



# Improving the Experience of Health Care for People Living with Sensory Disability: Knowing What is Going On

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COLLECTION EDITED BY Damian Mellifont, Jennifer Smith-Merry

COLLECTION

Disability Studies

EDITION

1st edition

MARKET

College/higher education and Professional and scholarly

## This course reading...

- Tells verbatim stories from people living with sensory disability about the challenges, abuses, and negative experiences of health care that arise from a lack of communication support.
- Provides a vital perspective to anyone who studies or works with disabled people, neurodivergent people, those with mental illness and queer people.
- Is written by a medical and academic doctor with personal lived experience of sensory disability.
- Supports the principle of “nothing about us without us”.
- Is vital reading for doctors, nurses, health care providers, and social support workers in practice and training.

### **How does a patient with sensory disability – such as a hearing or vision impairment, or both – get effective communication from a health care provider?**

Too often, the answer is that they don't. Communication is crucial for any professional-patient relationship, not least when disability is in the mix. For people living with sensory disability, however, the challenge of knowing what is going on with their healthcare, participating in shared decision making, and retaining an appropriate level of agency, is even greater. Using verbatim testimony from people with first-hand experience of sensory disability, this book explores issues such as accessibility barriers in consent forms, patient information sheets and other paperwork; situational vulnerability to abuse and neglect; and dehumanisation, infantilisation, and disempowerment in care.

Written by **Dr Annmaree Watharow MD PhD**, a doctor and author with personal experience of sensory disability, the stories in this book are told using people's own words, to allow readers to hear directly from the people who most need their own agency. Vital reading for doctors, nurses, health care providers, and social support workers in practice and training, this book will change the way you view sensory disability.

**Annmaree Watharow MD, PhD** is an academic and medical doctor with lived experience of dual sensory impairment. **Moira Dunsmore RN, PhD** is an academic and registered nurse with first-hand experience caring for older adults with multiple sensory loss. They are co-founders of a dual sensory impairment special interest group, and the dual sensory impairment project ([www.dsiproject.org](http://www.dsiproject.org)), based at the University of Sydney.

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