

SeniorNet (Pakuranga) Inc

12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga Auckland 2010

Telephone 09 576 4500

Established in 1996 especially for Pakuranga, Howick and Botany residents

APRIL 2026



Our next Meeting,

THURSDAY

2nd April

at 10.00am

This issue:

- ◆ Next meeting
- ◆ April Help Days
- ◆ New members
- ◆ Bits and Bytes
- ◆ Dawn's Ravings
- ◆ Kate's Take
- ◆ Your Committee
- ◆ How to join a course

St Andrews Church Centre

Corner Ridge Rd and Vincent St

The main entrance is in Vincent Street with parking in the grounds and disabled parking near the basement entrance.

Visitors welcome

The early speaker will be Kate and following morning tea the main speaker will be Senior Constable Craig Hammonds who is the Community Constable for the Howick area.

APRIL HELP DAYS

Wednesday	8th	10am
Monday	13th	1pm
Thursday	23rd	10am
Tuesday	28th	10am



1 NEW MEMBER

John McCreath



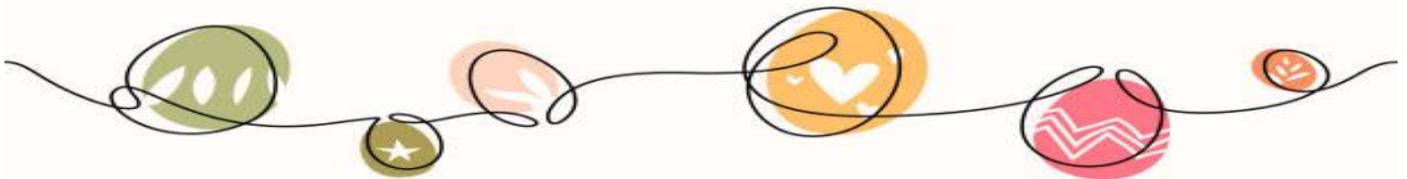
Is there such a thing as total privacy on a mobile phone. According to Angelia Harris, a Privacy Consultant, those days are over. No more do you have the high level of privacy of a landline phone. When you set up your phone or install a new app there is usually a set of agreement tick boxes like install only essential cookies or install just the settings needed to make the app work. It may also ask for permission to access your contacts, photos and other data that is quite unnecessary for the app to work.

It's all focused on building a profile of your habits and preferences, the sites you visit and the products you might view etc. These profiles are shared with 'data brokers' who make money by selling these profiles.

Web sites you visit on a phone will want to install cookies, that is tracking code to report to the app source in order to gain this data. You can select a ban all cookies and then the site won't work.

It's even suggested that apps that you have but are not currently using may be doing a spot of tracking in the background.

I've been a bit preoccupied this week and wrote this at the last moment. I will research further for the next newsletter and make some practical suggestions.



Ramblings

Dawn Howarth

Don't time fly when you're havin' fun. I haven't finished dealing with my Christmas over-indulging and now we are almost into April and Easter eggs. There is no hope for me ever to be slim, trim, taut and terrific.



My brother sent me a picture of a cow, a very pretty cow mind you, with the caption "The more you weigh, the harder you are to kidnap. Stay safe, eat cake." Sadly that is an apt description of me lately.

I'm very lucky to have friends who invite me to lunches and dinners, I love them (both the dinners and the friends) but with zero will power I will never lose weight and my doctor tells me I must. The only answer really, is stop going to the doctor. That's my current remedy but it doesn't bring peace, nor does the same solution for the dentist. I'm not sure whether the worrying about not going outweighs the pain of actually going. Woe is me.

However on a much happier note, I have been to see the new Elvis movie—*twice*. It was wonderful both times. I hope you get to see it too—absolutely no pain involved there.

Another happy note—last night neighbours invited me to their home for a crayfish dinner. Can't do better than that, can I. It was delicious and the company was great.

Take care of yourselves and eat lots of Easter eggs, they also make you smile. xxxx



PAM (Personal Admin Manager) is a New Zealand-based mobile application designed to alleviate the "mental load" of family life through artificial intelligence. It has achieved significant success in the NZ app store and recently secured \$570,000 in seed funding to fuel its expansion into the United States. Users can choose between a free version for individual use or a paid "Village" tier, which enables family sharing and integration with a shared calendar.

