

Abstract No. 4.3

Wednesday 6th September 2017 at 12:00-12:45

Title: Teaching Orientation and Mobility Skills to people with deafblindness who use tactile sign language

Presenter: Meredith Prain, Senses Australia, Australia

Co-presenters: Bronwen Scott

Main focus: Mainly practice/Acquired deafblindness

Abstract: This workshop presents the outcomes of a twelve month collaboration between Able Australia and Independent Options for Mobility in Melbourne, Australia. The project involved an initial investigation of the specific orientation and mobility (O&M) needs of people with deafblindness, as well as those involved in providing O & M training. A series of workshops aimed at people with deafblindness, communication guides, interpreters, and O&M specialists was devised and conducted over a six month period. The workshops further highlighted the complex communication requirements necessary to undertake O & M training, and a DVD was developed to help address these issues. The DVD includes some specific tactile signs and haptics to use in O&M lessons with tactile Auslan users, and an accompanying booklet explaining some of the common O&M terms and techniques was developed to accompany the DVD. The project highlighted the importance of O&M specialists, interpreters, and communication guides working closely together with each other and in partnership with the person with deafblindness to ensure high quality, successful communication of new terms and concepts.

This workshop will:

- outline the background to the project,
- outline what was covered in each of the workshops
- show the DVD and provide links to obtaining the accompanying booklet.
- provide participants with the opportunity to learn and practice the tactile O & M signs and haptics
- raise key points to consider when undertaking O&M training with a tactile sign language user
- raise points which require further work in research and practice in the future