



Dear Colleague

**PROVISION OF GUIDE COMMUNICATORS FOR
DEAFBLIND PEOPLE ATTENDING HOSPITAL OR GP
SURGERIES**

Summary

1. Because of their disabilities, deafblind people are at a disadvantage when attending hospital or GP surgeries for treatment. When using health services deafblind people have difficulties with mobility, communication and obtaining information in an understandable form.

2. The Commission of Enquiry into Human Aids to Communication published a Report in 1992 entitled "Communication is Your Responsibility". The Report recommended that:

- responsibility for providing appropriately qualified Human Aids to Communication (HACs) to users lies primarily with the organisation unable to communicate directly and in consultation with the user;

- responsibility for setting aside budgets and payment for the provision of appropriately qualified HACs lies primarily with the organisation unable to communicate directly with the user.

3. The Report recognised deafblind people as the most disadvantaged among the user groups covered within its remit.

Action

4. All Health Boards and NHS Trusts should be aware of their responsibilities in this area and have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure that deafblind people are afforded the services of a guide/communicator when they attend hospital or GP surgery.

Addressees

For action:
General Managers,
Health Boards

Chief Executives,
NHS Trusts

For information:
General Manager,
Common Services Agency

General Manager,
State Hospitals Board for Scotland

Executive Director,
SCPMDE

General Manager,
Health Education Board for
Scotland

Enquiries to:

Mr Andy Nichol
Health Care Policy Division
Room 277
St Andrew's House
EDINBURGH EH1 3DG

Tel: 0131-244 2428
Fax: 0131-244 3487

SCOTTISH HEALTH SERVICE COMMON SERVICES AGENCY	
TRM	
MAN	EX
AGL	102013
Date	1998

5. Health Boards are requested to circulate this MEL to GPs in their area for information and for action as appropriate.

Other Information

6. A guide/communicator service can be provided by some voluntary organisations. DEAFBLIND UK, 21 Alexandra Avenue, Lenzie G66 5BG (Tel: 0141 777 6111) already provide this service under contract in some areas. Information about existing guide/communicator services in your area can be obtained from Deafblind UK. Information may also be available from the local authority social work department, or from local Societies for the Deaf

7. Data is still being gathered on how many deafblind people there are in Scotland but an incidence of 4:10,000 is thought to be a realistic estimate. DEAFBLIND UK has recently commenced a project funded by the National Lotteries Board to raise awareness of Usher Syndrome (a genetic form of deafblindness) and to identify, inform, advise and support people who have Usher Syndrome. This project is, however, still in its infancy.

Yours sincerely



for KEVIN WOODS
Director of Strategy and Performance Management

Email: info@deafblindscotland.org.uk
Website: http://www.deafblindscotland.org.uk

COMMON SERVICES AGENCY	
RECEIVED	
5 MAR 1998	
FILE No	
REFERRED TO	ACTION TAKEN
RWSB	

Steve - info



DEAFBLIND
UK

3rd March 1998,

Mr Francis Gibb
General Manager
Common Services Agency

Deafblind Scotland
21 Alexandra Avenue
Lenzie G66 5BG
Tel/Text: 0141 777 6111
Fax: 0141 775 3311

Dear Sir,

**PROVISION OF GUIDE/COMMUNICATORS FOR DEAFBLIND
PEOPLE ATTENDING HOSPITAL OR GP SURGERIES**

I write to offer our assistance in the implementation of the above service for deafblind people.

Deafblind UK provides communication and guiding support to deafblind people when visiting hospital or GP surgeries. We currently employ more than 30 trained guide/communicators throughout Scotland. I enclose information on the Guide/communicator service and how it might be accessed.

It is our experience that, without deafblind awareness training, it is very difficult for hospital and GP surgery staff to identify potential users of this service. Training is beneficial in a number of ways:

- Communication with deafblind people is improved
- Staff become aware of the problems of dual impairment
- Deafblind people can receive appropriate support for their needs
- Staff are more confident in dealing with people who have a dual impairment

We offer training on a variety of levels, and would be happy to discuss the particular needs of any group. Our current training list is enclosed.

It is the experience of Deafblind UK that deafblind people who receive appropriate communication and guiding support are less anxious, better informed regarding diagnosis and treatment, and more able to benefit from health services.

We look forward to working with you to serve deafblind people.

Yours sincerely

Drena O'Malley
Development Manager Scotland

**24-HOUR FREE HELPLINE
0800 132320**

for deafblind people and those
who support them - do use us for
help, information or just a chat.

DEAFBLIND UK

The association of deafblind and dual sensory impaired people
100 Bridge Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DY. Tel/Minicom: 01733 358100
Fax: 01733 358356 Qwerty: 01733 358858 Email: jackie@deafblind.demon.co.uk
Registered Charity No.802976 Company Reg. No.2426281 Chairman: Tony Humphreys Chief Executive: Jackie Scott



DEAFBLIND
·UK·

Deafblind Awareness Training is offered to vocational groups. Sessions can be from one to six hours duration in an appropriate venue to suit your needs.

Usher Syndrome Awareness Training

AIM/OBJECTIVE: Awareness of genetic implications, effects, communication methods, aids.
VENUE: DBUK Flat, 21 Alexandra Avenue, Lenzie.
DATES: 4th March and 21st October 1998.
DURATION: 10am – 4pm.
COST: £50.00.
REQUIREMENTS: Open to all with an interest in Usher Syndrome.

