

Equality and Diversity Toolbox Talk

ED008/2025: How Deaf/BSL user can contact NHS Grampian Services



We often ask our patients to contact us by phone, however, for a Deaf/BSL user this can be a barrier. With technology, here are some options that you can offer and support a Deaf/BSL to access your services.

How can a Deaf/BSL user contact your services?

By email	<p>You may offer them to contact your service by email. Be specific how they can use this service, example, only for booking an appointment. Be clear that this is not for clinical discussion. Be mindful of Information Governance, IT Security and what information you can share.</p>
Use contactScotlandbsl (Video Relay Service)	<p>If they have a smartphone, tablet or computer, you can ask them if they use contactScotlandbsl app. https://contactscotland-bsl.org/</p> <p>This app allows them to get an online BSL interpreter who can relay messages to a hearing person via a telephone call. This is video relay service (VRS).</p> <p>The Deaf/BSL user need to register to use this free service.</p> <p>Staff can also use this service to call a Deaf/BSL user if you know their registered account. Please ask the patient if they consent to be contacted via contactScotlandbsl.</p>
Use UK Relay	<p>If they have a smartphone, tablet or computer, you can ask them if they use UK Relay app https://www.relayuk.bt.com/</p> <p>This app allows them to send a message to a Relay Operator who makes the call to the department and relay the message to a hearing person.</p> <p>The Deaf/BSL user need to register to use this free service.</p>

	You can also use this service to communicate to a Deaf/BSL user if you know their registered account. Please ask the patient if they consent to be contacted via UK Relay.
Come in person	You can inform them if they can come in person to book an appointment or if they have other queries.
SMS/Text	If your service have a work mobile that they can send message. Be specific how they can use this service, example, only for booking an appointment. Be clear that this is not for clinical discussion. Be mindful of Information Governance, IT Security and what information you can share.

What do you do if the patient requires a BSL interpreter for their appointment?

BSL interpreters can be booked for your patient's healthcare appointment. There are many ways on how NHS Grampian can provide this service to Deaf/BSL users.

See also Toolbox talks 004, 005 and 005 on BSL Interpreter

Option 1. Contact the BSL interpreter

You can call or email BSL interpreters (with Service Level Agreement with NHSG) to attend NHS health appointments.

You have to provide information about the appointment (date, time, location of appointment, telephone of GP/department).

BSL Interpreters who has Service Level Agreement with NHS Grampian

	Mobile	Email
Sally Fraser-Hay	07746 348365	fraser.hay96@gmail.com
Elaine Campbell	07856 907789	ec40@icloud.com
Colin Eagleson	07528 633607	colineaglebsl@outlook.com

Option 2.

If the appointment is in any of these NHS Grampian hospitals/services: Aberdeen Royal Infirmary, Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital, Aberdeen Maternity or Woodend Hospital, you can email gram.interpreterbooking@nhs.scot Please provide patient name, CHI or date of birth, date and time of appointment, location of appointment and preferred BSL interpreter (if any).

Depending on the type of appointment, you can provide offer either a face-to-face interpreter or online BSL interpreter. It is good practice to ask the patient's preference too.

1. In-person appointment

With BSL interpreter:

Most clinical appointments of patients with clinicians are **in-person or face-to-face**. The BSL interpreter must be booked in advance.

With Convo Now online BSL interpreter:

Some departments or GPs have Convo Now. Convo Now gives instant access to online video BSL interpreter (no pre-booking required) for in-person appointments with a clinician.

Convo Now is available in Emergency Department (A&E), hospital departments and some GP Practices.

The online video BSL interpreter provides quick access to a BSL interpreter.

If your service wants to have access to this, please email gram.equalitydiversity@nhs.scot

2. Video Consultation (via Near Me)

Some appointments are can be offered via video consultation (Near Me). A BSL interpreter can be booked in advance to join the video consultation. Near Me is a video consulting service that enables people attend appointments from home or other convenient locations. <https://www.nearme.scot/>