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**NJAHP Commemorates Better Hearing Month by Encouraging New Jerseyans
to Get Their Hearing Checked by a Hearing Health Professional**

***Hearing Screening and Care by Licensed Hearing Health Professionals Can
Greatly Improve Quality of Life for Those Suffering from Hearing Loss***

(Trenton, NJ)—With over 36 million American adults reporting some kind of hearing problem and one in five teenagers now suffering from hearing loss, NJAHP is commemorating May as “Better Hearing Month” by reminding New Jerseyans about the importance of hearing screening and care by licensed hearing health professionals. Hearing health professionals are Audiologists (AuD) and Hearing Instrument Specialists (HIS) who are clinically trained to evaluate hearing loss and test and fit hearing aids.

According to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), hearing loss is the third most common health problem in the US affecting people of all ages, but only one in five people who could benefit from a hearing aid actually wears one. Studies show that this neglect can accelerate hearing loss and lead to a number of other debilitating physical and emotional conditions including impaired memory and ability to learn new tasks, reduced alertness, increased risk of personal safety, irritability, negativism, anger, fatigue, tension, stress, depression, and diminished psychological and overall health.

The good news is that most hearing losses can be effectively treated with hearing aids. In fact, three out of four hearing aid users report improvements in their quality of life due to wearing hearing aids. But this success rate is not the result of amplification technology alone. Satisfaction with a hearing aid device relies on the treatment and care of hearing health specialists who work with individuals to properly fit and apply the best technology to meet their hearing needs.

“Hearing loss is a personal condition that deserves personalized attention and care from professionals who have the training and experience to assure that results meet patient expectation,” said Daniel Berke, Hearing Instrument Specialist and President of NJAHHP. “Far too many people needlessly suffer waiting to seek help for their hearing loss. May is an optimal time for people to get their hearing screened by a hearing health professional, so they can finally get the right treatment and best possible outcome,” he concluded.

The expertise and guidance that hearing health professionals provide during the hearing evaluation process is essential to getting more patients on the right road toward improving their quality of life. NJAHHP warns, however, about the dangerous practice of quick-fix treatment programs that some companies are now offering that allow patients to go online and test their hearing from their personal computers and then receive hearing aids through the mail. With no professional guidance, assessment or examination by hearing aid specialists, patients who seek treatment online run the risk of purchasing ineffective or ill-fitting devices that can further damage their hearing. Equally concerning is these patients are not monitored for serious hearing problems or undergo important follow-up care that is central to good hearing health.

“Audiologists and hearing instrument specialists are trained and licensed to know what to look for to ensure patient safety and appropriate care in hearing health,” said David Weesner, Au.D., NJAHHP Board Member. “Their personalized attention and clinical knowledge cannot be replaced by an automated and uncalibrated online hearing test that will no doubt yield unreliable results. Meaningful treatment starts with an evaluation by a hearing health professional. May is the perfect time to remind people to pick up the phone and make that important appointment.”

About New Jersey Association of Hearing Health Professionals (NJAHHP)

The New Jersey Association of Hearing Health Professionals is the oldest organization representing hearing care specialists in New Jersey. Organized in 1960, NJAHHP exemplifies honesty, fair practice and professionalism in fitting hearing instruments. We provide for the educational and advisory needs of our professionals to better serve the hearing impaired and their families. For more information, visit www.njahhp.com. To find a hearing health specialist in your area, visit <http://www.njahhp.com/membersearch.aspx>.

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