

Confident COVID Vaccine Conversations: Deaf and hard of hearing people

HELLO

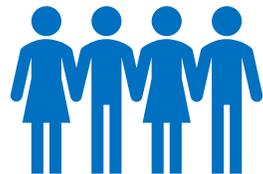


YOU ARE WELCOME



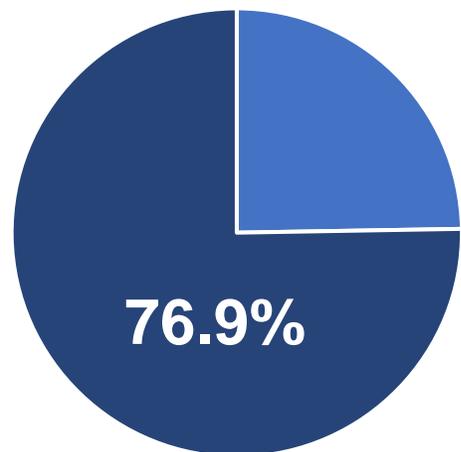
Deaf and hard of hearing people – insights

Adults who are deaf are

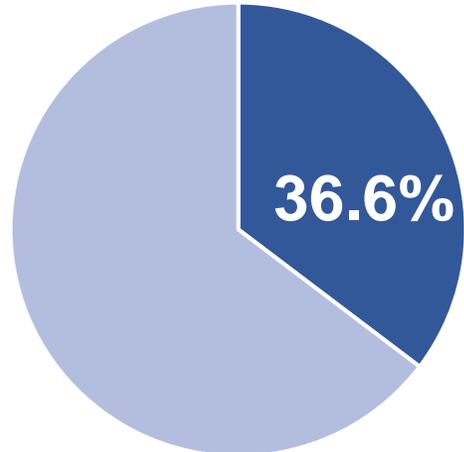


4.6 times
more likely to report
difficulty accessing
COVID-19 information
than adults who are hearing

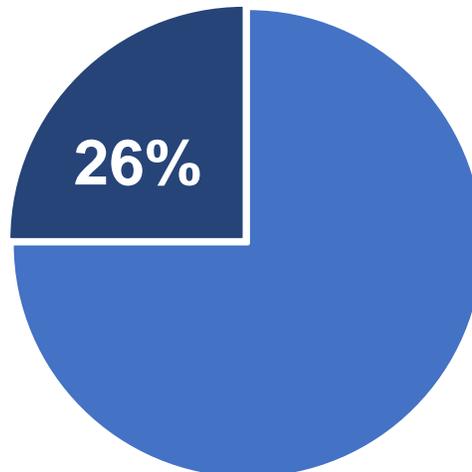
Adults who are deaf described COVID-19 information as



being scary



**not being available
in their language**



**hard to
understand**

"If British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreters had access to transparent face masks, far more face to face consultations could take place effectively and safely."



"I had to explain I might not hear my name called. They made me wait by the reception desk. It was so embarrassing!"

Deaf and hard of hearing people – Communication tips for health and social care professionals

Accessible Information Standard

The Standard sets out **5 steps to follow**, to make sure people with disabilities and sensory loss **get the support they need to communicate well and understand information.**

1. **Ask** people with disabilities and sensory loss if they **need help to:** contact services; communicate during appointments or when receiving care; or understand health information.
2. Information about communication and **information needs need to be recorded** in a standardised way on patient record systems.
3. This information should be **flagged on care records** or linked to an electronic alert to ensure staff know when to take appropriate action to meet needs.
4. This information must be **shared with other** services if someone is discharged or referred elsewhere for treatment and care.
5. When **communication and accessible information needs** are identified, appropriate support needs to be provided to meet those needs.

Where visual cues are not possible (such as when on the telephone or wearing PPE)



Speak clearly

Avoid shouting or speaking unnecessarily slowly.



Re-phrase

Say things differently if people ask you to repeat what you've said or do not understand.



Repeat back

Check understanding by asking the person to repeat information back.



Clear language

Use plain language and be straight to the point.



Reduce noise

Reduce background noise as much as possible.



Write information

Where possible, also provide written information.



Interpreter

If requested, speak to a relative or friend.

