

Carol McIndoe

Patient Experience Improvement Manager (Disability Equality)
Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Deaf Communication Cards: Promoting Effective Communication with Deaf Patients

PENNA category: Communicating Effectively with Patients and Families

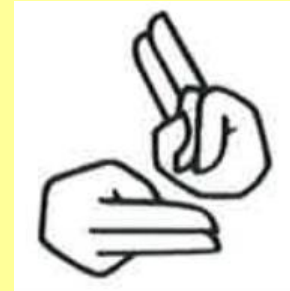


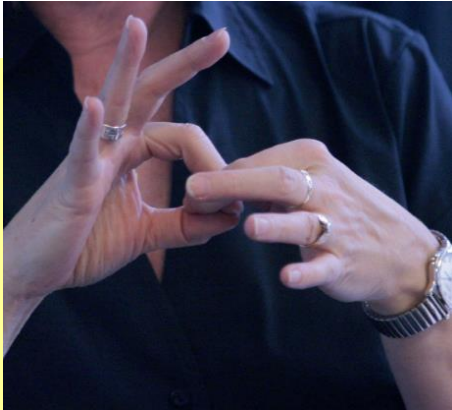
Imagine being in pain, feeling anxious and having to come into a busy hospital for care and treatment.

Consider how important effective communication is in that situation.

Now add to that scenario the fact that you live in a silent world and can observe others talking, but not take part. How must it feel to be addressed soundlessly, to be examined, moved and touched while watching others communicating with ease about you, but not with you?

This project is about putting processes in place to ensure that there is effective communication between Trust staff and Deaf patients using our services.





The improvement aim of this project was for 100% of Deaf BSL-users to experience good quality 2-way communication in all of their dealings with the Trust.

This will greatly improve the patient's overall experience, while also enabling staff can carry out their tasks and deliver care effectively.

Where it began



A focus group was held with Deaf British Sign Language (BSL) users, where they shared their experiences with us of coming to our hospitals as patients.

We listened to their comments and suggestions for improvements and realised that the Trust could make simple adjustments which would significantly improve communication between Deaf BSL users and Trust staff.

Yesterday was an opportunity for members of the Gloucestershire Deaf community to share their views on improvements to Deaf health care and for Carol to update on improvements already in place, including the new Deaf Patient Support Cards.



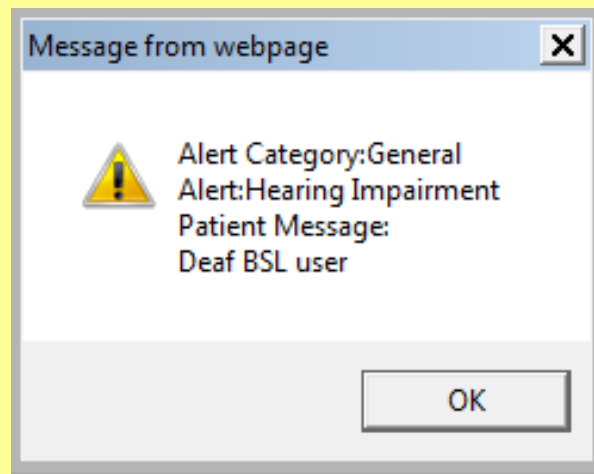
Change idea 1

Meaningful communication needs alerts on electronic patient records system

Deaf BSL-user alerts have been added to the home-screen of the electronic records of all patients who are Deaf BSL-users.

The alert is very obvious as it appears centrally on a blank screen and requires an action by the viewer to move onto the next screen.

Further details are included in the 'communication needs' section of the patient's home-screen, shown on the next slide.



Change idea 1

Continued from previous slide

Having this data clearly visible to booking office and reception staff enables them to share the patient's needs with other staff due to interact with the patient.

The data was kindly provided by Gloucestershire Deaf Association (GDA) with appropriate permissions.

Free text

Change idea 2

'Deaf Communication Card' and reception counter-top notice

Notices are displayed on reception counter-tops, prompting Deaf BSL users to present their Deaf Communication Card to the reception staff.



The card and the notice have the 24hr GDA telephone number for them to arrange an interpreter.

The sight of the notice is reassuring for Deaf BSL users as they know their communication needs are being considered.

