

An update from N-compass Deaf Link Service



Best Wishes and a Happy New Year to you All

n-compass Deaf Link Service supports British Sign Language users who are struggling to access information and support from the services in their communities across Lancashire. Our Deaf Link Worker Sue has worked with BSL Communities across the Northwest for 15 years and is committed to achieving positive change and equitable access to services for the Deaf in Lancashire.

It has been a really busy time for the Deaf Link Service as we work to improve access to services for Deaf people.

We are getting in touch with you to tell you about some positive changes that have been made to greatly improve access to hospitals and the Police force for BSL users in Lancashire in the hope that you will share this with the BSL users that you work with.

BSL Access to Hospitals in Lancashire

The 4 main hospitals in Lancashire; Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Preston Royal Hospital, Chorley and South Ribble Hospital and the Royal Lancaster infirmary had an existing provision of a BSL interpreter for all planned visits although increased awareness of BSL users' needs amongst hospital staff would improve the experience and ensure that this happens on every occasion.

Recent work has been undertaken by the local interpreter service Co Sign and the Patient experience Leads in the Hospital Trusts to address issues identified and raised by the Deaf Link Worker. There is now a service available to all BSL users visiting

hospital for unplanned visits, such as to the A&E department, to facilitate communication with staff.

Communication support is now provided via a remote interpreter for all unplanned visits

The BSL user can text Co Sign on 07974684720 to make them aware that you are going to or are at the hospital and they will facilitate an interpreter via a remote service to their mobile phone.

Co Sign will also support calls to the hospital for things like appointment changes, medication issues or hearing aid batteries free of charge to the BSL user. This can be done by just texting Co Sign with the request.

The Royal Lancaster Infirmary can also be accessed by BSL users on unplanned occasions via Sign Live.

For more information about the Deaf Link Service go to <https://www.n-compass.org.uk/our-services/wellbeing/deaf-link-service>





BSL Access to Lancashire Police Service

Our work with the Police has been led by the work that we are doing with Deaf individuals and witnessing their inability to communicate effectively with this service.

The provisions that the Police already had in place were-

101 – non-urgent crime reporting via ‘Sign Live’ remote interpreter service.

To report a non-urgent crime via an interpreter- Download Sign Live App onto a mobile phone, open App (Register with the App if not already registered) click on Lancashire Police in the Directory, Interpreter is immediately available on screen to facilitate communication. The non-urgent crime can be reported.

999 text to emergency services

This service can be used to report an emergency to the Police, Fire or Ambulance Service via text from a pre-registered phone. To register a phone text the word ‘register’ to 999. You will receive a response about the service and reply ‘Yes’. Phone is now registered to the service. Texts to emergency services should start with the service needed and contain as much information as possible.

NB Unregistered phones will not connect with the 999-text service.

Planned police appointments and interviews

The Police will book a face-to-face interpreter for all planned interviews. The Link Worker Service found that,

although the above improvements, made to access for Deaf people, are great steps forward, they do not facilitate communication that is unplanned e.g. phone calls to the station, to individual officers or to speak with an officer face to face in the street. Work done by our Link Worker Sue Gardam has resulted in an agreement by Lancashire Police Force to fund provision that will ensure that the Deaf community have full access to communication even for events that are unplanned when an interpreter has not been booked.

Now ALL unplanned communication with the Police for BSL users can now be made via Sign Live Remote interpreter service.

Download Sign Live App onto a mobile phone, Open the App, (register if not already registered), click on the directory listing for Lancashire Police, Interpreter is immediately available (24/7) to facilitate communication.

NB The text service must always be used for all emergency contact.

