

# International Conference and Expo on **Audiology and Hearing Devices**

August 17-18, 2015 Birmingham, UK

## **Hearing status of underserved and unserved populations: Insights from humanitarian services in 5 different governing regions**

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Hearing services are often not available to children and adults in many countries, especially for those with disabilities or living in rural areas. A variety of populations in Brazil, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan were tested using a combination of otoscopy, otoacoustic emissions, and tympanometry during annual humanitarian service trips. Those who failed or could not be tested using the testing protocol were then followed up with pure tone audiometry on-site. Populations tested include: 1) Adults living in nursing homes, 2) children and adults with special needs, 3) children and adults with HIV+ or AIDS, 4) adults with recreational drug addiction, 5) children living in orphanages, and 6) children living in rural areas. The test results indicated most of these populations, except children living in an orphanage in Taiwan or adults with drug addiction, exhibited high incidences of excessive cerumen, middle-ear problems, and/or hearing loss. The rate of referral was as high as 50% in some populations. These results combined with the fact that many of the individual tested have never had their ears or hearing checked highlight the tremendous need for regular and quality hearing services for these underserved or unserved populations.

### **Biography**

King Chung is an Associate Professor of Audiology at Northern Illinois University. She has been leading students onto humanitarian research and service trips every summer. Past destinations include Taiwan, Hong Kong, Brazil, China, and Cambodia. A researcher at heart, she publishes information on the hearing systems in the visited countries/regions and the hearing status of individuals tested during the trips to raise the awareness of the great demand for hearing services in different countries. The long term goal is to facilitate the provision of frequent and high quality hearing services to underserved and unserved populations around the world.

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