PAM (Personal Admin Manager) is an AI-powered personal organiser that helps turn everyday communications into:- calendar events, reminders, tasks, notes. It does this based on what you send to it—such as emails, photos, screenshots, or even voice memos. These can then be shared with family members, friends, or caregivers within your "Village".



The 14-day free trial provides full functionality, but PAM costs \$15 per month if you wish to include others once the trial ends. Several features are unavailable unless you subscribe to the full version. The paid plan allows up to six people to be included.

In the paid version, you set up your account by following the prompts, then create the PAM (Personal Admin Manager) contact in your address book. A WhatsApp account can then be linked to this contact. Using the share or forward function on emails, newsletters, events, and other content, you can send information to pam@mypam.co. The relevant details are extracted and added to your calendar, as well as to the calendars of others in your designated "Village".

Information can also be extracted from photographs of appointment cards or event posters.

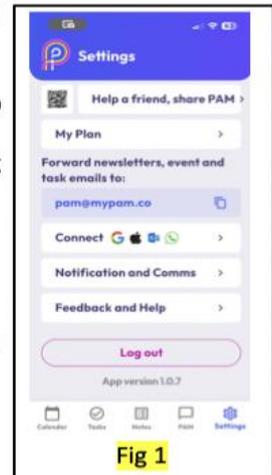


Fig 1

PAM gives you one place to view all your appointments, reminders, and tasks. You can share them with family/whānau or keep them just for yourself.

Instead of manually entering information into the app, you can send a screenshot of a letter or flyer, a photo of an appointment card, or even record a voice memo of something you need to remember. PAM reads the information and creates a task or event for you.

You can send information by email, direct message within the app, or by linking it with WhatsApp

On the Settings page (Fig. 1), click on the Connect panel to combine dates from your Outlook, Google, or Apple calendars. The events will appear in your PAM calendar but can only be edited within the original source app.

Clicking on the Notifications panel will take you to your phone's notification settings, where you can give permission for PAM to add reminders to your home screen.

PAM is particularly useful for Seniors as it:-

- **Reduces Cognitive Load** Instead of remembering appointment times, errands, birthdays, medication refills, or family events, PAM can capture those details for you automatically.
- **Voice-First Input** If you find typing is hard or slow, you can speak to PAM, and it will convert your voice into reminders or events. This is especially helpful if you find keyboards frustrating.
- **Shared with Family** Loved ones (friends, relatives, carers etc) can also view your schedule and help manage it — meaning fewer missed appointments and better coordination.
- **Creates a central place** for everything No more jumping between sticky notes, calendars, texts, and photos — everything can be brought together into one manageable timeline.

Undoubtedly, this is an excellent app if you have other people within your support network who help you manage appointments or share in your daily activities etc. Only one person needs to pay, but all members of your "Village" can add information.

However, for someone who is independently managing their life, many built-in apps on most devices can already extract dates from emails, photos, and letters, and provide reminders. Most also support voice input if you activate the microphone on your device. In these cases, such apps may serve just as well.

K Senner Mar 26



Kate's Take continued ...

There's more to hearing aids than hearing

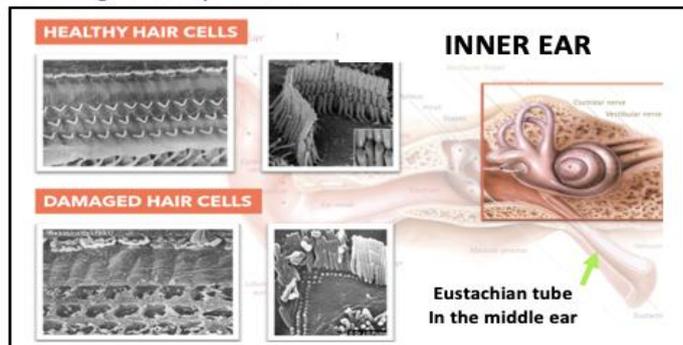


A big thank you to award winning audiologist, Amrutha Kishore, from Resonate, for her fascinating talk on hearing. Effective hearing is so important as it enables us to communicate and interact with others, to access the information we need to live happy and productive lives, to enjoy the sounds around us and to keep us safe by alerting us to danger. She explained the mechanics of the ear and the critical distinctions between conductive and sensorineural hearing loss. Conductive hearing loss involves the outer and middle ear. A perforated ear drum or glue ear are typical problems affecting these areas. These conditions can often be treated, so when conductive hearing loss is suspected, you may be referred to an ear, nose and throat specialist. A perforated eardrum often heals on its own, but if it doesn't, it can be patched. Many children develop glue ear requiring the insertion of

