

Reference:	FOI.16439.25
Subject:	Audiology support
Date of Request:	23 January 2025

Requested:

1. When patients present with hearing issues that require them to consider British Sign Language teaching. Who and what referral process do you currently undertake?
2. Do you have any national policy regarding such referrals you could provide me with copies with?
3. How many referrals have taken place?
4. If available in age categories of such referral can i please have these figures?
5. If no such referrals are made please can you explain why, and how this aligns with integrating with ensuring inclusivity for all and helping hard to reach communities?
6. Is there or has there ever been a policy to remove posters that have details of support groups for the teaching of British sign Language.

Clarification

I would like details for the last 12 months please?

I mean consider referrals of patients (including family members/carers of patients) presenting with hearing issues to BSL training?

I mean referrals to BSL training and deaf support networks.

Response:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) confirms that if and when required, the Audiology Service would signpost patients to the British Sign Language (BSL) teaching and BSL teaching directory, which are both available via the internet. Additionally, in the case of children, BSL teaching would be supported by the teachers of the deaf who are allocated to newly diagnosed children following the Newborn Hearing Screening pathway.
2. The UHB confirms that it does not have a national policy.
3. The UHB confirms that the service has not made any formal referrals for any type of BSL teaching, as it does not have a referral process for this.
4. Not applicable.
5. Please see response to question 1. Additionally, the UHB provides opportunities for staff to take on BSL training to enhance their ability to confidently communicate with patients and their family members with hearing issues. The UHB has a Deaf Club for staff to practise signing, and it raises awareness of BSL training opportunities provided by other organisations or community groups.

6. The UHB confirms that there is no policy to remove posters that have details of support groups for the teaching of BSL.