



Grants and information manager Carol Beetles. Picture: Lindsay Muskett

A new lease on life

COCHLEAR implants helped Carol Beetles of Madeley reclaim the lifestyle that early on-set deafness deprived her of for more than a decade.

Ms Beetles began experiencing severe hearing loss in her early twenties and said it caused her relationships with her husband, children and friends to deteriorate.

"Before the implants, I found it very difficult to communicate with people, I suffered depression, dreaded the thought of meeting new people and had a panic attack every time the phone rang," she said.

Able to understand only 8 per cent of speech with two hearing aids when her hearing

declined further after the births of her four children, Ms Beetles put her initial reluctance aside and consulted a doctor about cochlear implants in her late 30s.

"The night before the operation, I very nearly talked myself out of going to the hospital in the morning," she said.

"Why would I want someone to cut open my skull and insert a foreign object without any guarantee that it would improve my hearing?"

"Thank goodness I didn't back out. My cochlear implants have changed my life.

"I love meeting new people. I participate in meetings and conduct training sessions at

work, and do not suffer from depression anymore."

Ms Beetles said before the implants, her hearing had even affected her work. She is now the Grants and Information manager at ECU in Joondalup.

"Although I had the skills, I was always passed over for promotion," she said.

Since her implant, Ms Beetles has worked tirelessly as a Cochlear Network Association volunteer to raise awareness of hearing loss and the solutions available to hearing impaired adults and children.

She received a Cochlear HEARO Award to coincide with National Volunteer Week from May 11 to 17.