MARK: Hi everyone and welcome to our webinar today, on smartphone features for people with hearing loss, we have about 300 people registered today so I am going to give it a couple of minutes as I see you all joining us. For those already on the webinar now my name is Mark Gaddes and I am the Digital Marketing Manager with AbilityNet and I am the host of this webinar. I am just going to give it a minute so everyone that's registered has joined. Great, so I can see the figure for attendees is just going up. So I can see someone is using the chat, so hi Andrew. So we'll just give it a minute and we can start this webinar. Great. So hi everyone my name is Mark Gaddes I am the Digital Marketing Manager with AbilityNet and I am the host of this webinar which is on smartphone features for people with hearing loss. Also with me today is Alex Barker who is the Advice and Information Officer with AbilityNet and we're also really pleased to have from Action on Hearing Loss Kevin Taylor who is the Product Technologist. Today's webinar is about smartphone features for people with hearing loss and we're going to tell you about some of the support available from AbilityNet and Action on Hearing Loss and we're going through settings so that will allow people with hearing loss to achieve their goals and at the end of this webinar we have a question and answer session. For those new to the Zoom software there are a few features available for you to interact with us, so there is a chat function if you want to have conversation, if you want to ask us a question, if you are having technical difficulties please feel free to use the chat function and as host I will make sure I am responding to those messages as much as possible, we also have a Q&A function. So on the panel for those attending this is a Q&A function, so if you have any questions you want to ask please do use that function and there is a Q&A session at the end. So I am going to test the function of the webinar. The first thing I am going to do is launch a poll. We're just going to do a quick poll so we want to find out who is attending the webinar and if people are aware of the features on their smartphone and depending on what device you are on you may not be able to see this but if you can, who are you attending this webinar on behalf of? Maybe it's a friend or a relative or someone you support through paid work, someone you support through voluntary work or an organisation, so if you respond to that question. If you can see the question on the screen and then also are you aware of the accessibilities features on the smartphone? So I can see we have got 76% of people voted so that's really positive. 77 come through now. So I am going to end the poll now and I am just going to share some of the results with you. So, who are you attending the webinar on behalf of, 32% for themselves. So we really hope you will gain really practical benefit from the webinar. We have some attending for a relative. That's 3% of people. 1% is support through paid work and 6% through volunteer work and the majority is people attending on behalf of their organisation. So that's really interesting to hear so if you comment in the chat box to get a sense of where you are from and that are you aware of the features in the smartphone, 24% said yes, 53% no and there is a big portion where you are getting some real useful knowledge. So I am going to ask Alex to move to the next slide and this is where I am going to hand over to Kevin Taylor.

KEVIN: Here's some statistics related to hearing loss in the UK. There are 11 million people with hearing loss in the UK and that's one in six. By 2035 it's estimated one in five of us will have hearing loss. And estimated 900,000 people in the UK have severe or profound hearing loss and there are 50,000 children with hearing loss, around half of which are born with hearing loss while the other half lose their hearing during childhood. There is 24,000 people across the UK who use sign language as the main language but there could be more than that, that we don't know about. Next slide.

MARK: That's great. Ability is pan-disability which means we work with people of all disabilities and for myself particularly that was quite interesting to see, the prevalence of people with hearing loss. So thanks for sharing those statistics. Alex over to you.

ALEX: Thanks Mark, so 11 million people, so that's about the population of London that's got hearing loss. So that's interesting and putting it into interesting context. I'm Alex and I am the Advice and Information Officer with AbilityNet and I have worked here for over 15 years and these are some of the things that AbilityNet can provide. So we can offer a range of different fact sheets including one on hearing loss that's been written in conjunction with Action on Hearing Loss. We have a range of webinars. We have got a really good section on the website called 'my computer, my way' which talks customising the computer and also customising the iPhone and Android tablet. We have some useful links and we have a lot of digital accessibility resources. So we're very keen on trying to make websites as accessible for everyone and we also do workplace adjustments. One of the things that isn't listed on that slide is that we also have a network of over 280 IT help volunteers, so if you ever get into a situation where your technology isn't working in the way that you want it to, you can always drop us an email or give us a call or get someone to contact us on your behalf and we can arrange for a volunteer to come out within five to ten working days and we have volunteers in most parts of the UK.

MARK: Over to the Kevin.

