

NHS England Accessible Information Standard

Accessible Communications Policy and Guidance

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Introduction and legal framework

The Equality Act became law in October 2010. This covers all the groups that were protected by previous equality legislation, known as Protected Characteristics, one of which is disability.

The Act places a legal duty on all service providers to take steps or make 'reasonable adjustments' in order to avoid putting a disabled person at a disadvantage when compared to a person who is not disabled. The Act includes the provision of information in an accessible format as a 'reasonable step' to be taken.

The Care Act 2014 also placed specific duties on Local Authorities with regards to the provision of Information and Advice and that this must be 'accessible to, and proportionate to the needs of those for whom it is provided'.

Principles of policy

The Accessible Information Standard (AIS) defines a consistent approach to identifying, recording, flagging, sharing and meeting individual's information and communication support needs by health and social care providers.

The standard aims to improve the quality and safety of care received by individuals with information and communication needs and their ability to be involved in autonomous decision making about their health, care and wellbeing.

The AIS is of particular relevance to individuals who have:

- ▶ impairment or sensory loss (including people who are blind, deaf or deafblind)
- ▶ a Learning Disability
- ▶ information or communication needs relating to a disability
- ▶ a mental health condition which affects their ability to communicate

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ▶ raise awareness of communication support needs and to encourage staff to continue to assess for these needs and record them appropriately
- ▶ describe the processes in place for the provision of accessible information and communication support and how we will meet an individuals needs
- ▶ describe how the information we hold around communication support needs will be shared with our partners, where appropriate
- ▶ raise awareness of the AIS
- ▶ ensure that we have an accessible complaints policy and procedure.
- ▶ ensure we support individuals with information and communication needs to provide feedback on experiences of services and of receiving information in appropriate formats and communication support.

The AIS highlights 5 key areas that need to be considered in order to comply with the standard. These are:

- 1. Identify** Ask if people have any information or communication needs and find out how to meet those needs
- 2. Record** Record those needs in a set way that is highly visible, using specific definitions
- 3. Flag** Use alerts or flags to make it clear on the adult's record or file what their needs are, and prompt action to meet those needs
- 4. Share** Share information about the adult's need with other NHS and adult social care providers
- 5. Act** Make sure people get their information in an accessible way and have the communication support they need

Scope of policy

This policy applies to Borough of Poole adult social care and professional partners. It relates to meeting the communication and information support needs of adults where that support is due to a disability, impairment or sensory loss.

Exclusions

People without any disability, impairment or sensory loss but who do not speak or read English because they use a different language. Please refer to the AIS guidance document.

Health and social care websites are out of the scope of the standards.

References and related information

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[NHS England Accessible Information Standard 2016](#)

Additional Information

- ▶ The complaints factsheet and policy is available in Easy Read and large print and documents can be requested in any other accessible format.
- ▶ Gaining feedback from individuals with communication and support needs is included in the annual Department of Health survey and the self AIS auditing tool.

Contact Information

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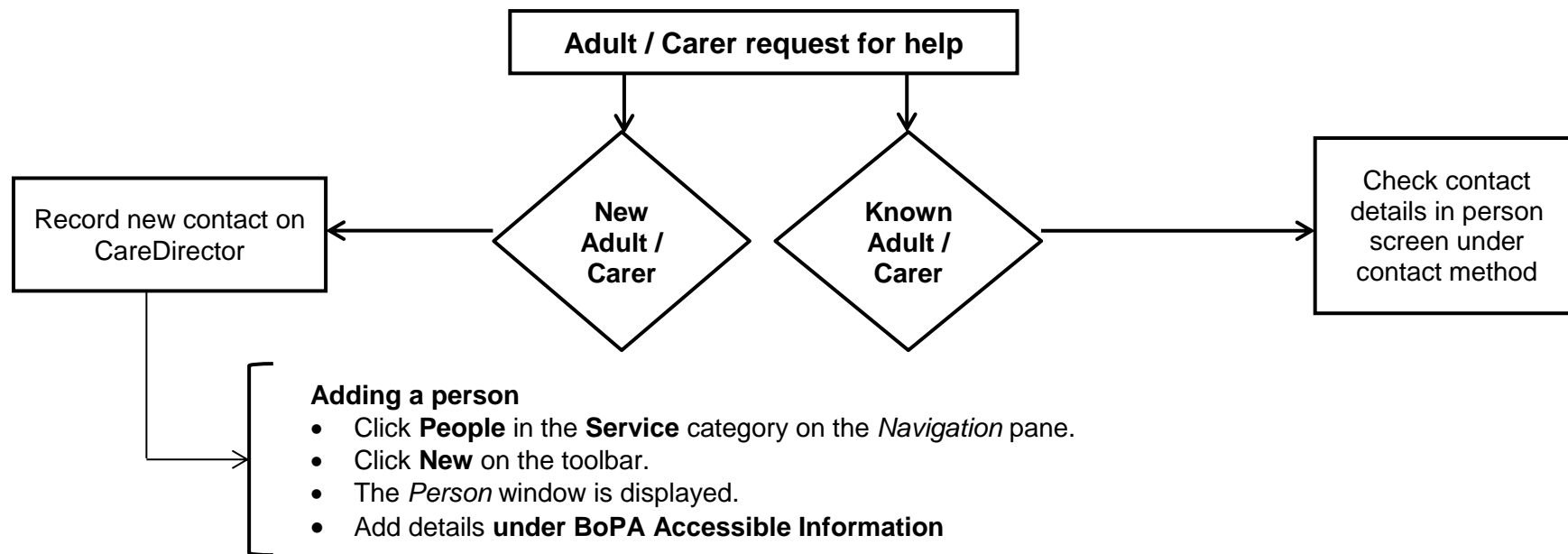
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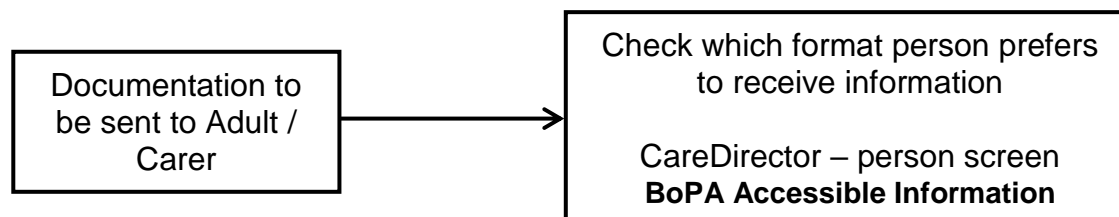
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Appendix

Recording and checking information on CareDirector:
 Where do I find accessible information / communication support?



Sending information



| Visual Impairment | Hearing Impairment | Deaf Blind | Learning Disability (LD) |
|--|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large print Minimum font size 16 CareDirector can print in larger font. Blue Badge in font 18. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conversation amplifiers Sensory Loss Team have amplifiers if needed. Check with team for availability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreter available through Third Sector. Details from Sensory Loss Team. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy read Easy read documents can be produced in-house dependent on capacity contact Amanda Wheeler or Nicky Mitchell Poole Forum are usually commissioned to produce large documents. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher contrast Coloured paper (ie yellow) for higher contrast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing Loop System A Portable hearing loop is available from Amanda Wheeler (C&I-PS) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makaton LD team sometimes use Makaton or they use their Speech and Language Therapist if essential. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Braille or Audio For information and advice on transcribing to Braille or audio contact the Sensory Loss Team | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text Relay Dial 18001 before the number. A third person in the call will type the conversation. | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • British Sign Language (BSL) Bookable 48 hours in advance, booking details on Loop. Emergency service is available. | | |