



Medal of the Order of Australia for Sue

"It's very nice that people think that I'm deserving of an award. I have so much admiration for people with hearing loss and in some way I felt I wanted to give back and become an advocate."



QLD program a world leader in services and support to hearing-impaired children and their families

"It's about promoting resilience and confidence. School is a new listening environment. Sometimes hearing-impaired children can be like floating ducks. Everything looks calm on the surface but deep down they are paddling hard every day."

Launch of Accesshub and closure of www.relayservice.gov.au

Accesshub will be a new, central source of information on the range of communication options available to people who are deaf, hard of hearing and/or have a speech impairment. Accesshub replaces the existing National Relay Service (NRS) website.

Hearing in noisy places

Some adults who have difficulty understanding speech in noisy listening environments have clinically normal or 'near-normal' hearing. The most commonly reported impacts for people experiencing difficulty hearing in noise include an inclination to avoid social situations due to an increase in disrupted conversation, tension and fatigue.



Underlying causes and impact of speech-in-noise difficulties in normal hearers

By Dr Joaquin Valderrama, Ingrid Yeend and Jermy Pang, National Acoustic Laboratories, Sydney, Australia



Professionals working in hearing health care have been aware for some time that a portion of adults who attend the clinic, reporting difficulty understanding speech in noisy listening environments, have clinically normal or 'near-normal' hearing.

This presents a challenge for clinicians as the underlying issues causing this problem are not clear and there are currently no available diagnostic tools or rehabilitation therapies.

National Acoustic Laboratories (NAL) research has recently shown that understanding speech in noise is a complex process that depends on multiple factors. Three factors that our research identified as particularly important for adults in their mid-years were (1) extended high-frequency hearing thresholds, testing this evaluates a person's hearing sensitivity to tones above 8000 Hz, which is above the frequency range typically tested in clinics; (2) working memory, which gives an indication of a person's ability to store and process information; and (3) attentional skills, which allows a person to sustain, select and switch their focus onto relevant information.

Our research has also shown that the most commonly reported impacts for people experiencing difficulty hearing in noise include an inclination to avoid social situations due to an increase in disrupted conversation, tension and fatigue. It also revealed that this population is more likely to be intolerant of loud background noise and use more effort and concentration during conversational listening.

We are now collecting data on the experiences of people with normal hearing or mild hearing loss who have greater-than-normal difficulty understanding speech in noise, as well as the clinicians who see these clients.

The aim of this research is to further understand the difficulties experienced by this population and to develop effective treatment options for them.

If you are interested in sharing your insights with us and participating in a personal or phone interview, contact Dr Joaquin Valderrama (NAL) via joaquin.valderrama@nal.gov.au

You can also complete our 15-min online survey:

- ✓ For people with speech-in-noise difficulties: <https://bit.ly/2U3Fdw7>
- ✓ For clinicians / audiologists: <https://bit.ly/2TVfaH7>

This research is approved by the Australian Hearing Human Research Ethics Committee (Ref no. AHHREC2018-34). NAL is the research division of Australian Hearing, an Australian Government statutory authority.



For many people, making decisions about legal issues surrounding institutional child sexual abuse can be difficult, and may cause significant distress.

knowmore employs specialist counsellors and social workers who are experienced in dealing with survivors of sexual abuse. They will support clients to help them obtain legal assistance by identifying and making links with other agencies who can assist them in the longer term.

It is a free service offering legal advice and information to help you consider your options about compensation, redress and other legal issues related to abuse. It was established by, and operates as a separate program of, the National Association of Community Legal Centres, with funding from the Australian Government.

knowmore staff are here to help you and act in your interest.

There is an Auslan video on the **knowmore** homepage: www.knowmore.org.au (see: About knowmore video) and also on YouTube at <https://youtube/qng7Tmo-ZhQ>