

The Accessible Information Standard



The Accessible Information Standard is a set of rules about making information easy to understand.

In this booklet we will call them **the standards**.



The law says all NHS and adult social care services must follow the standards.



NHS and adult social care services are things like:

- Hospitals.
- Your local doctors surgery or health centre.





- Ambulances.



- Dentists.



- **Social services.** This is a team in the local council. They look after people who need extra support and try to keep them safe.



- Care services. Things like day services and care homes.



People who plan and buy services must use the standards.

They need to make sure the services they plan and buy follow the standards too.

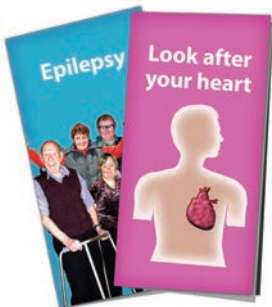
Why the standards are important



Everyone should be able to use health and care services easily.



The standards are a way to make sure people get information in the best way for them.



This helps people know more about their health and care.



When people get information in the right way they can:

- Make choices.
- Get better care.





The standards were first written in 2016.



But we know that lots of people are still not having their information and communication needs met.



We have looked again at the standards.



We have made some changes to help more services to follow the standards.

Who the standards help



Sensory loss is when you don't see, hear or feel the things around you in the same way as other people.

You might not be able to see or hear very well.



The standards say that NHS and adult social care services must make sure disabled people and people with sensory loss can:



- Get information in a way they understand

and

- **Communicate** with services in the best way for them.



Communicate means being able to tell someone what you think and how you feel.



Disabled people and people with sensory loss might be people who:

- Are blind.



- Have problems hearing.



- Are deaf and blind.



- Have a learning disability and/or are autistic.



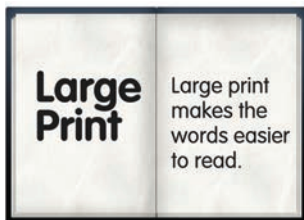
- Have a mental health condition.

Different ways to give people information



Not everyone can use and understand things like letters with small hard words or telephones.

Different ways to give people information can be things like:



- Large print. This means make letters bigger.



- Braille. This is special writing blind people read with their hands.



- Easy read. This is booklet is in easy read.



- Email.



- Makaton. This is a way of using hand signs and speech to communicate.



- Audio. This is recordings of people reading information.



Sometimes people need a person to support them to understand information.



An advocate is a person who supports people to:

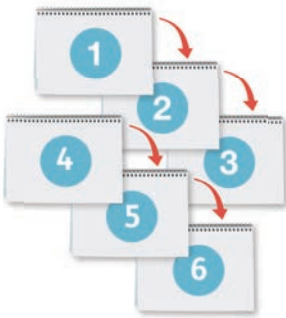
- Have their voice heard.
- Understand information.
- Look at what choices they have.



A Deaf person might need a British Sign Language interpreter.

They use their hands to make signs that explain what is being said.

How to meet the standards



The standards give 6 stages about how organisations should make information easy for everyone to understand:

1: Ask

Organisations should find out how people like to get their information.



This could be asking if they need Braille, large print, or help from a sign language interpreter.

2: Record

Organisations should write down how people need to communicate.

They can write it on the computer or on paper.



This will help to make sure people are supported in the right way.



3: Flag

Flag means making an important note about somebody in their **medical records**.



Medical records are notes that doctors and nurses keep about people's health.



This helps doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff see what a person needs when they check the records.



4: Share

When someone needs to use another service it is important to share their communication needs.



This means the new service knows how best to support the person straight away.



Organisations can only share this information if a person or their carer agrees.

5: Act

Organisations should make sure people's needs are met by:



- Giving people information in the way they understand best

and



- Offering people any extra support they need to help them to understand things.



6: Review

A **review** means checking if someone's needs have changed.



Organisations should check often to make sure the person's communication needs are still being met.



If someone's needs are not being met in the best way, their records should be updated.

Organisations should write down the best way to support the person.

Checking how well you are doing



All organisations should be following the Accessible Information Standard.



Organisations can check how well they are meeting the standards by using a **self-assessment tool**.

A **self-assessment tool** is something that helps organisations check their work and see what things they can do better.



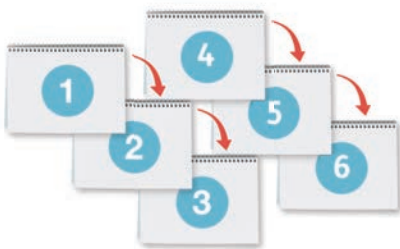
The tool shows organisations how to make a plan to fix any problems.



When they are finished checking, organisations can share what they have found out online. This means others can see how they are doing.

Steps to meeting the standards

To follow the Accessible Information Standard, organisations need to do these things:



- Understand what the standards say about what they need to do.
- Follow the six stages to meet the rules.
- Check how well they are doing.
- Share what they have found out.
- Make a plan to fix any problems and keep getting better.

For more information



You can ask for a copy of the Accessible Information Standard in a different way.

Things like easy read, large print or in another language.



If you need the standards in a different way, please contact us:



By phone:

0300 311 22 33



By Email:

England.AISQueries@nhs.net



Contact us

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