenger monitors offer taxi riders a wealth of information, so helping people understand hearing loss prevention and treatment is a positive use of this forum," said David Yassky, chairman of the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission. "We are proud that taxi cabs in New York can play a part in helping improve the awareness of hearing loss prevention and treatment."

#### **About New York City Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities**

The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, established in 1973, serves as a liaison between city government, disabled individuals, and organizations dedicated to improving the lives of disabled residents of, and visitors to, New York City. For more information go to [www.nyc.gov/mopd](http://www.nyc.gov/mopd).

#### **About the Hearing Loss Association of America**

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), founded in 1979, opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, advocacy and support. HLAA produces the Walk4Hearing® in 22 cities across the country, publishes the bimonthly *Hearing Loss Magazine*, holds annual conventions (Convention 2014 is in Austin, Texas, June 26-29), advocates for the rights of people with hearing loss, conducts educational webinars, and has an extensive network of chapters and state organizations across the country. For more information, visit [www.hearingloss.org](http://www.hearingloss.org).

#### **About *hi HealthInnovations***

*hi HealthInnovations* offers custom-programmed, digital hearing aids at significant discounts to the 48 million U.S. consumers with hearing loss. These innovative devices are delivered through a national staff and network of audiologist and hearing-health professionals who provide hearing tests, fittings, seminars and counseling online, by phone and in person. *hi HealthInnovations* is an Optum business and part of UnitedHealth Group (NYSE:UNH), a diversified health and well-being company dedicated to helping people live healthier lives and making health care work better.

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