

THE HEARING AIDS MY LIFE CHANGED'

Donegal man Gerry urges others not to be embarrassed and to get hearing checked

LIKE so many men, Gerry Gallagher wasn't one for getting medical issues checked right away. While the Donegal man felt healthy and well for someone in his 60s and certainly believed his hearing was perfect, his family were increasingly worried about it as he failed to catch everything they said.

There was no quick deterioration here, like most people Gerry's hearing suffered slowly and it took a trip to Blackberry Hearing in nearby Letterkenny to determine that he needed hearing aids to go about his daily life.

"I guess going to all those rock concerts in the 70s has finally taken a toll on me," he says almost boastfully. "I would consider myself a healthy man but recently I was missing some things that friends and family were saying to me. And a few times I found myself using subtitles on the TV to get a better experience.

"I was surprised to find out that I had a problem in both ears so I, slightly reluctantly, agreed to try the hearing aids.

"As soon as I wore them my life changed. I was amazed when I walked outside of how much more detail I could hear. It was that instant.

"I kept asking myself why I put it off for so long. It was so gradual and I was far from being deaf, so I put it off. But when I put the hearing aids in it was shocking how much better my life became. I could hear everything so clearly."

Gerry believes that there is a major stigma about going deaf and he hopes to inform anyone out there that there is no need for it.

"I was slagged a lot by my family. Never in a hurtful way, but if I couldn't hear what they were saying they would certainly make a joke about it.

"You wouldn't do the same for someone if they were starting to go blind

though, would you? I kept saying that to them and it became a running joke in the family. So much so that I ultimately decided to go and get the ears checked.

"I have been a member of a Men's Shed for the past few years and as secretary I was aware that Blackberry Hearing were offering support through a hearing test, so I just went and did it. I have zero regrets. And my family don't slag me anymore."

Gerry was so impressed that he went back and decided to upgrade to Evoke hearing aids. "I can now control the hearing

aids from an app on my phone. It's incredible. Some environments may require a volume change for example so I just alter it on the app. I honestly don't know myself.

"Obviously I haven't been in a pub or to a concert in a long time," he laughs. "But if ever there is a crowd around I will just change a setting on the app.

"And only those closest to me even know I have them because they are so discreet. I'm 68 so I don't care about people knowing but I'm saying it because younger men and women may be worried about having a big clunky device on their ear. It doesn't have to

be that way anymore."

Gerry admits that the hearing aids can be expensive but he says he has no regrets about getting them and even taking upgrades after the trial month.

"Blackberry do an amazing service. It's quick and painless and they really know their stuff. They can also help me remotely because of the technology, which is huge in the current climate with social distancing."

Blackberry Hearing is an Irish company which has been providing the technically most up-to-date, small and comfortable hearing aids at the best prices for over five years. Blackberry Hearing has more than 50 clinic locations nationwide. Visit blackberryhearing.com



BIG DIFFERENCE: Gerry Gallagher holding one of his hearing aids