Deafblind Scotland
21 Alexandra Avenue
Lenzie G66 5BG
Tel/Text: 0141 777 6111
Fax: 0141 775 3311

CACDP Keyboard Interpreting Skills

AIM/OBJECTIVE: Proficiency in Speech to Text / Braille transcription.
VENUE: Strathclyde University.
DATES: 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th September 1998.
COST: £200.00 plus exam fees.
REQUIREMENTS: CACDP Deafblind Interpreting (Manual).

CACDP Communication and Guiding Skills with Deafblind People

AIM/OBJECTIVE: Essential skills for hands-on work. Knowledge of resources, equipment and communication methods with Deafblind people.
VENUE: Falkirk Old Sheriff Court, Hope Street, Falkirk.
DATES: 25th February, 11th & 25th March 1998.
DURATION: 25 hours plus assignments.
COST: £99.00 plus £35.00 examination fee.
REQUIREMENTS: Open to individuals with a need for information on Deafblind issues.

CACDP Interpreting for Deafblind People (Manual Alphabet)

AIM/OBJECTIVE: Proficiency in Deafblind Manual, interpreting ethics, paraphrasing, reception skills.
VENUE: DBUK Flat, 21 Alexandra Avenue, Lenzie.
DATES: Provisionally 29th April, 6th, 13th May, 3rd & 10th June 1998.
COST: £200.00 plus exam fees.
REQUIREMENTS: CACDP Communication and Guiding Skills with Deafblind people and a good level of English.

If you would like to know more about any of the above training opportunities please contact Alice McLeary who will be happy to discuss possibilities with you. To register for any of the courses please complete the attached application form and return to Deafblind UK Scottish office.

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for deafblind people and those
who support them - do use us for
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DEAFBLIND UK

The association of deafblind and dual sensory impaired people
100 Bridge Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DY. Tel/Minicom: 01733 358100
Fax: 01733 358356 Qwerty: 01733 358858 Email: jackie@deafblind.demon.co.uk
Registered Charity No. 802976 Company Reg. No. 2426281 Chairman: Tony Humphreys Chief Executive: Jackie Scott

Assessment of deafblind person's needs

Communication method is of prime importance in matching guide/communicator to deafblind person. Preferred communication, mobility needs, gender, personalities will be taken into consideration.

Guide/communicators are BSL users, normally holding CACDP Stage 2 BSL and CACDP Stage 1 Communication and Guiding Skills with Deafblind People.

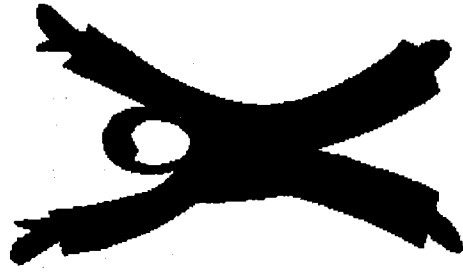
They also receive on-going training appropriate to their individual needs.

To encourage the provision of this service Deafblind UK will initially absorb the management costs and a flat hourly rate of £15 will be charged to the employing body if used on a sessional basis. Block contracts can be also be negotiated.

If travel costs are incurred during assignments these will be charged at cost.



Charity No 802976 Company Reg No 242681
The association of deafblind and dual sensory impaired people



DEAFBLIND
.UK.

Guide/Communicator Service in Scotland Medical Settings

Deafblind UK's Scottish office
21 Alexandra Avenue
Lenzie
G66 5BG
Tel/Text 0141 777 6111
Fax 0141 775 3311

Email: info@deafblindscotland.org.uk
Web site: <http://www.deafblindscotland.org.uk>

"People are regarded as deafblind if they have a severe degree of combined visual and auditory impairment resulting in problems of communication, information and mobility" - Breaking Through 1988

The Breaking Through Report of 1988 identified guide/communicators as the single most important service required by deafblind adults.

Deafblind people in a medical setting experience unique difficulties associated with their dual sensory impairment.

These include difficulty in:

- Finding hospital departments
- Hearing their name called
- Communicating with hospital staff
- Understanding diagnoses and treatment offered
- Accessing information in written form
- Understanding all aspects of medication
- When invasive treatment is required the deafblind patient is particularly likely to suffer anxiety

What is the role of a guide/communicator?

The guide/communicator should act as the eyes and ears of the deafblind person enabling he/she to function in a medical setting and to access information about their medical condition.

Arranging a service

To arrange a guide/communicator, please telephone Deafblind UK giving as much notice as possible. Deafblind UK can also be contacted in writing, by email or minicom.

The guide/communicator is required to:

- 1 Provide confidential communication and guiding support to the deafblind person.
- 2 Communicate all information in the deafblind persons chosen medium. These might include BSL, DB manual, Clear speech, using a loop, written notes, keyboard interpreting and others.
- 3 At all times, seek to enable the deafblind person to accomplish an identified task.
- 4 Enable the deafblind person to make informed decisions by providing all information.
- 5 Observe reasonable safety precautions during assignments.
- 6 Report to service co-ordinator.

Provide the service to the deafblind person as agreed by the deafblind person, funding agency, Deafblind UK co-ordinator and guide/communicator.

Deafblind UK
Application Form

Course required:

Name of participant:

Designation:

Address:

.....Tel.No.....

Any other requirements e.g. interpreter, loop, tape, large print, wheelchair access, special diet:

.....

Details for Invoicing

Name:

Address:

.....Tel.No.....

Please return to: Deafblind UK
21 Alexandra Avenue
Lenzie
G66 5BG

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