



Royal Association for Deaf people

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Does your prison meet its equality duties  
for Deaf prisoners?

We can help you achieve this

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Royal Association for Deaf people

## Don't assume:

A Deaf prisoner will hear me if I shout loud enough

It doesn't matter how loud you shout, a profoundly Deaf person will not hear you.

A Deaf prisoner can lip read

Not all Deaf people can lip read and only 30% of English sounds are visible on the lips, so a lot of lip-reading is guesswork.

A Deaf prisoner will understand me if I write something down

British Sign Language has a different structure to English; many Deaf people have poor literacy skills, English is often not a Deaf person's native language.

## Deaf Prisoners:

The exact number of Deaf prisoners is unknown, however it is estimated that there are over 400; who are categorised as 'disabled prisoners', this is likely be a under estimated figure.

(The Howard League for Penal Reform 2012)

The role of Disability Liaison Officers has now ceased to be mandatory within the Prison system, this increases the risk to Deaf prisoners if staff and managers are not trained and aware of Deaf people's support and communication needs.

"Prisoners, visitors and others with whom we work should be provided with equal opportunities".

(NOMS Agency Board Ensuring Equality Policy (2011-2015))

## Without support Deaf prisoners:

- Struggle to communicate well with staff or other prisoners
- Are at higher risk of developing mental health challenges
- Miss out on educational opportunities
- Have difficulties maintaining relationships with family or friends
- Cannot access support, eg; behaviour management and counselling
- Are unable to participate in support in preparation for release, eg housing advice, parole review preparation

## The process:

### Step 1

The prison makes a commitment to achieve the Deaf-Aware Prison quality mark.

### Step 2

Deaf Awareness Training is delivered to prison staff and additional support is provided.

### Step 3

The prison is assessed against the 3 standards; **Accessibility, Communication & Equality** if successful the Quality Standard Mark will be awarded. If unsuccessful further support will be provided until standards are compliant to achieve the quality mark.

### Step 4

Bi-annual, annual or quarterly monitoring and on-going support will be engaged as agreed.

For further information please email  
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