Where lipreading is possible (such as a face to face meeting)



Make sure there is adequate lighting



Get the person's attention before speaking



Use normal lip movements, facial expression and gestures



Face the person

(Source: RNID - National hearing loss charity communication tips that should be adopted by health and social care professionals)

Deaf and hard of hearing people – Tips and BSL resources to share

Jessica, a BSL user, shares some helpful tips when going for your COVID vaccination.



- inform the volunteers that you are Deaf, and ask if they can change their mask from a material one to a clear one. Do this every time you meet a volunteer or doctor. This will allow you to see their face and lip read if you wish.



- if you use your own face mask from home, they will ask you to swap it for a blue medical mask, which they will provide. If you don't have a mask at all, they will supply you with one.



- it might be worth taking your up-to-date list of medications (if you are on any) so that you can show the doctor during the appointment. Also, a list of any health issues that you have, just in case you need to explain them to the doctor. This will help the doctor to advise you accordingly.

[Jessica explains what it's like to get the COVID-19 vaccine as a British Sign Language \(BSL\) user - YouTube](#)



Information about COVID-19 vaccines for deaf people and those with hearing loss or tinnitus – from NHS and UKHSA

Information on the booster programme



[COVID-19 guide to booster vaccination – BSL - YouTube](#)

What to expect when you get the COVID-19 vaccine



[What to expect after your COVID-19 vaccination – BSL - YouTube](#)

At the vaccination centre

You'll be asked to sign a consent form. Watch a BSL version of this form below.



[COVID-19 vaccination consent form – BSL version - YouTube](#)

Information for women of childbearing age, those currently pregnant or breastfeeding



[COVID-19 guide - pregnant or breastfeeding BSL - YouTube](#)

Key COVID vaccine information and useful resources



What are the benefits of COVID vaccinations?

Vaccination allows you to develop immunity in a safe and controlled way, without being ill with COVID-19 and passing it on to others.

COVID vaccines:

- protect against serious illness, **hospitalisation and death** - people who are [unvaccinated are up to eight times more likely to be hospitalised](#) with COVID-19
- reduce the **likelihood of you getting COVID-19**
- reduce the risk of **spreading COVID-19** to vulnerable household members
- are **strongly recommended in pregnancy** as this is the best way to protect against the known risks of COVID-19 in pregnancy for both women and babies, including admission of the woman to intensive care and premature birth of the baby
- reduce the risk of **developing Long COVID** – a [UK study](#) of double-vaccinated adults, showed a 41% lower likelihood of reporting Long COVID than unvaccinated people

Even if you have already had COVID-19, getting the **COVID vaccine will add extra protection, stimulate a stronger and longer lasting immune response** than natural infection, which will help against any future new variants.

For those who have yet to take up their first or second dose, it is not too late to come forward – every dose counts.



Are the COVID vaccines safe?

- **Billions of people have been safely vaccinated** against COVID-19 around the world .
- Like all medicines and vaccines, the COVID vaccines underwent **extensive and rigorous multi-stage testing** through clinical trials.
- The COVID vaccines are **continually monitored** for safety and effectiveness. In the UK this is by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).
- Serious adverse reactions and **side effects** are [extremely rare](#) and are investigated. Remember that COVID-19 disease itself can cause serious complications in the short term and Long COVID.
- **COVID vaccines were tested** on tens of thousands of men and women from different ethnic backgrounds and there **is no evidence** any of the vaccines **will work differently in different ethnic groups.**
- COVID vaccines do not contain the live virus that causes COVID-19 and can be **used by everybody**, including immunocompromised individuals or people with autoimmune disease.



How to book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment

Anyone aged 16 or over can book their first, second and booster (or third dose)



[appointment online on the NHS website](#)

Or by calling 119

119

You need to be [registered with a GP](#) to book an appointment online

If you are not registered with a GP you can get a COVID vaccination at a [walk-in or pop-up centre](#), where there are no ID checks and your immigration status is not relevant.

More information and support

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine – NHS](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination guides – UKHSA – translations and easyread available](#)
- [Safety of COVID-19 Vaccines - WHO](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine questions - British Society for Immunology](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine resource links – MECC](#)
- [MECC – Short COVID vaccine conversations](#)
- [COVID-19 fertility and pregnancy - public – RCOG](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccination and pregnancy – for professionals – RCOG](#)