



PRESS RELEASE

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Arlene Phillips urges Brits to stop listening in vain

RENOWNED choreographer and former Strictly Come Dancing judge, Arlene Phillips is urging Brits to stop letting their vanity hold them back when it comes to their hearing.

The 75-year-old dancer is working with Specsavers to encourage people to have regular hearing checks to coincide with the launch of the Signia Styletto – a stylish and discreet new hearing device available at Specsavers stores.

Arlene says: 'Hearing loss will inevitably affect all of us as we get older – it's a natural part of the ageing process. And when I discovered I'd lost the ability to hear every sound clearly I wanted to do something about it.'

'Luckily I only have mild hearing loss at the moment. I'm really busy choreographing dancers and directing productions on stage but what if one day I couldn't hear the music or my working environment became too noisy?'

Specsavers research shows that 52% of UK adults worry that they are losing their hearing – with a third saying they would rather miss out on conversations than admit they can't hear and almost half saying they would avoid social gatherings altogether because of their hearing loss.

Reasons why people would feel self-conscious about wearing a hearing aid include the way it looks (43%) and the impact a hearing aid would have on their appearance

(24%). But almost all of those asked (91%) said that if hearing aids were more stylish and discreet, they would wear one if they needed to.

Arlene says: 'I must admit that part of me was a bit anxious about wearing a hearing aid too. What if it looked awful or flew out of my ear while I was dancing. But I needn't have worried.'

'Technology has come on so much and hearing aids are no longer the clunky and bulky devices that commonly spring to mind. The Signia Styletto is so small and discreet – and when I saw it for the first time I couldn't believe how stylish and sophisticated it was. Just like with the evolution of glasses, there's no reason why you have to compromise on your style when it comes to needing a hearing aid. There's nothing to be ashamed of.'

The Signia Styletto high-tech hearing system comes with a portable charging station. It is the first of its kind to have a sleek, slim-line look and is available in three colour combinations for the style-conscious – dark granite and silver, cosmic blue and rose gold and snow white and rose gold.

Gordon Harrison, Specsavers chief audiologist, says: 'Our research shows that there is still a stigma attached to hearing loss and hearing aids. But nine out of 10 of those asked said that if hearing aids were more stylish and discreet they would wear them if they need to. The new Signia Styletto is exactly that and we hope this new aid will help open up the conversation surrounding hearing loss and ensure no one misses a moment.'

Specsavers recommends that those over the age of 55 should have their hearing checked every two years, and if you are concerned about your hearing make an appointment to see your Specsavers audiologist. To find out where your nearest Specsavers store is and to book a hearing check visit www.specsavers.co.uk/hearing

The research of 2,002 UK adults was conducted by Atomik Research on behalf of Specsavers to coincide with the launch of the Signia Styletto. The Survey also found:

- 25-34-year-olds are the most concerned about losing their hearing (72%)
- 52% of UK adults worry that they are losing their hearing
- 34% of UK adults would rather miss out on conversation than admit they can't hear – with this applying to more men than women (38% compared to 31%)
- One fifth of people have avoided getting their hearing checked because they don't want to wear a hearing aid
- 45% of UK adults would avoid going out to social gatherings due to their hearing loss, with reasons including they wouldn't want to have to keep asking people to repeat themselves (24%), being afraid of people noticing their hearing aid (19%) and finding loud music disorientating (17%)
- 43% would feel self-conscious wearing a hearing aid because of the way it looks
- Overall, 57% would feel self-conscious wearing a hearing aid, for reasons including feeling old (33%) and the impact on appearance (24%)

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Issued by Beattie Communications on behalf of Specsavers

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Specsavers notes to editors

- Specsavers is a partnership of almost 2,000 locally-run businesses throughout the world -all committed to delivering high quality, affordable optical and hearing care in the communities they serve.
- Each store is part-owned and managed by its own joint venture partners who are supported by key specialists in support offices
- More than 36 million customers used Specsavers in 2017 and the partnership had a turnover of more than £2.6bn.

- More than one in three people who wear glasses in the UK buy them from Specsavers.
- Specsavers is a champion of the National Health Service – of its 19.2m customers in the UK, 60% are from the NHS and the company is the largest provider of free NHS digital hearing aids
- Specsavers supports several UK charities and is in partnership with RNIB for a public awareness campaign to transform the nation's eye health.