grommets to drain the mucus that builds up behind the eardrum when the Eustachian tube, which leads to the throat, becomes blocked. These are examples of conditions that can cause conductive hearing loss. The other type of hearing loss is sensorineural which is often difficult or impossible to rectify. Sensorineural hearing loss occurs when problems arise in the inner part of the ear, such as the cochlea.

Amrutha used pipe cleaners to demonstrate how the tiny hair cells inside the cochlea can become damaged, causing sensorineural hearing loss. After gently rubbing her hand over the pipe cleaners, they immediately returned to their upright position. However, when she rubbed them vigorously, they became bent and distorted. This is similar to what happens to the cochlear hair cells when they are exposed to very loud noise over a long period of time. Once damaged, these hair cells can no longer return to their normal position, they become less sensitive to sound and are unable to send information to the brain. Sensorineural hearing loss also occurs as we age and may be associated with diabetes or high blood pressure.

Amrutha pointed out the difference between hearing and listening. We don't wear hearing aids to listen, we wear hearing aids to hear. It is the brain that processes the sounds we hear, so a hearing problem can soon become a brain problem. As it becomes more difficult to hear what is being said, our brains have to work harder to comprehend. We begin to rely more on visual cues. Did they say "pause" or "cause"? The brain must use context to make sense of the word.



To understand what is being said, you need to engage the thinking part of your brain to do the hearing. The brain must focus its resources on hearing when it should be concentrating on memory and other important aspects of life.

Amrutha discussed four issues that are directly influenced by poor hearing: tinnitus, balance, sleep and memory loss.

- **Tinnitus** is a sound that you hear in your ears but is not actually present in your physical environment. It affects 30% of the population and is usually caused by hearing loss, infections, neck or head injury, medications or other medical condition. Often, it is the brain that is responsible for tinnitus when it is associated with hearing loss. The brain expects to hear sounds at particular frequencies, but as hearing declines, it compensates by creating the illusion of those missing frequencies. Audiologists often find that the frequency at which hearing loss occurs is close to the perceived frequency of the tinnitus.
- **Balance** can be affected by hearing loss. Adjacent to the cochlea is the vestibular system, which consists of three semi-circular canals and two otolith organs. It detects head movement and gravity to help you stay upright. Because these systems are so closely connected, issues that affect the fluid or pressure in the inner ear, such as an infection, can often cause both hearing loss and dizziness at the same time.



Kate's Take continued ...

- It has been found that people with mild hearing loss are three times more likely to have had a fall over the past year—another good reason to wear hearing aids.

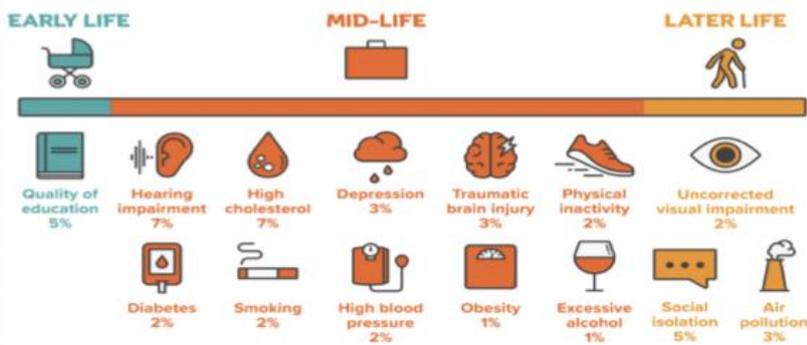
NB: Have a look at the Nymbi app, which is designed to improve balance and mobility in older adults.

