Charities team up to investigate the impact of tinnitus on professional musicians

Wednesday 2 October, 2019

[interviews and photos are available]

2 October 2019 The British Tinnitus Association (BTA) is partnering with the musicians' charity Help Musicians UK (HMUK) to conduct research into the impact of tinnitus on professional musicians. Tinnitus is the sensation of hearing sounds in the head or ears for which there is no external source. It is experienced by around one in eight adults. Although people can be helped to manage the condition successfully, there is currently no cure.

Noise exposure and noise induced hearing loss has been found to be the most common factor associated with tinnitus. Musicians can often be exposed to high levels of sound, meaning many are at risk of hearing loss and tinnitus. However, the relationship between tinnitus and its impact on musicians has not been rigorously researched.

The aim of the planned research project is to find out about the impact of tinnitus on professional musicians within the UK. The project will consider the impact of tinnitus on musicians' professional and everyday lived experiences. In addition, this will enable identification of the techniques and services musicians access, if any, to help prevent or manage their tinnitus.

Dr Georgie Burns-O'Connell, Research Officer at the British Tinnitus Association, said: "The project has the potential to have worldwide influence in establishing an understanding of the impact of tinnitus on musicians. This will ultimately lead to a better understanding, stronger messaging around prevention and management and improved services for musicians living with tinnitus."

David Stockdale, British Tinnitus Association Chief Executive, said: "We're delighted to be working with Help Musicians UK to deliver new research into the as yet uncharted territory of tinnitus and its impact on musicians. BTA researchers will have access to a pool of HMUK-supported musicians and will collect quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for more in-depth insights than have ever been captured before. Considering everything from genre and frequency of performance, to instrument and the position it's played in, the findings will pave the way for the broadest understanding of the effects of tinnitus within the UK music sector yet and open doors for effective, targeted support".

Joe Hastings, Help Musicians UK Head of Health and Welfare, added: "HMUK wants a world where musicians thrive. Musicians are at increased risk of hearing damage, and while our Hearing Health Scheme helped 5,076 musicians to protect their hearing last year, this research partnership will allow us to study the impact of tinnitus on professional musicians working in the UK and shape our offer and advocacy in the medium to long term".

Help Musicians UK is funding the project with a grant of £45,764. The study is expected to begin in December 2019 with an anticipated publication date of August 2020.

Ends

Editors Notes

- The BTA is an independent charity which supports over 1 million people per year who experience tinnitus and advises medical professionals from across the world. It is the primary source of support and information for people with tinnitus in the UK.
- The BTA needs to raise £975,000 each year to continue their UK wide support. Donations can be made via
- **Not">www.tinnitus.org.uk/donate**
- Not">... an illness or disease, tinnitus is a term that describes the sensation of hearing a noise in the absence of an external sound. The noise can have virtually any quality. Ringing, whistling, and buzzing are common, but more complex sounds may also be reported.

For more information

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Media:



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