

## Editorial

Since electrical stimulation on the cochlear nucleus was first tried at the end of the 1970s at the House Ear Institute, Los Angeles, there has been a growing interest in this kind of therapy. The results of these early experiments showed that, on the basis of the cochlear implant, patients can be helped by sensible stimulation. Thus, since 1992 it has been possible to acoustically link patients, especially those suffering from neurofibromatosis type 2 (NF2), to their environment again in a limited way. Several research groups throughout the world have been developing the multichannel auditory brainstem implant. The indication up to now has been restricted to cases of bilateral lesion of the auditory nerve in NF2, however, it has now been extended.

The aim of the International Symposium in Freiburg was to create an exchange of ideas between the relevant research groups and, thus, an update of experience. A consensus Statement has been developed that can be regarded as a recommendation on

the basis of the actual standard of knowledge concerning research as well as therapy. All participants thought that such a statement might be useful in view of the small number of patients and the highly complicated surgical procedure of implantation. Thus all participants wanted a certain standard of quality to be guaranteed.

In the following summary the actual state of research and therapy as well as future developments are presented. We, as organizers, want to thank all participants for the fruitful co-operation. It will be interesting to see how the catalogue of indications will be enlarged and how new electrode designs will enable us to help patients better. We will also benefit from the progress in the field of cochlear implantation and see the potential of further development of this interdisciplinary cooperation.

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