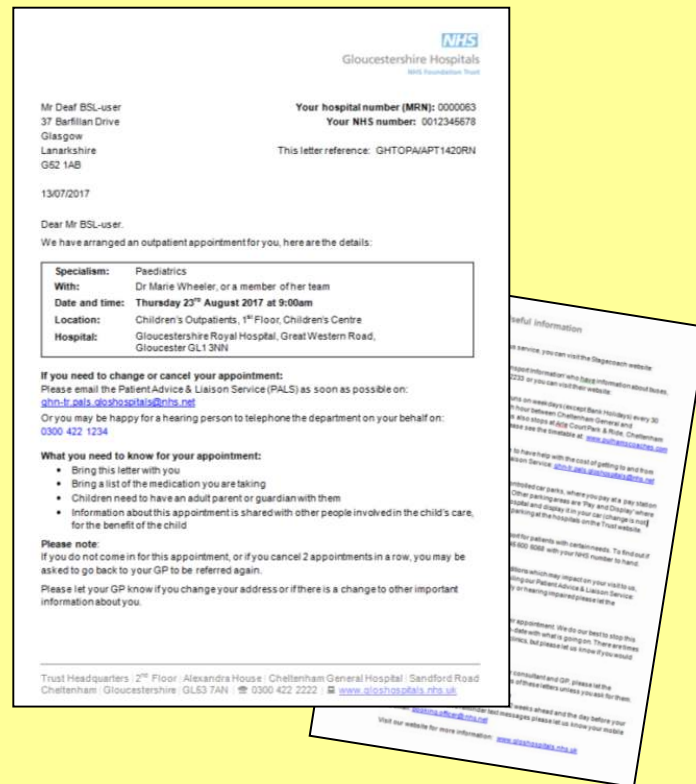


Change idea 3

Bespoke patients' letter template for BSL-users

English is not the first language of Deaf BSL users, although they use English words. Sentence structures are very different, so a 'Plain English' patient letter template has been created.

Key information is emphasised in a text box and all other information is kept short, succinct and bullet-pointed for readability.



Key results - in place

- **Deaf Communication Card and corresponding reception counter-top notice**

there has been a 22% increase in BSL interpreter bookings by the Trust, rather than by the patient* since August 2017

*In September 2017, Gloucestershire Deaf Association (GDA) did not have a single appointment out of 19 requiring an interpreter, that the Trust had failed to notify them on



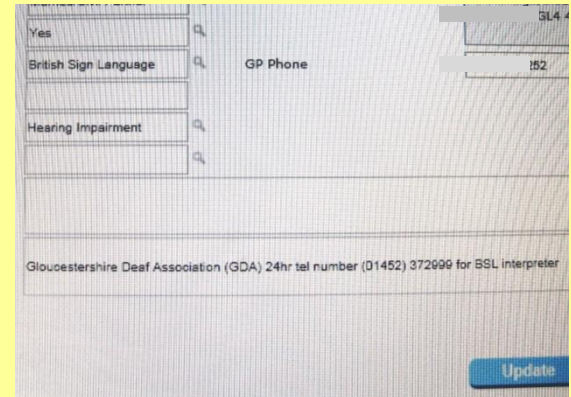
Key results - in place

- **Communication need alerts put onto electronic patient records system**

100% of known Deaf BSL users now have an accurate alert on TrakCare.

This means that all staff accessing the system are immediately aware that the patient requires a BSL interpreter. Information is provided which enables staff to book an interpreter with ease.

Staff viewing the patient's record can share the patient's communication need with others involved in their care. This also goes some way to fulfilling the 'sharing of data' requirement of the Accessible Information Standard.



The screenshot shows a patient record form with the following fields and values:

Yes	GP Phone
British Sign Language	BSL
Hearing Impairment	

At the bottom of the form, there is a text box containing: Gloucestershire Deaf Association (GDA) 24hr tel number (01452) 372999 for BSL interpreter. An 'Update' button is visible in the bottom right corner.

Key results - in place



Gloucestershire Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

- **Accessible patient letter**

The adjusted patients' appointment letter utilising Plain English is now used as standard for Deaf BSL users.

As an aside, the Trust has decided to adopt the letter template for all of our patients.

Dear Mr BSL-user.

We have arranged an outpatient appointment for you, here are the details:

Specialism:	Paediatrics
With:	Dr Marie Wheeler, or a member of her team
Date and time:	Thursday 23 rd August 2017 at 9:00am
Location:	Children's Outpatients, 1 st Floor, Children's Centre
Hospital:	Gloucestershire Royal Hospital, Great Western Road, Gloucester GL1 3NN

If you need to change or cancel your appointment:

Please email the Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) as soon as possible on:

gln-tr.pals.gloshospitals@nhs.net

Or you may be happy for a hearing person to telephone the department on your behalf on:

0300 422 1234

What you need to know for your appointment:

- Bring this letter with you
- Bring a list of the medication you are taking
- Children need to have an adult parent or guardian with them
- Information about this appointment is shared with other people involved in the child's care, for the benefit of the child

Please note:

If you do not come in for this appointment, or if you cancel 2 appointments in a row, you may be asked to go back to your GP to be referred again.

Please let your GP know if you change your address or if there is a change to other important information about you.

Additional improvements that have grown from this project:



A short news item was featured on local BBC news channels to promote the Deaf Communication Card, following publicity on social media by Gloucestershire Deaf Association and a resulting nationwide interest.

Key results - in place



10 minute staff training video, to raise awareness and increase confidence, which will be incorporated into our communication training