



ACCESSING AUDIOLOGY - PERINDA

CASE STUDY

Name

Perinda

Access needs

Severe visual
impairment

Audiology needs

New referral into
Audiology



Meeting the Accessible Information Standard

All providers of NHS care or other publicly-funded adult social care must meet the Accessible Information Standard (AIS).

Five steps of AIS

- Identify
- Record
- Flag
- Share
- Meet

Perinda was offered an appointment by letter. She was able to read the letter with the help of her magnifying aid, but it was two pages long so took her 3 hours to read in full. There was no map, so she attended with a friend who could help her find Audiology.

LEARNING POINT 1

The GP letter stated that Perinda had a severe visual impairment but did not say state her communication needs. Stage 1 of the AIS has not been met. The Audiology service sent a letter assuming this would be accessible for Perinda or that someone could read it for her.

She had a hearing test and was told she had a mild hearing loss. This was surprising as she felt she was really struggling. She was given hearing aids on the same day. The controls were very confusing, and the leaflet provided had very small words with lots of pages. She worried about how long it would take her to read it all. She also had memory problems so knew she would not remember all the information she had been told.

LEARNING POINT 2

The written information provided to Perinda was inaccessible. Stage 5 of the AIS has not been met. The following supports accessibility of written information for adults with visual impairment:

- Simple font, such as Ariel with double space (at least) between lines.
- Leaflets with enlarged text – prior to printing check the patient can read the font size from the computer screen (when screen size set to 100%). Adults with tunnel vision may not prefer large text.
- Contrast between font and background – black on white is ideal. Some adults may prefer yellow paper as white paper can cause glare.
- Adults may use mobile phone apps to enlarge text and/or convert text to voice. Information can be emailed to the patient so they can use a device to enable access.

Perinda got a copy of her report a few days later describing her appointment, this was also very hard to read as it was long with small, hard to read words. She did not know what 'sensorineural' and 'presbycusis' meant but they sounded serious.

LEARNING POINT 3

Perinda's access needs had not been recorded and flagged to ensure she got appropriate letters and written information. Stage 2 and 3 of the AIS have not been met.

She tried to use the hearing aids but could not remember what to do. The leaflet was too hard to read. By the time she got to her follow up appointment 6 weeks later she was upset and felt like she had failed with her hearing aids.