

Reference:	FOI.5892.21
Subject:	Accessible services for deaf people
Date of Request:	23 April 2021

Requested:

I would like to see a copy of your generalised standard policy for accessible services for deaf people.

These would link in with the All Wales Standards for accessible Communication and Information for people with sensory loss.

If you do not have a policy could you let me know how the health board ensures that their services are fully accessible? This would be more than just providing an interpreter.

Response:

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) confirms that it does not hold an accessible services policy.

However, whilst operating in accordance with the Section 45 Freedom of Information Code of Practice, the UHB has a duty to provide advice and assistance. Therefore, the UHB provides the following information, which is relevant to your request :-

The UHB reports bi-annually to Welsh Government (WG) on its adherence to the All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss. This includes the establishment of a Partnership Forum to monitor performance against the standards and the provision of staff training, delivered by those with a lived experience of sensory loss. Additionally, all staff are encouraged to undertake a Sensory Loss training module, to aid awareness, which is available as an online course within the UHB's Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system. Communication is supported by offering alternative methods of communication such as SMS text and email and providing information in a range of formats including British Sign Language (BSL).

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is required for any policy or service change to ensure that all protected categories have been considered, that there are no negative impacts and that services are accessible.

The UHB operates in accordance with the UK Government's Accessibility Requirements for Public Sector Bodies, which came in to force in September 2018 and requires websites and mobile apps to be fully accessible. The UHB's Accessibility Statement is available on the UHB's website and can be accessed via the link below:

<https://hduhb.nhs.wales/use-of-site/accessibility-statement/>

For further information on the accessibility requirements, please use the link below.

[Understanding accessibility requirements for public sector bodies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/understanding-accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-bodies)

The UHB provides interpreter and translation services and BSL interpreters are available face to face and online, so that communication can be supported for episodes of unplanned care as well as scheduled appointments.

Further information is available on the UHB's dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion webpage, which can be accessed via the attached link:

[Hywel Dda University Health Board | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(wales.nhs.uk\)](https://www.wales.nhs.uk/healthboards/hywel-d-da-university-health-board/equality-diversity-and-inclusion)