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## **Understanding and addressing hearing loss stigma in context of larger cultural factors**

Stigma is a controversial topic in hearing care. Everyone wishes it would disappear but there are broader societal issues impeding progress. Cultural perceptions of disability and aging are moving in different directions, further complicating the issue. Some look to the vision care industry for inspiration. This is of limited use since the demographics of common vision problems and hearing loss are not the same.

In this presentation larger cultural dynamics affecting stigma will be examined, especially ageism in the workplace as it overlaps the population with greater hearing loss prevalence. Data showing how critical it is to recognise the foundational basis of stigma, and address it in a way that more people will accept, will be shared. How different devices can help reduce stigma in the long term while meeting people's needs today will also be discussed.