

7 Minute Briefing – d/Deaf Awareness

1. What's the difference between 'deaf' and 'Deaf'?

When someone is described as '**deaf**' this means they have some degree of **hearing loss**.

When someone is described as '**Deaf with a capital 'D'**', this means they use British Sign Language (BSL) as their **first language**, and they are part of **the Deaf community** which has its own culture.

2. Communications with d/Deaf people:

- Make sure the d/Deaf person can see your full face when you speak.
- Be aware different d/Deaf people have different communication needs.
- Always ask how people would like to communicate and try to meet those needs.
- Book a BSL interpreter if required; Interpreters can be face-to-face or online via video link.
- Be aware Deaf people will not always understand written English as this is not their first language. Keep any written communication with them in plain English.

3. Why is d/Deaf awareness important for safeguarding?

d/Deaf awareness is crucial in safeguarding because people who are d/Deaf can be **more vulnerable** to abuse and neglect due to their specialist and communication needs.

Professionals should access d/Deaf awareness training to be aware of these needs so they can protect people who are d/Deaf.

4. Direct and Indirect discrimination

d/Deaf people can be victims of **direct discrimination**, which occurs when someone is treated unfairly due to their disability.

d/Deaf people can also be victims of **Indirect discrimination**, which occurs when people with disabilities are treated the same as others, without their specific needs cultural or communication needs being considered.

5. Booking an interpreter

Providers of NHS Care and Publicly funded Adult Social Care **must meet the communication and information needs of people who are Deaf** (BSL users). This could be achieved by using a BSL interpreter. Each organisation should have its own processes for booking an interpreter. Other services should make **reasonable adjustments** under the Equality Act 2010 and this may include booking an interpreter.

6. The Accessible Information Standard

All organisations that provide NHS care or publicly funded adult social care are required to meet the [Accessible information Standard](#). These organisations must **IDENTIFY** the communication needs of people using the service, **RECORD** this clearly, clearly **FLAG** on their system if a person has information or communication needs, **SHARE** a person's information and communication needs where appropriate, and **MEET** the needs identified.

7. Further information

- [Deaf information and advice • Salford City Council](#)
- [NHS England » Accessible Information Standard](#)
- [Meeting the Accessible Information Standard - Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010 and Disability \(BDA\)](#).
- [BSL Video about NHS Accessible Information Standard](#)

Contact details:

- Safeguarding Board: SSAB@salford.gov.uk
- [Worried about an Adult?](#) Call 0161 206 0604
- <https://safeguardingadults.salford.gov.uk/>