

Lidia Smolarek- Best



Lidia Best. Vice President / EFHOH

Lidia Best is the Chair of the National Association of Deafened People (NADP) in UK and a Vice President of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH). She is responsible for running the EFHOH Policy Office, policy development and managing EFHOH strategy. Her work includes consultations, organizing training workshops on accessibility, and publications. She also does speaking engagements related to accessibility and quality of hearing care for hard of hearing people. Her main areas of focus in her work are accessibility, including access to ICTs and quality of hearing care as she sees this as a gateway to improved wellbeing for hard of hearing people. Recently she joined G3ict (the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs) as an accessibility consultant at the UN agency of the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) where she contributes her first-hand knowledge to include persons with disabilities in creating mainstream international standards to multimedia that make them accessible to persons with disabilities.

The importance of standards and consulting with hard of hearing people as experts by experience.

Hard of hearing people face so many different choices of listening experience thanks to new technological development, but are those developments breaking the barriers or are they creating new ones? Recent concerns related to wireless interference issues are a very good example to highlight.

Hearing Loops are important to hard of hearing people, their universal appeal is important to us. However, there are new developments such as FM and especially Bluetooth applications have opened other venues to explore. Bluetooth and radio aids do not have the international standard like hearing loops have. This causes difficulties and for past few years, advocates struggled to ensure that governments take a note that some of their action may have detrimental effect on hard of hearing people ability to connect without any interference.