

See It My Way

- A resource for staff to support someone who is Deaf or someone who is hard of hearing.

Helpful suggestions when supporting Deaf and hard of hearing people when using your service.



Your environment



Try to find a quiet place. Minimise environmental noise in the room.

Ensure the lighting in the room illuminates your face. Be mindful light may reflect off glass or plastic making it hard to see through. It is important to stand in the best position for the person you are talking to.

Ensure you have the person's attention -always face them and address the person directly.

Your introduction



Ask the person how they would prefer to communicate. If the person uses sign language it is important you book an interpreter. Other supportive tools include using speech-to-text apps or writing things down; however these helpful short term solutions should never be used as a substitute for providing access to a sign language interpreter or electronic note taker when required. **For more information and support refer to your organisation's policies and procedures.**

Introduce yourself and indicate who you are – "Hello my name is.... I am a ..." You should always wear a name badge.

Wearing a face covering is a barrier to lipreading and understanding facial expressions. Be mindful of this. Stay safe: always consult with Infection Control colleagues if removing your mask for the purpose of communication. Seek guidance from the person you are talking to on how to best communicate safely.

Your conversation



Speak calmly - Don't talk too quickly or too slowly. Avoid jargon and keep to the point.

Stay focused. Check the person has understood clearly – you may need to re-word what you have said.

Be patient and empathetic. Use your normal facial expressions and gestures.

Final thoughts



Ask for feedback on how you could improve communication and support them better. Share this with your team and staff.

Make sure the person knows the conversation has ended before you move away.



If you wish to learn some useful phrases in British Sign Language or Irish Sign Language, videos are available on www.10000morevoices.hscni.net/see-it-my-way.