

# The Accessible Information Standard



**How to get information you can understand from health and social care services**



**Easy  
Read**



Do you find it hard to understand your doctor or social worker?



Do they speak too fast?  
Or give you letters that are hard to read?



There is a new rule for health and social care services.



The rule says they have to communicate with you in a way you can understand.



The rule is called the **Accessible Information Standard.**



There are lots of health services who may communicate with you: like the GP, hospital or dentist.



There are lots of social care services who may communicate with you: like social workers and support workers.



They may communicate with you in a letter.



They may communicate with you on the phone.



They may communicate with you by talking to you at your appointment.



The Accessible Information Standard says health and social care services have to do their best to communicate with you in a way you can understand.



**The Accessible Information Standard says health and social care services have to:**



1) Ask you what support you need from them.



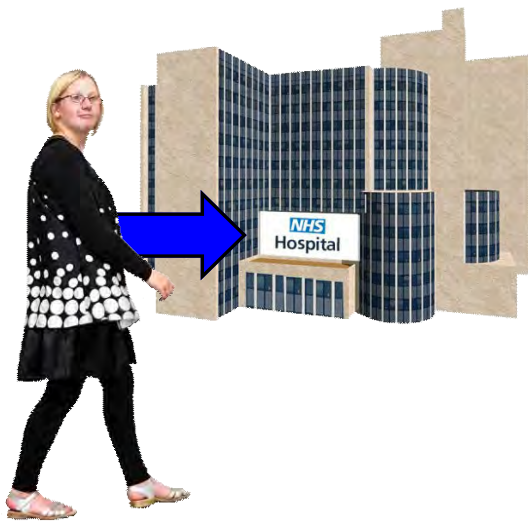
2) Write down what support you need in a note on your records.



3) Make sure the right people know you need support.



4) Make sure that you get the support you asked for.



5) If they send you to see another service, they can tell them what support you need.



**There is more information about how this all works in the rest of this booklet.**



**At the end of the booklet there is form you can use to help you ask for support with communication from health and social care services.**



**1) They should ask you what support you need**



They may ask you at your annual health check or at your next appointment.



Think about what would help you to communicate better with your health and social care workers.



You can choose what support you ask for, there are some ideas to help you on the next page:



**You could ask them to:**



Make sure they use easy words and slow down.



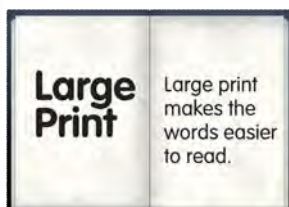
Explain everything in a way you can understand.



Give you a longer appointment.



Book your appointment when your supporter can come.



Give you letters and leaflets in easy read or large print.



**2) They must write down what support you need, in a note on your records.**



Then the next time they need to communicate with you, they should look at the note first.



**3) They must make sure the computer can show the right people what support you need.**



If you have told them that you need support,



the computer must be able to tell them what you need, every time they communicate with you.



#### 4) The service must make sure you get the support you need



If you have told a service you need support to communicate,



like easy read information or extra time for your appointment,



The service needs to make sure you get the support you need, every time.



5) They must ask you if they can tell other services what support you need.



If they need to send you to another service, like the hospital, they can tell the service what support you need.



You can choose if it is ok for them to share your information.



If you say yes, they can tell other services what support you need.



If you say no, they cannot tell other services about what support you need.



If you say no, you may not get all the support you need from the other service.



## What should you do next?



Your health workers and social care workers should ask you what support you need.



Or you can ask to talk to them about how they communicate with you.



The Accessible Information Standard is new and people are still learning about it.



You can show your health or social care worker this booklet if you need to help them understand it.



Mencap has an easy read form you can use to help you talk to them.