

## **Advice on making your service accessible for individuals with Sensory Loss**

Often only simple adjustments are needed to make a big difference for someone with a visual and/or hearing impairment and encourage them to have confidence to access your services.

Here are some tips for engaging with people who have a visual and/or hearing impairment and how to make your service/venue more accessible

### **Signage**

Use a consistent font size (Arial) and position (eye level), think big, bold and bright

Use sentence case, don't capitalize text

Keep terminology simple and information relevant

Use signs with a matt finish to avoid glare

Make use of colour contrast

Use contrasting tape around the edge and payment area of plastic screens in shops

Place signage at eye level

### **Environment**

Consider the impact of background noise for customers with a hearing impairment when communicating

Make customers aware of changes to layout

Keep walkways clear

Provide audio information from staff and describe surroundings

Don't make the area too busy with signage, images, pictures, or obstacles

## **Information**

Provide information and leaflets in a large print format

Justify printed text so that an individual with a visual impairment know where a line starts and finishes

Consider providing an audio format

Keep information simple and relevant

## **Communication**

Customers with a visual impairment require more information verbally

If you recognise someone has a sensory loss, offer help and introduce yourself

Announce yourself and where you are

Take time and rephrase if the individual does not understand what you are saying

Speak clearly and accurately when communicating

Be descriptive in your explanations and check understanding

Use audio announcements

## **Covid-19 – Vaccination and Test Appointments**

If you are aware someone has a visual impairment, keep your distance as they may find it hard to socially distance and announce to them where you are.

Allow individuals with a visual impairment to have an interpreter/guide attend the appointment with them at vaccination centres.

Make space for an individual to take a guide dog into their appointment, e.g. a larger cubicle, also beneficial for individuals with mobility aids, wheelchairs and walkers.

Take time to describe and talk through what is going to happen during a covid vaccination or test as well as explaining each stage of the process as it happens so that the individual is aware and prepared.

Train staff to recognise the signs of difficulty or sensory loss and to offer help.

Not everyone will know to book ahead for support and be aware of their difficulties or how the situation impacts on them until they get to their appointment.

Make staff members visible, for example high visibility clothing.

Provide a separate or quiet room/cubicle to avoid background noise which may impact on communication.

**For further information, support, advice or queries about Sensory Awareness Training please contact the Yorsensory Team in York.**

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