



## ***A Letter from Dr. Gregory Frazer, Au.D., Ph.D. CEO, AUDNET Hearing Group***

Hello All:



As someone who has been a hearing health care professional for over forty years, I can say with great certainty that the climate for both hearing care professionals and interested hearing consumers has never been more exciting or more challenging than it is right now.

Technological innovations focused on improving everyone's hearing experience, whether hearing impaired or not, are being introduced at a mind-boggling clip. Burgeoning delivery options, from over-the-counter products to retail hearing aid departments down the aisle from the laundry detergent in your favorite big-box store, are making access to various hearing devices more prolific and more visible. And, the numbers of individuals whose lives are meaningfully affected by hearing difficulties is rapidly increasing while the age where such difficulties become permanent is unfortunately decreasing. If hearing wasn't a Top of Mind issue for past generations, it certainly is becoming one now.

I am a longstanding fan of innovation. Ask my patients, many of whom have become one of the first in the country, if not the world to experience and comment on the latest in hearing technologies. Ask my colleagues who worked with me to build dozens of successful audiology private practices, and partnered with me launch some of the country's most innovative hearing health care provider networks. Ask my students, whose careers I continue to champion as an adjunct professor at several universities.

It is that passion for innovation and for hearing care that has made me so excited about this latest enterprise of which I am so proud to be a part. Through the merger of AuDNet, Inc. and Marcon Hearing Group - two well-known and storied group purchasing enterprises that have each done much to help independent practices succeed - we have created a larger national business/professional support resource called AUDNET Hearing Group, designed to benefit both consumers and providers in this modern age of hearing care innovation.

AUDNET Hearing Group (AHG) un-bundles and lowers the cost of business support services many practitioners need to run their businesses. By contracting with a

variety of independent business advisors and consultants to provide discount ala-carte services to provider member when needed, AHG helps practices lower the cost of operating their businesses. AHG members don't pay for services they may not want or may no longer need. And, by not requiring these members to pay for such services through their wholesale hearing aid purchases (an historic group purchasing tactic that has kept product costs high for providers, and therefore for consumers), practices can run more efficiently and cost effectively.

In addition, by creating a larger group purchasing footprint through the merger of smaller group purchasing entities, AHG is further lowering the cost of goods members pay for the products and supplies they need to run their businesses. As a result, AHG provider-members are uniquely positioned to pass more significant savings on to the consumers they serve. And, these savings can be substantial.

Further, AUDNET Hearing Group recognizes the value of collective brain power. Through our annual "Collaborative Empowerment Expos" and our continuing education webinar series, members, suppliers and consumers collaborate in identifying and addressing the key issues influencing effective hearing assistance and ongoing hearing health.

Finally, through our cooperative business model, provider-members have a say in both the direction of and the investment strategies used to maximize consumer and provider value.

In an age where price and accessibility are being promoted as reasons not to seek professional care, and therefore to risk missing out on effective long-term hearing benefit, our collaborative business support model is perfectly positioned to benefit both consumers and providers by working together to lower costs, maximize productivity, advance professional care excellence and build better value into the provider/patient relationship.

Now that's innovation I am proud to get behind, and I trust you can to.

My very best to you all!