

Accessible Information Standard – Overview 2017/2018

Summary

The Accessible Information Standard aims to make sure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss get information that they can access and understand, and any communication support that they need from health and care services.

The Standard tells organisations how they should make sure that patients and service users, and their carers and parents, can access and understand the information they are given. This includes making sure that people get information in accessible formats.

The Standard also tells organisations how they should make sure that people get support from a communication professional if they need it, and about changing working practices to support effective communication.

By law ([section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012](#)), all organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care must follow the Standard in full from 1st August 2016 onwards.

Organisations that commission NHS care and / or adult social care, for example Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), must also support implementation of the Standard by provider organisations.

What does the Standard tell organisations to do?

As part of the Accessible Information Standard, organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care must do five things. They must:

1. Ask people if they have any information or communication needs, and find out how to meet their needs.
2. Record those needs clearly and in a set way.

3. Highlight or flag the person's file or notes so it is clear that they have information or communication needs and how to meet those needs.
4. Share information about people's information and communication needs with other providers of NHS and adult social care, when they have consent or permission to do so.
5. Take steps to ensure that people receive information which they can access and understand, and receive communication support if they need it.

What does the Standard include?

The Standard says that patients, service users, carers and parents with a disability, impairment or sensory loss should:

- Be able to contact, and be contacted by, services in accessible ways, for example via email or text message.
- Receive information and correspondence in formats they can read and understand, for example in audio, braille, easy read or large print.
- Be supported by a communication professional at appointments if this is needed to support conversation, for example a British Sign Language interpreter.
- Get support from health and care staff and organisations to communicate, for example to lip-read or use a hearing aid.

More information

There is more information about the Accessible Information Standard [on the NHS England website](https://www.england.nhs.uk/accessibleinfo) at www.england.nhs.uk/accessibleinfo.

For more information please email NHS England at england.nhs.participation@nhs.net or telephone 0300 311 22 33. Or you can write to Accessible Information Standard, NHS England, 7E56, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE.