

# 1 IN 5 ADULTS ARE DEAF OR HAVE HEARING LOSS

## Not everyone's communication needs are the same.

If you don't know, ask them how best you can communicate with them.

The Disability Discrimination Act places a duty on healthcare providers to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities. This includes meeting communication needs and providing information in accessible formats.

### Communication Tips



#### Communication support

Before the appointment, check if the person needs communication support such as a sign language interpreter



**Aid lip reading** by maintaining 2 metre social distance and using Perspex screens for interactions where possible



#### Reduce background noise

if possible, move to a quieter area and use hearing loops if available



#### Get the person's attention

before speaking and face them



#### Speak directly to the person

not their interpreter or anyone accompanying them



#### Don't shout

use normal lip movements and facial expressions



#### Use clear, plain language

and be straight to the point



#### Re-phrase

if the person asks you to repeat or doesn't understand



#### Check understanding

by asking the person to repeat information back



#### Write things down

if needed. You can also use speech-to-text apps

### Contacting people by phone

Use video relay services such as InterpreterNow for Sign Language users. [www.interpreternow.co.uk](http://www.interpreternow.co.uk)

Use Relay UK for people with hearing loss. [www.relayuk.bt.com](http://www.relayuk.bt.com)

Where possible, use alternative communication methods such as SMS, E-mail or video conferencing with captions.

### Sign Language interpreters

To book a face to face interpreter in advance:

- Belfast, South Eastern, and Southern HSC Trust: <https://louderthanwords.org.uk/communication-support/> 0845 030 5590
- Northern Trust: contact the Northern Trust Equality Unit [Equality.Unit@northerntrust.hscni.net](mailto:Equality.Unit@northerntrust.hscni.net)
- Western Trust: contact Hands That Talk [www.handsthattalk.co.uk/](http://www.handsthattalk.co.uk/)