KEVIN: We have a range of product and technology leaflets and fact sheets including mobiles and smartphones when you have hearing loss and communicating on line, and assistive technology on making the most of it that you can download from our website. We cover various technology issues in our membership magazine and we offer a range of products including amplified phones from our online shop. We also have a number of resource centres around the country and people can book an appointment and come in and try the products and equipment and we also provide a hearing loop installation service and we provide advice on the use of equipment for access to work. We provide communication support such as sign language interpreters and speech to text reporters and you can find out more of this from the website on Action on Hearing Loss.

MARK: So now we're heading into the smartphone features section. So Alex is going to give you more information about the accessibility settings readily available on smartphone settings.

ALEX: A lot of people don't know there is a wealth of technology built into smartphones now. For example, the two screen shots on this page are both from an iPhone that we had in the office and it's under the accessibility section on the settings tab and it talks about hearing aids, LED alerts and mono audio and noise cancellation and all of these might be useful for people that have hearing loss. So for example, let's take the LED just for alerts. Sometimes the iPhone will perform a function and it will flash, the screen will flash to let you know what is going on. But I will start that again, sometimes the iPhone will beep or make a noise to tell you what is going on. If you can't hear that noise you are at a disadvantage but what you can do is you can turn on the LED flash for alerts. So say you get an email in and normally you get a little noise, when you get an email in it will flash the screen and tell you what is actually happening. So that's a really, really useful piece of technology. So my wife has an iPhone and it's always making lots of notification noises. If she was hearing impaired, she wouldn't know whether someone was sending a message by WhatsApp or email. So having the LED light on the screen and on the phone flashing is going to make things a lot easier. Now, for a lot of people that have got hearing loss, they find it really difficult to cope with sounds that go into stereo, so what you can do is you can configure your phone just to provide mono audio and for some people it enables them to hear it more. So everyone knows if you are using the phone in a certain environment it can be really, really noisy and really difficult to hear. What you can do is you can switch the phone noise cancellation on and it works on the basis, or the same idea that you have noise cancelling headsets, it will electronically filter out some of the background noise, so you are able to hear people more effectively and also what you can do is you can adjust the balance on your iPhone. So for example, if you got more hearing in your left-hand side or your right-hand side, you can actually move the slider to one side or the other to improve the sound quality. Just moving on to the next slide. Now, I just wanted to tell you a bit more about the inbuilt accessibility. The two screens shots to the left-hand side are actually from an Android phone. So I have got a Samsung Galaxy A6 and I was really interested to see what accessibility features the Android had and of course, yeah, you have the flash notifications, so it all flashes on the screen when an email comes in. You can also adjust or switch on mono audio and it's the same as an iPhone. Going back to the iPhone here, right at the bottom, the screen shot number three you have subtitles and captioning and Apple go out of their way to say that if you are watching particular pieces of video material, you can get them subtitled and captioned. So that's going to be really, really useful for an awful lot of people. The screen shot on the far right. I think it's quite nice, it's only available on the really new Samsung Galaxy S9. So if you have a new baby you can turn the device on and if you are in another room the device will actually listen and notify you if your baby is starting to cry and I just think that's a really nice example of how technology can work and I don't have a baby. So I can't vouch for its usefulness but I think it's a really nice idea and it's going to help you as a new parent.

MARK: Absolutely you can, I am sure there is a personal story why the baby monitor was created. We hope everyone on the phone while you are on the webinar just grab the smartphone and see what accessibilities setting you have on the phone. I think if we go to the next slide we're going to hand over to Kevin. Alex, do you want to talk about Live Transcribe first?

ALEX: We were going to do a demonstration of Live Transcribe but we couldn't get the video to work. I would suggest that when you got a minute, go on to You Tube and google Live Transcribe. It's a guy called Dimitrie who is a software engineer who helped design this piece of software for Google and it will listen to what someone says and it will print it out on the screen. So an example would be if you go into your local coffee shop and you ask for a cup of black coffee and piece of cake and they say to you, do you want milk and sugar in it? If you hold the phone up to them you will be able to see what the assistant at the coffee shop is actually saying to you, so for example, if you got, mild or moderate hearing loss or total hearing loss that would be really useful because you can actually go and have a conversation with someone and you can understand what is being said. Now, one thing to say is you do need to have a network connection and I have used all my data up this month so I couldn't demonstrate it to you while I was talking to you. But it's a really nice piece of software and I have actually demonstrated it at an event for the Sense Charity and they were all blown away and the best thing is, it's totally free of charge. And I think that's a real, that's a real boom to a lot of people that have hearing loss.

MARK: Again, thanks for that, that's a free App. So regardless of whether you are joining us as a person with hearing loss or not, do download that and have a go. And I think we're now going to move on and we're going to hand over to Kevin who is going to start talking to us about hearing aid compatibility ratings.

