

Title of Document	Accessible Information Policy		
Name of Department	Operations		

What type of document is this?	Policy	This sets out instructions for how a particular procedure in Helping Hands is to be routinely carried out	
Which Helping Hands POL/SOP/W.I does this document relate to?	NA	Reference number of POL/SOP/W.I	NA

Which Operational Priority/Priorities does this document link to?	Governance Framework	Superior Client Care	People, Performance & Culture	Information Management & Technology

Custodian of document	Group Managing Director	Committee/Group responsible for this document	Policy Committee	
Approval date and committee chairperson signature	14.08.24	When is its next scheduled review?	14.08.27	

Who does it apply to?	All Helping Hands staff at the facility				
	Does it apply to bank workers?	Yes	Does it apply to agency staff?	Yes	Does it apply to third party contractors?

Purpose of the Policy	This policy is to support access to accessible information				

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
All Directors	To ensure that the policy is cascaded and embedded and to ensure that the policy is adhered to.
All Staff	To ensure that all staff read and understand and adhere to the policy

1.0 Scope

All staff has a responsibility to ensure that they are communicating with colleagues, customers, carers and the public, in a way which is effective and ensures that you have been understood. It is therefore the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they are aware of the relevant translation, interpretation, and accessible information services available and how to access them.

2.0 Aims & Objectives

Helping Hands aims to improve people's health and wellbeing. We also aim to make sure that people can understand the information they are given about their care and wants, everyone to be able to get involved in decisions that affect them.

The key aims of this policy are outlined as follows:

- To raise awareness of the provision of translation, interpretation and accessible information across the company.
- To ensure staff have appropriate knowledge of how to accommodate the diverse information and communication needs of our service users.

3.0 Interpretation

Interpretation can be defined as the *oral* transmission of meaning from one language to another, which is easily understood by the listener. This includes the conversion of spoken language into British Sign Language (BSL), (which is a recognised language) and other sign languages. Interpreting can be provided by telephone (text) or face-to-face communication (including video-link). Here, it is also important to consider the understanding of information of those with a learning disability.

Clinical information, medical terminology or consent about clinical care should always be done through the authorised interpreting services except in an emergency. Please remember that a delay in providing interpretation may lead to an adverse outcome. Staff should adopt a common sense approach to interpretation and ensure they gain the correct consent. Staff members with language skills may be able to support.

4.0 Use of Relatives or Friends

Whilst some relatives and friends may be able to interpret, staff must be aware that interpretation undertaken by people involved with the service user may be distorted (due to over-protectiveness, bias, conflicting interests, or lack of understanding of the clinical language. As such, this protection also applies to those caring for someone with a learning disability). It may not therefore, be an appropriate way of communicating confidential information.

5.0 Safeguarding

Where the concerns are about vulnerable adult protection, an external interpreter may be used, even for basic communication where there is no Power of Attorney in place.

6.0 Translation

Translation is defined as the *written* transmission of meaning from one language to another, which is easily understood by the reader. This includes the conversion of written information into Braille and may be extended to include the production of easy read information.

7.0 Easy Read Information

Easy read is a way of presenting information so that people who have difficulty reading can understand it. In the UK, the average reading age is 9 and 1 in 5 people struggle to function in daily life with regards to understanding information. It is thus important to recognise that even where a person's first language is English, they may not be able to read/write. Easy read information typically supports people with a learning disability but can be useful for a range of people. Easy read information is best when tailored to the needs of the individual. It converts a document into a format that is understandable to the general population. It does this by using clear and simple language and a range of helpful graphics, images and symbols. For further support and advice on how to produce Easy Read information, please contact the Marketing Department

8.0 All other Accessible Information

The duty to make reasonable adjustments aims to remove barriers that prevent disabled and vulnerable persons from integrating fully. Helping Hands will make

reasonable adjustments to any of their provisions, criteria or practices that place a disabled or vulnerable person at a disadvantage.

All requests for accessible information (other than those mentioned above), including the production of braille, audio and video devices should be discussed in the first instance.

9.0 Artificial Intelligence

Helping Hands has begun to implement the use of Artificial Intelligence for some of its internal training programs. Artificial Intelligence typically can be useful for a range of people. It converts a document into a video format that is understandable to the general population. It does this by using clear and simple language played out through a “human host”, images and symbols. For further support and advice on how to produce Artificial Intelligence videos information, please contact the TechTeam Training Department

TRAINING

Is training required?	Yes
Details of training	Helping Hands will ensure this policy and its sentiment is communicated to all staff, customers and visitors and that the provision of accessible information is made accessible to all.

COMPLIANCE

How is compliance with the POL going to be monitored	This policy will be monitored and audited on a regular basis. A full review will take place every three years
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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

	Yes / No	Comments
Does the document have a positive or negative impact on one group of people over another on the basis of their:		
• age?	Y	
• disability?	Y	
• gender reassignment?	NA	
• pregnancy and maternity (which includes breastfeeding)?	NA	
• race (including nationality, ethnic or national origins or colour)?	Y	
• marriage or civil partnership?	NA	
• religion or belief?	Y	
• sex?	NA	
• sexual orientation?	NA	

If you have identified any potential impact (including any positive impact which may result in more favourable treatment for one particular group of people over another), are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?		This policy will ensure that accessible information standards are accessible to everyone with needs and requirements
If the impact on one of the above groups is likely to be negative:		
• Can the impact be avoided?	NA	
• What alternatives are there to achieving the document's aim without the impact?	NA	
• Can the impact be reduced by taking different action?	NA	
• Is there an impact on staff, client or someone else's privacy?	NA	<i>If yes, privacy impact assessment required</i>

What was the previous version number of this document?	Version 01	
Changes since previous version	At point of review added 9.0 Artificial Intelligence and how its use can adapt text into other accessible formats.	
Author of the document	Operations	
Who was involved in developing/reviewing /amending the POL?	Operations Team Quality	
How confidential is this document?	Public	Can be shared freely within and outside of Helping Hands

References	Mental Capacity Act 2005
Associated Documents	Accessible Information Standards Guidance Sheet