



Accessible Information Standard Policy

1.0 Purpose and scope

This policy sets out the NHG's position on the Accessible Information Standard and how staff refer to the standard and apply its principles in their workplace.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define NHG's role in responding to the information and communication needs of customers with a disability, visual impairment or sensory loss, who receive publicly funded care and support services at NHG
- Ensure that we meet regulatory requirements, comply with law and best practice.

This policy applies to all NHG Care and Support services, including CQC registered Extra Care services. Staff outside of Care and Support can still apply the principles of this policy as best practice but must follow the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and adhere to the Equalities Act 2010.

The Accessible Information Standard Policy has been developed in line with relevant NHG Policies and procedures and current legislative requirements.

2.0 Definitions

The Accessible Information Standard (AIS) - a law since 2016, which aims to make sure people with a disability, visual impairment or sensory loss are given information they can understand, and the communication support they need.

Information and communication needs - covers the needs of people who are deaf/Deaf, blind, or deafblind, who have a learning disability or other disability, impairment, or sensory loss. This includes interpretation or translation for people whose first language is British Sign Language. It does not cover these needs for other sign languages. Additionally, AIS applies to carers and parents of those with information and communication needs.

3.0 General principles

NHG has a duty to meet the Accessible Information Standard for all customers who access NHG publicly funded care services.

We have no duty to meet the Accessible Information Standard in instances where a resident's care is not publicly funded. However, we ensure that we make reasonable adjustments, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the NHG Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and provide necessary support to meet individual communication and information needs as far as possible.

Where we provide care services to a customer with information and communication needs, we take necessary steps to ensure the appropriate and legible communication methods are in place.

As far as possible, we strive to meet requests for specialist communication needs for all customers with an identified information and communication need, including those who do not receive publicly funded care. This will be provided by us or an external agency, where appropriate.

4.0 Assisting residents with information and communication needs

If a customer has information and communication needs and need access to information such as appointment letters in a format other than standard print, or an interpreter for a health or social care appointment, we assist and support that as far as possible.

When supporting residents with information and communication needs:

- We are able to contact, and be contacted by, services in accessible ways, for example via email or text message
- We are able to receive information and correspondence in formats customers can read and understand, for example in audio, braille, easy read or large print
- We are supported by a professional communication service at appointments or when receiving services if this is needed to support conversation, for example a British Sign Language interpreter
- We get support from care staff and organisations to communicate, for example to lip-read or use a hearing aid
- We are committed to demonstrating compliance with the law and regulated activities through staff behaviour, day to day practice, communication, and record keeping.

The standard does not require us to provide translation or interpretation services for those whose first language is not English. Additionally, it does not cover access to accessibility in care such as specialised signage or professional transportation.

The standard only refers to communication and information needs, which should be assessed if this has not been done before accessing NHG services.

We monitor the ways we deliver improvement in how we capture a consistent and meaningful sensory data and recognise that the residents with the sensory, communication and information needs must be given support they require.

5.0 Expectations of staff

We expect staff and encourage third parties to report any issues relating to accessibility of information or concerns that may come to our attention immediately, should there be any, to the registered manager and/or Care and Support Senior Management Team.

All concerns must be recorded via the relevant systems in place.

Any failure to comply with the Accessible Information Standard Policy may lead to formal proceedings, such as capability and/or disciplinary action, in both CQC regulated Extra Care services and Care and Support services.

Any failure to comply with this policy in CQC regulated services would be subject to inspection findings and thus may impact on ratings and could potentially lead to enforcement action being taken.

6.0 Our approach

In writing this policy we have carried out the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Assessment.

If you'd like more information about this work, please contact the Policy Team at policy@nhg.org.uk.

7.0 Reference

- Equality Act 2010
- The Care Act 2014
- Data Protection Act 1998 and relevant GDPR
- Health and Social Care Act 2012 (section 250)
- Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014: Regulation 9: Person centred, Regulation 10: Dignity and Respect and Regulation 13: Safeguarding service users from abuse and improper treatment.

Document control

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