KEVIN: They work with hearing aids for cochlear implants and have a hearing loop setting also known as a T setting. The result is clearer through the hearing aid and reduced. So many smartphones actually have a hearing aid compatibility rating based on a US standard. Phones that work best with hearing aids and cochlear implants have a T4 and T3 rating. The iPhone 8 has a T4 rating. While it's likely that a phone with a T3 or T4 rating will work well with a hearing aid, there is some variability between hearing aides ability to reject electrical interference. So it's better to try the phone before purchasing it. Next slide please. Phones that are hearing aid compatible sometimes have this symbol or something similar on the packaging and if you are not sure in your hearing aid has a hearing loop setting or whether it's been enabled we suggest you check that out with our audiologist because they might be able to advise you whether the hearing loop setting is enabled on the hearing aid. Sometimes it isn't. So we have seen the iPhones and the Samsung S10 and S9 and S8. They are all hearing aid compatible and there is a very useful on line resource called the GARI data base, global accessibility reporting initiative and it's a free on line tool that lists accessibility features for mainstream smartphones. So you can search phones for dexterity, vision, hearing loss, speech loss for over 20 mainstream brands, so if you go to the website. That's gari.info and you can log on to the data base and you can search for the accessibility functions on mainstream smartphones. It's particularly useful if you are thinking about getting a new smartphone and you want to know the accessibility features it has or if you have an existing smartphone and you are not sure what accessibility features it has you can check it out on the data base. Next slide please. So amplified smartphones, especially for people with hearing loss and older adults, like mainstream smartphones they are hearing aid compatible but they also have a number of other accessibility features, they provide, a louder volume and they have a boost button and that's useful for people without hearing aids so they have a louder ringer and generally they have an SOS button, so that sends out an alert to a relative or friend, other features may include easier to use interface or operating system, predictive text and adjustable font size and bluetooth. So main brands are Doro and the 35 and 840 and the Amplicoms and you can find out more about those by going the Action on Hearing Loss website and looking at our web shop. Next slide. So another way that smartphones can be used with hearing aids is with bluetooth. So increasingly smartphones and tablets work directly with hearing aids and cochlear implants and either through a streamer or directly and generally this works really well. For example, the cochlear phone clip which is a type of audio streaming accessory device works like a bluetooth headset but instead linked to the cochlear implant and it allows hands free and allows music streaming from the smartphone to the cochlear implant. Which brings me on to made for I phone hearing aids, these help you hear them more clearly. They publish accessibility for all devices so if you go to Apple.com/UK/ability/iPhone you can find out more details. So next slide please.

MARK: That's great. That was really interesting Kevin. Particularly liked hearing about the kind of developments around the bluetooth connectivity and we have questions coming in so I will make sure there is time to get around to those but before we go to questions is just launch another poll. So depending on how you join us you may not see something on the screen but I'm just going to launch a poll now just to ask before this webinar did you know some hearing aids could connect to bluetooth smartphones? With modern technology a lot of this is built in and it's not new technology it's just how we're using it. So just going to let people vote and I am going to close the poll now so we can get some questions to presenters. So we have 75% people voted. Actually interestingly 43% of you were aware of bluetooth compatibility smartphones. 57% said no. So that's interesting. A lot of people were aware of that. So that's really interesting. And that's a bit of feedback for us just to know there is a lot of you already out there that were aware of that, the connectivity there. So maybe there is something you want to know more about. So this is an opportunity now because obviously with the remaining 15 minutes we're going to do a question and answer session. So there are a few questions coming in already. If you have your own question use the Q&A function on the panel if you are joining from a desk top device and I am going to start asking the questions now to Alex and Kevin. So one I have seen was from Tim and he is just asking what is a streamer. So that was in relation to what you were just speaking about Kevin. Can you give some context to that.

KEVIN: In terms of linking a hearing aid to another device by bluetooth. Some devices can't link directly by bluetooth they have to go by a streaming device and that's a device that linked the smartphone to the bluetooth but increasingly we're seeing made for all hearing aids that don't need an intermediate streaming device, so it's just a way of linking the hearing aid to another bluetooth device but you have to go via a streamer but technology is moving on and we're starting to see hearing aids that link directly by bluetooth without a streamer.

MARK: I have a few comments coming in about Live Transcribe. There is a few interesting ones here so I am going to read them to you and let me no if you want to make a comment on this. An improved version of Live Transcribe will be available on the next version of Android and will not require data as it will be calculated on device. So you are commenting on your poor data and how you are using up the data. So just to be aware there is a new version. At the same time, I do have Joe commented about she has a deaf customer that uses speak on her iPhone to do a similar text version. So it's like an alternative. I imagine it's a low tech version. So you can pull up the text on the screen and pass it over to the person. So that was really interesting. I am going to now look to another question I can ask. Kevin, I think this is probably or you, what does the N rating refer to in the hearing aid compatibility rating.

