




COMMUNICATION INCORPORATING ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

Validated	October 2022
Scope	<p>This procedure applies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Staff Providing support to our clients <p>Legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Children Acts 1989 and 2004 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 The Care Act 2014 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
Purpose	For staff to understand, manage and deal with young people's behaviours, including and encouraging our service users to take responsibility for their behaviour and help them to learn how to resolve conflict.
Procedure owner	Galaxy Staffing Ltd.
Last review date	October 2021
Next review date	October 2023
Review frequency	Annually
Authorisation	Sulochna Chhetri
Signature	

Policy

This policy includes the requirements of the Accessible Information Standard (AIS) 2017. This relates to the information and communication needs of people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss.

There are many reasons a person may not be able to communicate. Staff must recognise these so that they can pay particular attention to how they communicate with people with a communication impairment.

Reasons might include:

- Sensory impairment e.g. visual problems, hearing difficulties or speech impediments.
- Health problems e.g. dementia, strokes or terminal illnesses such as brain tumours or tumours on the vocal cords. Neurological conditions such as motor neurone or Huntington's disease. Genetic problems such as Down's syndrome or a learning disability. Infections or pain.



- Mental incapacity. This might include being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication. The presence of a brain tumour, dementia or a stroke.
- Environmental issues e.g. noise, poor lighting or distractions.
- Psychological problems such as anger, denial, fear, anxiety and bereavement.

Definitions: Galaxy Staffing commit to equality when it comes to communication. It expects that all communication is effective.

For clarification, we use the AIS definitions for disability, impairment or sensory loss.

Disability – NHS England use the definition in the Equality Act 2010 to define this as ‘*a physical or mental impairment*’. Which also has a ‘*long-term adverse effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*’

Impairment – The authors use the Scope definition for this i.e. the ‘*long-term limitation of a person’s physical, mental or sensory function.*’

Sensory loss – This is especially for people who are blind or have some vision loss. People who are deaf/Deaf or have some hearing loss or people who are deafblind.

Policy: We are committed to equality. We expect that all communication is effective, in line with the AIS and that it is anti-discriminatory as required by the Equality Act (2010).

When communicating with people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss, managers and staff must ensure that these people understand what is being said. They should do this by requesting feedback to check understanding.

When communicating with others, we expect staff to:

- Find the best method of communicating with the person. To assist the person to use this method to help two-way communication and understanding.
- Speak to others in a professional manner, by treating people with courtesy, respect and consideration at all times.
- Communicate directly with the person or persons to resolve any differences that might develop. Staff should handle differences of opinion privately and with tact.
- Galaxy Staffing will not tolerate gossip and backbiting.
- Maintain a respectful working atmosphere.
- Refrain from shouting, yelling, using vulgarities or swearing at staff, service users or others.
- Avoid discriminatory remarks relating to any of the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. This also includes appearance, dress and other non-work-related matters e.g. where people live, socialise etc.

We will regard breaches of this policy as misconduct.

Assessment and care planning



- The AIS requires staff to identify the communication and information needs of people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss.
- Staff will identify communication and information needs during the initial assessment. This will continue regularly to ensure effective communication takes place at all times.
- Our clients will develop care plans that flag the communication and information needs of their service users. They should share these with our staff so they know how to communicate with the person.

Helping effective communication

- As part of the AIS, service users must receive information in an accessible format. This might include the use of various aids or tools to help with understanding. For example, the material is written in Braille. Material translated into another language. An interpreter to explain a treatment or communication via high tech equipment.
- Before communication takes place, staff should make sure the person is in the right frame of mind to communicate. If a person is angry, distracted or the environment is unsuitable, staff should postpone the communication.
- Staff should be aware of invading a service user's personal space, as this can prevent effective communication.
- When communicating verbally, staff should make sure that their language, tone, pace, volume and pitch is clear. Body language should match the message they are conveying.
- Staff should summarise what they have said and ask for confirmation that the person understands this.
- Active listening skills are difficult for people to grasp. But staff must try to hear what the service user is saying, without interruption. They must only act on the information when the person has finished their point.
- Avoid making judgements about others. For example, do not compare, criticise or blame others as this can prevent the person from talking to staff.

Communication aids and equipment

- If the service user needs an aid or piece of equipment to assist with communication, staff should discuss this with the person. They may need an assessment to make sure it is the right equipment for that individual. A local speech and language therapist or TEC personnel can help with this.
- There may be times when you will need to get literature or language translated for the person. This might involve using an interpreting or translation service, such as Language Line. Make sure the organisation understands the importance of confidentiality.