

# Audiology Department

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**Head of Audiology**  
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Implant MDT team,  
University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust

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Upon the announcement of intention to divest Oticon Medical by Demant and the subsequent agreement with the intention to sell Oticon Medical to Cochlear, the implant MDT team at University Hospitals Sussex NHS Foundation Trust would like to manifest their concerns on this agreement on behalf of our patients.

It is not our intention to judge the quality of Cochlear's products or their adequacy to the demographics in question; our intention is merely to point to the lack of competitors Cochlear would face, which would be detrimental to these patients. Research and development, and quality improvement of hearing implant technologies are driven by competition.

There are three major hearing implant companies certified to provide their technologies in the NHS: the above mentioned Oticon Medical and Cochlear, and Med-El. In the market of bone conduction hearing implants, Oticon Medical and Cochlear are the only manufacturers offering percutaneous solutions, as well as power and superpower solutions.

If this deal were to be finalised, Cochlear would have monopoly of the market of percutaneous bone conduction hearing implants and power and superpower hearing implants. Any patients with hearing losses worse than 45dB HL would be left without an option to choose from but Cochlear; any patients unable to have a transcutaneous hearing implant would, equally, be left without an option but Cochlear.

We would urge these concerns be considered before finalising this agreement and other options be analysed in order to maintain healthy competition in the market to the benefit of our patients.

Sincerely,  
The Implant MDT team

Professor Mahmood Bhutta

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