



“My doctors always check that I understand and that I have heard. They also let me voice my opinion.”
Deaf young person

Every deaf young person is different.

Some might sign, lipread, or use speech. Some might use a bit of everything.

The best way to find out what they need is to ask them.

NDCS Freephone Helpline:
0808 800 8880
(voice and text)

helpline@ndcs.org.uk

ndcs.org.uk/mylifemyhealth

“We need to be more independent in preparation for our future life, it is good for your confidence, you shouldn’t always go with your parents all the time”

Deaf young person

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ndcs
every deaf child



Supporting deaf teenagers during their appointments



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ndcs
every deaf child

Before their appointment

Is your booking service accessible?

Deaf people often need to book via email or text, as using the phone may not be suitable.

Are your reception staff comfortable talking to a deaf teenager?

Share the advice in this leaflet with them so they feel able to communicate in the best

way. It may be useful for the surgery staff to undergo some accessibility training together.

It's a good idea to have a longer appointment with a deaf young person, as communication may take longer. Please discuss this with your reception staff.

How do you announce appointments?

In many surgeries names are called out and a deaf young person could miss their appointment. An LED screen is the clearest way to announce appointments, but if you don't have one of these make sure the deaf young person is collected from the waiting area.

Who books interpreters if needed?

Your reception staff need to book interpreters. The young person should not have to rely on family or friends to interpret a confidential appointment. It may be possible for you to use Sign Translate www.signtranslate.com.



During their appointment

Has a parent or carer come with them?

The deaf young person may have brought a parent or carer with them for reassurance. Always speak to the deaf young person rather than their companion.

How do you know they have understood?

Encourage the deaf young person to ask questions, ask them if they have understood or if they would like you to write down a summary of what you have said.

Some easy steps you can take to improve the appointment.

- At the beginning of the appointment ask if there is anything you need to do to help them understand you.
- Keep background noise to a minimum.
- Don't stand with your face in the shadow or with a window behind you, as this makes it hard to read your lips.
- Keep still, it is hard to lipread someone who is moving around.
- Use visual clues, such as objects or charts. Use gestures to improve understanding.
- If you are not sure they have understood, don't give up. Try writing it down.
- Don't shout, talk slowly and clearly.

Action on Hearing Loss has some practical resources about how you can better support deaf patients www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Becoming independent

Many deaf young people will bring a parent or carer along for support or reassurance. Although this can be helpful, it can also hinder the young person becoming more independent.

There are ways you can encourage deaf teenagers to become more independent.

- Speak to the deaf young person directly – it's their health.
- Ask the deaf young person if they would like to speak to you privately without the parent present. There may be something embarrassing they are not mentioning.
- Encourage the deaf young person to ask questions.

“They talk to my parents. [It] makes me very embarrassed because I'm 18.”

Deaf young person

