

Effective Communication with Hard of Hearing, Deaf, and Deaf Blind Communities

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Objectives

- **To strengthen communication services to individuals who are deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing**
- **To identify tools and resources for providing effective communication services to individuals with hearing loss**
- **Foster partnerships to ensure that communication access is provided that meets the needs of individuals with hearing loss**

What Would You Do?

- **A person enters your office appearing agitated and distracted. As you speak with the person, you notice some responses do not match the questions you are asking. Also, sometimes s/he says “What?” and speaks louder. What approach would you take with this individual?**

What Would You Do?

- **A blind person shows up at your agency. Upon speaking with this individual, you immediately recognize s/he is also deaf. How would you communicate with this individual?**

Demographics

Total number of people with hearing loss:

– **Statewide:**

Over 1 million people

Expected to increase 69 percent by 2030

– **Mecklenburg County:**

169,610 (15.73 percent)

Residents Ages 18-44 = 31,102

Residents Ages 45-64 = 62,093

Residents Ages 65-74 = 35,791

Residents Ages 75 & Over = 40,624

SOURCES: N.C. Office of State Budget and Management (2015 county population by age) and National Health Interview Survey (average of U.S. population age-adjusted percentages of population with hearing loss)

How to Recognize Hearing Loss

- **Hearing aid or cochlear implant**
- **Unclear speech**
- **Loud speech**
- **No response, inappropriate response or asks for repetition**
- **Moving ear closer to sound**
- **Puzzled expression while listening**
- **Not hearing some or any sounds**
- **Frustrated with lack of communication**
- **Watching a person's lips**
- **Gestures/sign language**
- **Writing or typing messages**

Who are People with Hearing Loss ?

- **Deaf**
- **Late-Deafened**
- **Hard of Hearing**
- **Deaf-Blind**
- **Hard of Hearing-Blind**

- **Hearing Impaired**
- **Deaf-Mute**

Lip-reading Exercise



American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II & III

- **Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all services, programs, and activities provided to the public by state/local governments (Title II) and public accommodations and commercial facilities (Title III)**

http://www.ada.gov/ada_title_II.htm

http://www.ada.gov/ada_title_III.htm

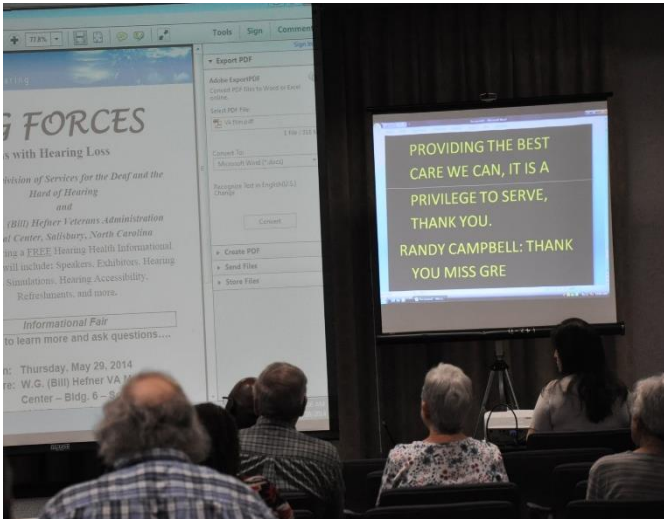
Reasonable Accommodations

Appropriate auxiliary aids and services may be required to provide equal access to information:

- **Qualified interpreters**
- **Assistive listening devices**
- **Communication technologies**
- **Written materials**

<https://www.ada.gov/effective-comm.htm>

Examples of Auxiliary Aids



NC General Statute 90D (Interpreters and Transliterators)

- **Requires interpreters and transliterators to hold a license (educational, religious and volunteers exempt)**
- **Types of license:**
 - **Full**
 - **Provisional – temporary**

<http://www.ncleg.net/gascripts/statutes/StatutesTOC.pl?Chapter=0090D>

Qualified Interpreters

“An interpreter who, via a video remote interpreting (VRI) service or an on-site appearance, is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively, using any necessary specialized vocabulary. Qualified interpreters include, for example, sign language interpreters, oral transliterators, and cued-language transliterators.” (Americans with Disabilities Act Subpart A—General, § 35.104 Definitions).

http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/titleII_2010/titleII_2010_regulations.htm#a35152

