



# ACCESSING AUDIOLOGY - SHEILA

## CASE STUDY

### Name

Sheila

### Access needs

Mild intellectual disabilities

### Audiology needs

New referral to 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

Sheila resides in supported living accommodation. She communicates verbally and uses pictures to help understand complex information (e.g., EasyRead summaries). Sheila has reported problems hearing the TV and conversations. She is supported by her keyworker to visit her GP, who refers her to an audiology department. Sheila's intellectual disabilities are mentioned in the referral, but not her communication needs. Sheila receives a standard appointment letter from audiology.

### LEARNING POINT 1

While the GP identifies Sheila's intellectual disabilities (stage 1) they have not shared how Sheila's communication needs can be met by the audiology department (stage 4). The audiology department does not provide information regarding appointments which would be accessible to Sheila (e.g. an EasyRead format) and therefore cannot fully meet her needs (stage 5).

Sheila attends the appointment with her keyworker. After testing her hearing, the audiologist suggests that Sheila might benefit from a hearing aid. They provide some hospital information sheets. Sheila's keyworker explains to the audiologist that Sheila cannot understand complex information in plain text form. The audiologist provides an EasyRead summary about hearing aids and points her to some online videos. Her keyworker goes through the EasyRead summary with Sheila to make sure that she understands it.

### LEARNING POINT 2

The audiologist and keyworker are able to identify and share Sheila's communication needs during the appointment (stages 1 and 4). This allows the audiologist to provide suitable resources, while her keyworker ensures that this is tailored effectively to meet Sheila's communication needs (stage 5). To meet the accessibility needs, new formats of information may need to be created and/or sourced.

After the appointment, the audiologist enters Sheila's communication needs into their patient management system as part of the appointment notes. This information is accessible to all audiology clinicians. However, referring to it is not a routine part of appointment booking.

### LEARNING POINT 3

The entry of Sheila's communication needs into her notes, partially meets the need to record communication needs (stage 2). However, these notes are not routinely referred to and so cannot be seen as 'highly visible'. Having 'Communication needs' as part of an appointment template would meet the requirements of stage 2. To meet the accessibility needs, services should adopt a range of technologies, integrating them into their IT and workstreams.