- Sleep** can also be negatively affected by hearing loss. Ironically, poor hearing can impact sleep, while poor sleep can, in turn, affect hearing. Hearing loss is often associated with increased stress and anxiety, greater cognitive load, and tinnitus—all of which can interfere with sleep quality. During sleep, oxygen supply to the brain increases, allowing cellular repair to take place, rejuvenating cells and boosting the immune system.
- Memory** is also negatively affected by poor hearing. Struggling to understand conversations increases cognitive load and the risk of misunderstandings. Inaccurate information may be stored in the brain, leading to confusion and symptoms that can resemble dementia.



Nymbi is an app-based digital health program that utilizes science-backed dual-tasking and cognitive behaviour training via education topics to improve balance and mobility.

FACTORS LINKED TO DEMENTIA RISK



Note how hearing impairment during adulthood contributes 7% to dementia risk

FACTORS LINKED TO DEMENTIA RISK

The 2024 Lancet Commission report on dementia prevention, intervention, and care identified 14 potentially **MODIFIABLE** risk factors for dementia.

This means we can potentially prevent (or delay) about 45% cases of dementia by addressing these health and lifestyle factors.

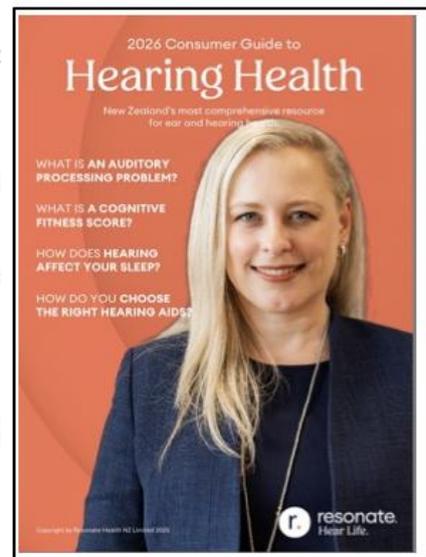
Research has found that managing hearing loss with hearing aids can help prevent cognitive decline. It may even improve cognitive function in older adults who are at high risk of decline. Intervention in the form of hearing aids and related support resulted in a 48% reduction in the rate of cognitive decline over three years.

Amrutha is employed by Resonate, a New Zealand owned company with 31 audiology clinics around the country. On 19 March, Resonate Health at Botany and Howick won Excellence in Healthcare and Wellbeing Award, along with Best New Business, at the East Auckland Business Awards. Amrutha's excellent talk gave us valuable insight into the importance of effective hearing for our overall wellbeing. Visit the company's website at resonatehealth.co.nz

and download the booklet **2026 Consumer Guide to Hearing Health** (see right). This booklet is a mine of information, covering everything from ear physiology and ear health to hearing aid technology and funding options through ACC or subsidies. It also includes in-depth articles on the topics Amrutha discussed in her talk.

The booklet explains the ReSound SmartFit 3D app and Remote Care—a feature that allows an audiologist to adjust your hearing aids remotely via the internet, without the need to visit a clinic.

Unlike many other audiology providers, Resonate does not require large upfront payments. Instead, you pay \$90 per month, with a free upgrade every three years.



K Senner March 26





COMMITTEE

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Happy Easter



COURSE TIMETABLES, HELP DAYS AND COURSE BOOKING INFORMATION

To view all SeniorNet courses and timetable, click here

<http://www.senpak.nz/courses/>

APRIL HELP DAYS

Wednesday	8th	10am
Monday	13th	1pm
Thursday	23rd	10am
Tuesday	28th	10am

NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY



Course Booking Information

- * You need to be a member of SeniorNet to take part in our classes.
- * If you need assistance in deciding on a course, please contact the Tutor who will answer any questions and also take your booking.
- * We require you to pay a course fee to cover the cost of notes and other expenses. Please bring the correct cash to the first session.
- * Our Courses are all held at our Learning Centre at
12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga.
- * Please park on the road or in the Gym carpark across the road as no parking is permitted on site. **If you use the gym parking (not available Monday or Thursday mornings) it is important that you park on the left, next to the gym. You can printout the parking advice from our website (under the Courses tab) or write your own and leave on the dashboard of your car.**

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