Basic Communication Tips

**** Ask the individual what is the best way to effectively communicate ****

- **Tap on shoulder/arm or wave to get attention**

With deaf-blind, place hand on shoulder or arm until s/he faces you

- **Face the person directly**

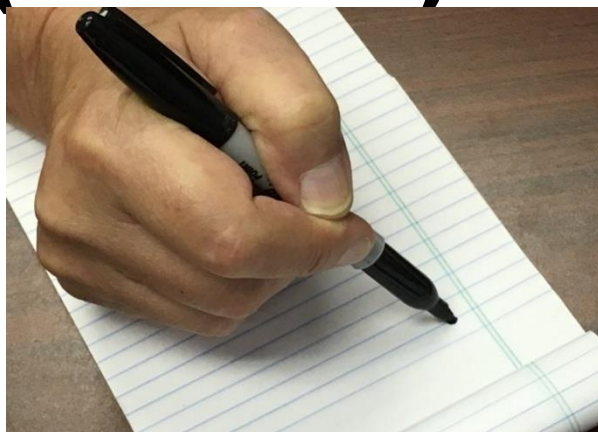
Avoid having your back to bright light and background noise if possible

- **Speak slowly and clearly, but do not exaggerate**

- **Repeat or rephrase the word, sentence, or question**

Basic Communication Tips (continued)

- **Avoid covering your mouth and face**
- **Use appropriate facial expression**
- **Give visual cues or gestures**
- **Write or type notes**
- **Use black marker or print on palm (deaf-blind)**



Basic Communication Tips (continued)

- **Use mime, gestures, sign language or fingerspelling**
- **Use pictograms**
- **Use assistive listening device (ALD)**
- **If they inform you on how best to communicate with them, follow their request**
- **Do NOT assume that the person understands you – follow your intuition**



Gesture Exercise



Getting their attention during an announcement

- **Turn lights on and off**
- **Place a poster board, flipchart or dry erase board in a visible area**
- **Contact each individual, if time permits**
- **In case of emergency, use finger to mark X on deaf-blind's back, then guide this person to a safe area**



American Sign Language (ASL)

- **Visual conceptual language**
- **No written language**
- **Its own vocabulary, idioms, grammar and syntax**
- **English as second language for many deaf people**
- **Not international language**

<http://www.ncleg.net/EnactedLegislation/SessionLaws/PDF/2007-2008/SL2007-154.pdf>

How Can DSDHH Support your Organization?

- **Resources**
- **Consultation**
- **Communication policy or plans**
- **Trainings**
- **Exercises/drills**
- **Collaboration**
- **Educational events**
- **Equipment loan (if available)**
- **Committee participation**

How to Make an Agency Communication Accessible

- **Interpreters (live or webcam)**
- **Visual Announcement**
 - **Bulletin board**
 - **Electronic reader board**
 - **Flip chart**
- **Communication kit**
- **Printed materials, including Braille and large print**
- **Signage (instructions, direction, information)**
- **Communication technologies**

What to Prepare Ahead of Time

- **Review communication policy and procedures**
- **Assemble communication kit**
- **Develop contract or MOU with qualified interpreters (live and webcam)**
- **Compile list of resources, such as qualified interpreters, places for hearing aids and batteries, communication equipment, and others**

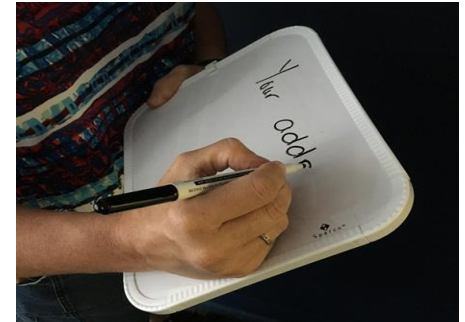
What to Prepare Ahead of Time (continued)

- **Have staff trained in providing effective communication services**
- **Meet with community members**
- **Invite community members to participate in exercises**
- **Contact video relay service providers for videophone loan**

<https://www.fcc.gov/general/internet-based-trs-providers>

Examples of Items for Communication Kit

- Communication board
- Individual assistive listening devices with extra batteries
- Paper and pen (black marker)
- Dry erase board and markers
- Phone equipment (TTY, amplified phone, captioned phone)
- Magnifying glass



Examples of Items for Communication Kit (continued)

- **A list of various spoken languages, including sign language**
- **Tablet, laptop or smart phone**
 - **Webcam**
 - **Braille display**
 - **Type or touch screen feature**
 - **Font, size, colors for letters and background capabilities**
 - **Assistive listening**
- **FAQ on communicating with individuals with hearing loss**
- **List of resources, such as qualified interpreters, places for hearing aids, batteries and others**

Summary

- **Communication barriers at multiple settings can be minimized, if proper preparation is made ahead of time**

Key Points

- **All people coming into an organization/agency are entitled to equal services**
- **Personnel are responsible for providing functionally equivalent, effective communication services to all people with hearing loss, including deaf, deaf-blind, late deafened and hard of hearing**

Contact Information

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www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh