



Inspired Care

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

January 2023

Scope

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Policy Statement

Sensory impairment is a general term that encompasses people with a deaf or blind impairment or loss and includes dual sensory impairment or loss.

Sensory services are specialist, but such services must be integrated into the broader health and social care structures, including community care services. Local authorities should identify, make contact with and keep a record of people with hearing impairment, visual impairment and dual sensory impairment or loss, and keep a record of sensory impaired people in their area. This is to encourage specialist services at the appropriate level, with the required skills and knowledge to promote the following:

- Assessments to be carried out by trained and competent staff.
- Services to be provided that are appropriate to meet the identified needs of deaf, visually impaired and dual sensory impaired users.
- Involvement of the individual in the planning of services.

Principles

Dignity: people should be given the care and support they need in a way that supports their independence and dignity.

Privacy: people should be supported to have choice and control over their lives.

Choice: care should be based on the identified needs and wishes of the individual.

Safety: people should be supported to feel safe and secure, without being overprotected.

Realising potential: people should have the opportunity to achieve all they can and to make full use of available resources.

Equality and diversity: people should have equal access to information assessment and services, and all such services should work to redress inequalities and, where appropriate, challenge such discrimination.



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The Policy

In accessing our services, individuals will be supported by competent, well-trained staff whose practice is informed by the above principles.

The Department of Health Statutory Guidance 2015 Social Care for Deafblind Children and Adults requires local authorities (LAs) to:

- Identify, make contact with and keep a record of all deafblind people in their catchment area (including those people who have multiple disabilities including dual sensory impairment).
- Ensure that when an assessment is required or requested, it is carried out by a person or team that has specific training, expertise and experience to assess the needs of a deafblind person particular to assess the need for communication, one-to-one human contact, social interaction and emotional wellbeing, support with mobility assistive technology and habilitation/rehabilitation.
- Ensure services provided to deafblind people are appropriate, recognised that they may not necessarily be able to benefit from mainstream services or those services aimed primarily at blind people or deaf people who can rely on their other sense.
- Ensure that deafblind people can access specifically-trained one-to-one support workers if they are assessed as requiring one.
- Provide information about services in ways that are accessible to deafblind people.

It is important to note that to ensure the needs of the service users are met a multi-agency approach to information sharing is vital. In other words, any methods identified as communication are shared so that all involved parties can use an appropriate and understandable communication method, e.g. Makaton, BSL, Braille etc. This should be accessible information to all involved in the care planning process

The Care Act 2014 Regulations on Assessment include provision for the assessment of deafblind people. They state that:

“An assessment which relates to an individual who is deafblind must be carried out by a person who has specific training and expertise relating to individuals who are deafblind.” Care and Support Assessment Regulations 2014, 6 (1)

The Care Act guidance states that “the type and degree of specialism required should be judged on a case by case basis, according to the extent of the person’s condition and their communication needs”.

Related Policies

Accessible Information and Communication



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Assessment of Need and Eligibility

Care and Support Planning

Equality and Diversity

Equal Opportunities

Meeting Needs

Dignity and Respect

Related Guidance

Hearing Link:

<https://www.hearinglink.org/>

National Association of Deafened People:

<http://www.nadp.org.uk/>

Sense (includes implementing the Care Act):

<https://www.sense.org.uk/>

Royal National Institute for the Blind:

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/>

Accessible Information Standard:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/accessibleinfo/>

Training Statement

Some of these organisations above offer specific awareness training, as do the local specialist team within the social services department. All staff will undertake an appropriate level of training to deliver the required service to the required standard.

All staff, during induction, are made aware of the organisation's policies and procedures, all of which are used for training updates. All policies and procedures are reviewed and amended where necessary, and staff are made aware of any changes. Observations are undertaken to check skills and competencies. Various methods of training are used, including one to one, online, workbook, group meetings, and individual supervisions. External courses are sourced as required.

[AMEND AND INSERT AS REQUIRED]

Date Reviewed: January 2023

Person responsible for updating this policy: Wigdan Abdelaziz Mohamed Ali



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Next Review Date: January 2024

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