

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of the Disability Handbook was written in preparation for the introduction of Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance for the over 65s (DLA/AA) in 1992. DLA brought in some major policy changes in the field of benefits for sick and disabled people. Notably, adjudication became the responsibility of non-medical adjudication officers. The Handbook was designed to be a source of reliable information on the care and mobility needs likely to arise from a range of medical conditions. Although written primarily to help adjudication officers, it was hoped that it would also be of assistance to all those involved with DLA/AA, both inside and outside the Department. Happily, this has turned out to be the case: it is extensively used by members of Disability Appeal Tribunals, as well as by adjudication officers.

It was always intended that the Handbook should be a living document and over the years, a number of amendments and additions have been produced in the form of annexes to the original text. It has become clear that this was making the book rather unwieldy and that the time had come to produce a new edition. In compiling this, we have been able to draw on the accumulated experience of people, too numerous to mention, who have been involved in DLA/AA since its inception. We have also tried to incorporate all the latest developments in the medical and disability fields. It is a testament to the success of the first edition that we have been able to leave much of the original text unaltered.

It has to be remembered that the primary purpose of the Handbook remains unchanged and consequently the Introduction to the first edition appears in its original, unaltered form. We hope that, through this new edition, the Handbook will be able to continue to fulfil its unique role in the field of disability assessment.

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