It is estimated there are up to 400,000 polio survivors “still here!”, making polio survivors the largest physical disability group in Australia. Many live with the Late Effects of Polio, commonly experiencing fatigue, weakness and pain, but these symptoms are often dismissed as simply “part of the ageing process”. In reality, there are physiological reasons why some people with the Late Effects of Polio have a neurodegenerative condition, requiring customised services and equipment. Polio Australia will explain why polio survivors experience muscle weakness, significant pain and fatigue, sleep disturbances, breathing and swallowing issues and impaired thermoregulation, to assist health professionals in understanding how best to manage these health issues.

Assistive technology needs of many polio survivors will change over time, as their symptoms progress and evolve. Using case examples of polio survivors, this presentation will discuss how assistive technology prescription can be used to assist mobility, home and vehicle safety and respiratory sufficiency. Addressing the challenges of funding for much-needed equipment and services will be discussed, given their unique experience of evolving needs and use of assistive technology, to help people get the right options at the right time.