

# Diverse Needs: People who are deaf, deafblind, vision-impaired or hard of hearing

Many Australians have long-term vision problems and hearing loss. One in three people over 65 years experience deafness or hearing difficulties. 2% of Australians are deafblind, experiencing both vision and hearing loss. Some are born with one sensory impairment and develop the other later in life.

## Experience of disadvantage

People with sensory impairments often face limited support, leading to poor education, unemployment and poverty. Some struggle with daily activities and communication, resulting in isolation and depression, especially for those who lose sight or hearing later in life.

## Complex overlaps

Sensory loss affects people differently, and other disabilities may occur. Older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people often experience sensory loss alongside multiple health issues. Access to assistive technologies may be limited and misunderstandings can occur.

## The impact on end-of-life care

The struggle to communicate their needs to staff in complex end-of-life discussions may lead to poor outcomes. Interpreters, assistive technology or culturally appropriate support may be needed to help people with sensory loss feel understood and treated with dignity.

Explore more about ageing and dual sensory loss by [Able Australia](#).

Download this [tip sheet](#) for care workers from palliAGED.

