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### **Hearing Aid Innovation Leader Signia Introduces World's First 'Face Mask Mode' for Hearing Devices**

Beyond the threat to public health, the COVID-19 pandemic has challenged nearly all aspects of our lives, including one of the most basic – how we communicate.

That's why hearing aid innovation leader Signia is pleased to debut the world's first setting for a hearing device which specifically improves audibility for those communicating with someone wearing a face covering. Built within the company's proprietary app, Signia's **Face Mask Mode** is the most complete solution on the market, requiring no in-person adjustments with a hearing care professional.

#### **An Evolutionary Leap Forward in Hearing Technology**

"Today, many hearing aids have an 'automatic' setting that automatically adjusts based on noise, speech, and a number of other factors," explains Tish Ramirez, Au.D of Signia. "For most users, this addresses the majority of the environments they encounter. In some cases, however, a patient may not be able to hear in a particular environment, even after the device makes an automatic adjustment. In these cases, a hearing care professional will create a second or even a third program that the patient has to 'manually' engage, either by pushing a button on their hearing aid or selecting a different program in their app. Signia's Face Mask Mode does not require an additional program, and it is easily accessible in the Signia app resulting in the most effective solution."

#### **Designed to Address the Specific Challenges Posed By Face Coverings**

Signia's Face Mask Mode not only adjusts the frequencies that are important for hearing speech, but also applies adjustments to Signia's Dynamic SoundScape processing, which delivers natural sound and best speech understanding in every situation, even when moving.

"With a tap of a button within the Signia app, users can better understand speech through face masks," says Dr. Ramirez. "It additionally allows hearing care professionals to offer a one-of-a-kind feature to their patients that will help result in improved speech understanding through face masks, all through this time-saving and convenient solution."

#### **No More Lip Reading**

While face masks are good for safeguarding health, they can be bad for hearing – whether or not you have hearing loss. In fact, **social distancing and the use of face masks make it difficult to hear** other speakers – by about 30%, according to studies by Signia of people with normal hearing.

But if you're one of **the 48 million Americans with hearing loss, understanding people when they're wearing masks can be nearly impossible.**<sup>1</sup> And it's not just about muffled voices – masks

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<sup>1</sup> Alexander Goldin, PhD, Barbara E. Weinstein, PhD. <https://www.hearingreview.com/hearing-loss/health-wellness/how-do-medical-masks-degrade-speech-reception>

obscure the ability to read lips and facial cues, while social distancing means **you can't get closer to hear better.**

### **Tips on Communicating Better in a Masked World**

Eric Branda, PhD. AuD, Director of Research Audiology for Signia, recently published a study on the effects of facemasks on those with hearing loss.<sup>2</sup> Here, he shares some strategies that can help communication at this time, if you live or work with someone with hearing loss. These include:

- Facing the person you're talking to
- Using approved clear face shields to allow the other person to read lips and facial cues
- Rephrasing speech rather than repeating the same words or shouting
- Writing down information to minimize communication errors

### **Technology for the Hear and Now**

Signia has introduced another key technology to address the very specific challenges posed by the current COVID-19 crisis, making it the right device at the right time.

**Remote Care** is a breakthrough remote hearing care program enabling hearing care professionals to fit and fine-tune hearing aids remotely. Remote Care combines **Signia Telecare** – an industry-leading tele-audiology solution – and a **new AI-based virtual assistant** for complete remote service and support, along with enhanced ordering and delivery options.

Learn more at [www.signiausa.com](http://www.signiausa.com).

### **About Signia**

Signia stands for iconic innovation. Since its launch in 2016, Signia has already brought to the market several world's first solutions. In addition to highly innovative hearing aids, Signia also delivers tools and apps to increase customer interaction and engagement on all levels of hearing aid management. Signia thus allows hearing care professionals and patients to get the most out of their hearing aids.

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.signia-library.com/scientific\\_marketing/improving-communication-with-face-masks/](https://www.signia-library.com/scientific_marketing/improving-communication-with-face-masks/)