

Deafness and hearing loss

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This document is also available on request in Braille, large print, tape, disc and can be translated into different languages.

Information sheet G1

January 2016

This information sheet is about:

- The first steps you can take if you have developed a hearing loss
- How to get help if you are Deaf and use British Sign Language
- Information for people who help and support you
- Where you can find out more

We understand that a hearing loss can affect many areas of your life. You might be finding it difficult to use the phone, hear the television or the doorbell. You may be having problems communicating with family and friends, joining in social events, or you may be struggling at work. Losing your hearing can affect you emotionally, and you may feel frustrated, angry, depressed and isolated.

You can get lots of information, help and support from many organisations that are used to working with people with hearing loss. This information sheet tells you about organisations that can provide you with support. It also lists other useful reading which tells you more about getting information, ways of communicating, specialist equipment and support.

The first steps you can take if you have developed a hearing loss

If you notice that your hearing is getting worse, you should first go to your GP who will probably arrange for you to see a specialist at the audiology clinic. The clinic will provide treatment if required, and discuss hearing aids with you, if appropriate.

If your condition cannot be treated, there are several organisations that can provide you with help.

Action on Hearing Loss (used to be called Royal National Institute of Deaf People - RNID)

This is a large national organisation that provides a wide range of equipment, information about ear conditions, advice on coping with deafness, specialist residential services, communication support and a range of other services.

For more information and to contact them:

Phone: 0808 808 0123 (voice)

Textphone: 0808 808 9000

SMS text: 0780 0000 360

Email: information@hearingloss.org.uk (email hyperlink)

Website: www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk (hyperlink)

deafPLUS

deafPLUS is a voluntary organisation which provides a range of services to people who are Deaf, deafened and hard of hearing.

Nationally, deafPLUS services include:

- Advocacy, advice and employment support
- Personal support and development

In Somerset, deafPLUS run a Mobile Advisory Service that carries equipment and information, and visits towns and villages throughout the county.

For more information, contact deafPLUS:

2 Queens Parade

Bath

BA1 2NJ

Phone: 01225 446555 (voice)

Fax: 01225 333505

Email: bath.office@deafplus.org (email hyperlink)

Website: www.deafplus.org (hyperlink)

Forest Books

This company provides a wide range of books, videos, DVDs and CD ROMs on all aspects of deafness and has a mail order service.

You can contact them at:

Phone: 01594 833858 (voice/minicom)

Fax: 01594 833446

Email: customerservices@forestbooks.com (email hyperlink)

Website: www.forestbooks.com (hyperlink)

Help from Adult Social Care

There are specialist social care workers around the county for people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment. They will be happy to visit you in your own home to share your anxieties and talk about any problems you may be having.

They can:

- Give you an opportunity to talk about how you are feeling
- Provide advice and information about local and national services to help you
- Provide aids and equipment to make life easier
- Provide practical and emotional help with your care and support needs

How can I contact Adult Social Care?

For general enquiries in the first instance, please contact Somerset Direct.

Phone: 0300 123 2224 (voice)

SMS text: 07781 482858

Email: generalenquiries@somerset.gov.uk

Information for people who help and support you

In Somerset, there is a carers support service that provides information, advice and support networks for carers. This service is run by an organisation called Compass Carers.

Phone: 01823 255911

Email: info@compassdisability.org.uk (email hyperlink)

Website: www.compasscarers.org.uk (hyperlink)

Where can I find out more?

Other information sheets

G2 Hearing loss: Methods of communication

- Ways of communicating if you are Deaf or hard of hearing
- Where to learn lipreading and British Sign Language
- Communication support and interpreting services

G3 Hearing loss: Your rights

- Your rights
- What to do if you experience discrimination because of your hearing loss
- Organisations that can support you with complaints

G4 Hearing loss: Employment

- How to get help if you are looking for a job
- How to get support with your hearing loss if you are already in work

G5 Hearing loss: Leisure, holidays and travel

- Special leisure services for Deaf people who use British Sign Language.
- Help you can get with travel
- Some travel concessions and special holidays
- Religious services and support for British Sign Language users

G6 Hearing loss: Education services for children with hearing loss

- How to get help with your child's education

G7 Hearing loss: Hearing therapy

- How hearing therapy can help you
- Tinnitus
- Cochlear implants

G8 Hearing loss: Mental Health services

- Local mental health services for Deaf people
- National mental health services for Deaf people
- Local mental health services for young Deaf people
- Counselling services for Deaf people

Your opportunity to feedback

We welcome your comments about the services you receive. If you would like to tell us what you think, please either:

- Contact us on our website www.somerset.gov.uk (hyperlink), or
- Speak to your social care worker
- Phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224
SMS text: 07781 482858
Email: generalenquiries@somerset.gov.uk (email hyperlink)
- Contact the Adults and Health Customer Experience Officer:
Floor B2
County Hall
Taunton
TA1 4DY
Email: customerexperience@somerset.gov.uk (email hyperlink)

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