About the Authors

Barry Carpenter is Honorary Professor at the Universities of Worcester (UK), Limerick (Ireland), Hamburg (Germany), and Flinders, (Australia). In his career, Barry has held leadership positions of Academic Director, Chief Executive, Principal, Headteacher, Inspector of Schools and Director of the Centre for Special Education at Westminster College, Oxford. In 2009, he was appointed by the Secretary of State for Education as Director of the Children with Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Research Project. Subsequently, Barry has overseen the development of a national project developing on-line training materials for teachers of children with severe, profound and complex learning disabilities. The author of over 100 articles on special educational needs, he has won the prestigious Times award for his co-edited book "Enabling Access." He has been awarded Fellowships of the Royal Societies of Arts and Medicine, and was created OBE and CBE by the Queen for services to children with special needs.

Anne O’Connor works as a clinical psychologist in Early Intervention Services and is currently pursuing a PhD. Anne has practiced in the general area of childhood disability and is particularly interested in the family perspective and experience. She also works as a clinical coordinator on the Doctorate Programme for Clinical Psychologists which affords her the opportunity to visit services throughout Ireland. After many years of clinical practice, Anne is now also working as an academic and researcher. She has been focusing on developing opportunities for local clinicians and researchers to collaborate to increase research input to disability studies. She is a member of the International Society of Early Intervention. Through her work on her PhD she has developed an interest in Classic Grounded Theory. Email: aoconnor@nuigalway.ie

Dr. Barry Coughlan, Acting Director on the Doctoral programme in Clinical Psychology at the University of Limerick and also maintains a clinical practice and professional consultancy portfolio. Dr Coughlan has a special interest in the emotional wellbeing & mental health of young people and adults with intellectual disability and complex need. His clinical and associated research focus includes mental health & emotional wellbeing in intellectual disability, Complex Learning Difficulties & Disabilities, Special Educational Needs, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Ageing and Disability, Deinstitutionalisation & Community integration. In 2015, Dr. Coughlan was commissioned by the Australian Ministry of Education (Melbourne Office) to undertake a review of Western Autistic Schools’ special provision for young adolescents presenting with high functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder and mental health difficulties.

Debbie Garratt, PhD Candidate at Notre Dame University, Sydney, is a clinical nurse consultant, qualified counsellor and adult educator, and founder and Executive Director of Real Choices Australia, an organisation established to provide quality research and education on reproductive health issues. As part of this work, Debbie also consults to community groups and the health sector on professional standards and organisational development for services for women experiencing challenges during the perinatal period. For 20 years she has divided her time between the provision of education and clinical supervision to practitioners and clients locally through her private practice, and research, education and speaking engagements both nationally and internationally. Debbie’s current doctoral research is a grounded theory study of dominant discourses. Email: dgarratt@realchoices.org.au
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