



# Hear Us

## QUALITY MANUAL



## SECTION F: MEETING CLIENTS' NEEDS

### F.1 Accessibility requirements

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## Hear Us

To promote, educate, communicate and empower, for the benefit and interest of people affected by mental health issues

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This Policy/Statement applies to all clients and everyone who comes into contact with Hear Us.

Our overall aim is to remove or reduce any disadvantage experienced when communicating with us or accessing our services.

This Policy details how we'll carry out our legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people.

The concept of accessibility does not just apply to people with disabilities - all users will have different needs at different times and in different circumstances.

We will also try to (in some instances we may) provide reasonable adjustments in circumstances which are not defined as a disability according to the Equality Act, but will make services accessible to customers with special need or circumstance. For example:

- Providing translation or interpreting services for customers whose first language is not English,
- Providing additional support for customers with literacy problems or other communication difficulties.

At Hear Us, we aim to be a fully inclusive and accessible service and seek to remove all barriers to communication and make our services accessible to all. We'll make every effort to make our services as accessible as possible. This includes using plain English, a standard font size (14) for written communications and providing information in other formats, such as Braille, Large Print, Easy Read or using coloured paper.

### **What is a reasonable adjustment?**

A 'reasonable adjustment' is a legal term defined by the Equality Act 2010: To make an adjustment is to make a physical change to premises or to change work practices to avoid or correct the disadvantage to a person with a disability.

### **How will we decide what adjustments we can make?**

The Equality Act does not define what is 'reasonable' but guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission lists the following as the most relevant factors:



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- The effectiveness of the adjustment(s) in preventing or reducing the disadvantage.
- The practicality of making the adjustment(s),
- The availability of resources including financial,
- Any disruption to the service that making the adjustment may cause.

We'll provide guidance of the types of adjustments we're able to make. Here are some examples of when we may be able to make adjustments:

- Using your preferred type of communication (e.g. letter or email),
- Contact you or make appointments at certain times of the day (within our operating hours),
- Provide information in other formats,
- Communicate through an advocate with your permission. (This could be a friend/ relative or representative from an external organisation such as Citizens Advice).

If there's anything you need us to do differently for you, such as send you letters in large print, we'll record this.

We'll listen to your needs and make every effort to meet your requests when it's reasonable to do so.

If we're unable to meet your request, we'll be honest with you and explain why

### **An Accessible Service**

#### **Our building, meeting rooms and toilet(s) are wheelchair accessible.**

To enable effective communication and equal access for service users whose first language is not English (including BSL) our staff are able to book a range of interpreting and translating services, in person or by phone, through the Interpreting and Translation Service run by Croydon Council.

We will record your chosen/first language and other languages spoken by the client and which language you would prefer to have correspondence in.

### **Translating our website**



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It is possible to use GTranslate, a free online translation service directly from our website. We hope that you find this useful, but please remember that this translation tool relies on GTranslate's language database, meaning technical and medical (certain/other?) references may not always translate accurately.