



MEDIA RELEASE

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Registrations open for the 5th National Deafness Sector Summit

The Deafness Forum of Australia is pleased to announce that registrations are now open for the 2008 National Deafness Sector Summit which will be hosted in Canberra 24-25 May 2008. These biennial summits are a fantastic opportunity for disability professionals, carers and the Deaf and hearing impaired community to learn about new developments in the sector, a chance to discuss issues, network and catch up with old friends.

The focus for the summit in 2008 is **It's Your Life – A whole of life approach to deafness**. Over the two days there will be presentations and opportunities for discussion about the critical early years, starting school, adolescence, working years and winding down - providing a valuable insight into current discussions, research and technology in the area. With **one in six Australians** affected by a hearing impairment this is a growing and important field in the Australian community.

The 5th National Deafness Sector Summit also features the Libby Harricks Memorial Oration, presented on the Saturday by guest orator Professor Bob Cowan, Chief Executive Officer of the HEARing Cooperative Research Centre. In 2004, Bob was selected as "Australian Professional of the Year 2004" by Professions Australia. An internationally recognised expert in the field of cochlear implants and audiology, he has over 100 peer-reviewed publications, and holds a number of technology patents.

Author of *Mao's Last Dancer*, Li Cunxin, will speak about his life and his highly successful book which is being made into a movie next year. Li's daughter Sophie was born deaf. Professor Jennie Brand-Miller, the guru of the glycaemic index and cochlear implantee, will also feature as speaker, along with Carmel Batson, President of CODA International.

A range of organisations will hold displays as part of the Summit.

The previous summit held in Perth in 2006 was very successful, and we look forward to more success in 2008. Further information is available through the Deafness Forum Website, www.deafnessforum.org.au, or via email info@deafnessforum.org.au.

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**For further details or interviews contact Nicole Lawder CEO Deafness Forum of
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NOTES FOR EDITORS

About the Deafness Forum:

Deafness Forum is a peak national systemic advocacy body for deafness in Australia. Established in early 1993 at the instigation of the Federal government, the Deafness Forum now represents all interests and viewpoints of the Deaf and hearing impaired communities of Australia (including those people who have a chronic disorder of the ear and those who are DeafBlind).

Mission Statement:

The Deafness Forum exists to improve the quality of life for Australians who are Deaf, have a hearing impairment or have a chronic disorder of the ear by:

- advocating for government policy change and development
- making input into policy and legislation
- generating public awareness
- providing a forum for information sharing and
- creating better understanding between all areas of deafness.

For further information on Deafness Forum

<http://www.deafnessforum.org.au>