



CYMRU

A national charity since 1911

RNIB
Cymru

Yn cefnogi pobl
â cholled golwg
Supporting people
with sight loss

Communicating with someone with a sensory loss



Communicating with someone who is deaf, has hearing loss, sight loss or is deafblind doesn't need to be difficult.



Encourage people to **Tell, Ask and Share**

Tell you about their sensory loss,

Ask for accessible information and communication, and

Share feedback on their experiences – both good and not so good.

This booklet contains some simple things you can do.

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/Wales

www.rnib.org.uk/cymru



The person I'm speaking to... is hard of hearing/deafened/has a hearing loss

- Make sure you have face-to-face contact and their full attention.
- Ask if they need to lipread or use the loop system.
- Speak clearly; don't exaggerate your facial expressions and gestures.
- Don't cover your mouth.
- Don't shout!
It's uncomfortable and aggressive.
- If someone doesn't understand, say it in a different way.
- Make sure people can contact you in **their** preferred way.

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/Wales



The person I'm speaking to... is Deaf

- Ask; do they lipread? Or do they need a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter? (page 5).
- Make sure you have face-to-face contact and their full attention.
- Talk to the person you're communicating with, not the interpreter.
- Speak clearly; don't exaggerate your facial expressions and gestures.
- Don't cover your mouth.
- Don't shout!
- If someone doesn't understand, say it in a different way.

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/Wales



Using a BSL interpreter

- Your organisation should have a budget to pay for BSL interpreters and other accessibility needs.
- You can book BSL interpreters through Action on Hearing Loss www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/communication
- or find a local interpreter through The National Registers of Communication Professionals working with Deaf and Deafblind People (NRCPD) www.nrcpd.org.uk
- Learning some basic fingerspelling could also help you to communicate (page 12).

www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk/Wales



The person I'm speaking to... has sight loss

- Introduce yourself.
- Talk to the person directly, rather than any companion.
- Use words, avoid nods and head shakes.
- Tell the person what you are doing, for example, "I'm looking at your file".
- Tell the person if you're moving away from them.
- Ask the person if they need help to find their way (page 8).

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The person I'm speaking to... is deafblind

(has both hearing loss and sight loss)

- Make sure you have face-to-face contact and their full attention.
- Introduce yourself.
- Speak clearly; don't exaggerate your facial expressions and gestures.
- Don't cover your mouth.
- Don't shout!
It's uncomfortable and aggressive.
- If someone doesn't understand, say it in a different way.
- Try writing things down.
- For phone conversations consider using a text relay service such as Next Generation Text.

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Guiding a person... who has sight loss or is deafblind

- Introduce yourself.
- Ask where they want to go.
- Let them hold your arm at the elbow, with your arm by your side.
- Walk one step ahead.
- Beware of hazards at ground level and head height.
- Say where you're going and what to be aware of.
- If they want to sit down, place their hand on the back of a chair.

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Giving information to... someone who is hard of hearing/deafened/has a hearing loss

Writing for people with hearing loss is the same as writing for anyone else – you need to make sure that the information you produce is easy to understand.

- Keep sentences and paragraphs short.
- Always use shorter words and avoid jargon.
- Break up the writing with headings and bullet points.
- Use photographs containing real people to illustrate your points.

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Giving information to... someone who is deaf

- Reading English can be difficult for BSL users. Information in sign language has to be filmed.
- All frequently-used information leaflets should be available for deaf people.
- Producing a video with both BSL narration and subtitles is an excellent way to reach deaf people.
- Easy read documents can also be useful (page 13).

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Giving information to... someone who has sight loss

- Make information available in large print (minimum size 16/18), audio file and braille.
- Use A4 paper, align text to the left, avoid columns, use a clear font and minimum text size 14.
- Don't use italics, underlining or lots of capital letters.
- Use black text on a white background.
- Explain images and diagrams.
- Use matt paper, not glossy.
- RNIB Cymru can produce accessible documents.

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Fingerspelling alphabet



A



B



C



D



E



F



G



H



I



J



K



L



M



N



O



P



Q



R



S



T



U



V



W



X



Y



Z

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Producing easy read materials

- No more than 24 pages.
- Keep sentences short.
- Use 14 point font size.
- Make sentences active: “we’re following up your complaint”.
- Take out words that aren’t needed.
- Include a glossary of abbreviations and jargon, and an index.
- If you use difficult words or ideas, say what they mean in the next sentence.
- Use pictures to support the meaning.

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**For more information
and advice visit**



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