KEVIN: It's about how the hearing aid performance when you have it on the microphone setting with a smartphone or another type of phone. So the T rating is around how the hearing aid performs on the hearing loop setting. But actually some people what they do is they leave the hearing aid on the M setting, microphone setting and just use it nearer the phone but what used to happen is the hearing aid would also pick up interference on the M setting. So what they decided to do was a T rating and M rating. So the M rating is around when you are using the hearing aid on the M setting and using the phone

MARK: Alex going to go back to you, I think you will be able to answer this one, do any smartphones offer a speech to text function?

ALEX: A lot of smartphones now have the ability to cope with speech to text. For example, if you are looking at making notes, you can talk to your Apple device using SIRI or you can make a note on an Android phone so yes, you have basic speech to text. If you are looking at doing more advanced things you can get Dragon anywhere and it will allow you to transcribe documents, notes and emails and so on.

MARK: Great. Thanks Alex. I have another for you Alex. Someone is asking what about features on windows phones?

ALEX: Okay, to be honest we haven't really touched windows phones because there aren't that many windows phones available but what you can do is the same way you have accessibility features set up in windows, you have accessibility windows features set up on windows phones and you can have sound turned on where you can get the screen to change when you get notifications. And the other thing you can also do is you can also, on some windows phones you can actually change the way the sound is, so you can have mono and stereo sounds on the other devices. To be honest, we didn't get as many calls about windows and I think they were a great idea but people just lost interest in them because both the Android and Apple phones seem to have a bit more functionality in terms of their ease of access features on the windows phones.

MARK: Thanks Alex. Kevin. I have one for you, somebody is asking if we can explain T coil coupling with regards to hearing aids.

KEVIN: The T coil that's what I was talking about earlier. The T coil is inside the hearing aid and it picks up the signal from hearing loops and hearing aid compatible phones.

MARK: Okay. That's clarification. I have got some other questions here and I might ask you Kevin and Alex one or two more, some of them are very specific. So I might just say if you have asked a very specific question, the next slide we'll go on to it's just about contact information. So Alex, I don't suppose you mind going on to that slide now because, it's one more slide Alex. So what I will do is, there is contact information on the screen which I will come to in just a second but for context, I know somebody asked about specific recommendations for someone who is autistic and deaf and I think that's probably Alex, is that the kind of thing I would feel confident with. Somebody emailing us about?

ALEX: Yeah and I am sure we can deal with it but a bit of context would be really useful. So if you can drop an email I can get back to you by the end of this week. It sounds like it's a question that I probably couldn't give a quick two sentence answer to but if you drop an email we'll go and do some research.

MARK: That's great. We're getting a lot of very specific questions coming in. So just looking at the time I am just going to say thank you to Alex and Kevin for joining us on this webinar and talking to us about smartphone features for hearing loss. Thank you both. I do want to mention MyClearText. So there is a lady called Judith doing this, if you are wondering what the captions are on the bottom of the screen that's supplied by MyClearText and it's a way of showing that our webinars are as accessible as possible. So thank you to Judith for providing that service. There is lots of information available and there is lots of questions asked that I am not going to go back to. Noise cancellation features. So Alex is one of people that mans that. So you can call us on 0800269545 during UK office hours and you can email us at enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk and earlier in the webinar Alex touched on the free resources we have available include fact sheets and websites. To find those go to ability.org.uk/expert-resources or if you have a particular technology problem that you need support with whether that be remote support or having a volunteer visit you in your home. You can go to ability.org.uk/request-IT-support and you can call us to request that support and as Alex commented, if you can just give us a bit of context to what the difficulty you are having and the technology you are using and that's always appreciated and there is also support available from Action on Hearing Loss and again, Kevin highlighted some of the support available and directed them to Action on Hearing Loss and. That number is 08088080123. You can also email information@hearingloss.org.uk and they also have text phone which is 08088089000. And SMS which is 07800000360. So just reading that out for the benefit of anyone that's visiting with a visual impairment. And thank you to Alex and Kevin and Judith and to everyone attending and we hope you learned something and we look forward to meeting you on the next webinar and there is an after webinar survey and if you have any feedback or any comments you want to share or any ideas about what you want to see in the next webinar please complete survey. Thanks everyone.