

Use this handout to help you explain your hearing loss, cochlear implants, and hearing needs.

Hearing loss

- Hearing loss is the inability to perceive or interpret sounds.
- **[If you use a hybrid cochlear implant]** My cochlear implant preserved some of my residual hearing. However, I still have trouble hearing in certain environments.
- **[If you do not use a hybrid cochlear implant]** While I may have had some hearing before getting my cochlear implant, once implanted I lost all residual hearing I previously had, and cannot hear without using my cochlear implant.

Cochlear implants

- A cochlear implant, or CI, is a device that provides a person who is deaf or has hearing loss with access to sound.
- A cochlear implant bypasses damaged or nonfunctioning parts of the ear to create a representation of sound for the user. This representation is not like the sound you hear or the sound a person with a hearing aid hears.
- Although cochlear implants give individuals access to sound, their brains must learn how to interpret what they hear as meaningful information. This is hard work and it takes a lot of time and practice.

My hearing needs

- Please make sure to get my attention before talking to me and face me, so I can read your lips.
- Before starting a new topic, give me some context and topic words, so I can better understand what the conversation is about.
- I struggle in specific hearing environments, such as **[places with lots of background noise]**, so I may need to **[change seats or leave a noisy place completely]**.
- I struggle hearing **[speech at a distance]**, so please do not **[try to speak with me from another room]**.
- I struggle with speakers who **[have accents]**, so I may need you to **[use written communication]**.
- I do not hear very well when **[I'm on the phone]**, so I may need you to **[call me on my captioned phone number only]**.

Tip: Customize the language inside the brackets with language specific to your unique hearing needs.