

**Service Title: Sensory Impairment Service  
Equality Impact Assessment Report  
Date: 3 Dec 2008. Date of Update: 8 June 2009**

**Co-ordinator of Policy or Service: Basil Wild**  
**Persons carrying out Equality Impact Assessment: Basil Wild**

## **1. Introduction**

The purpose of the Sensory Impairment service is -

- To improve the quality of life of people with hearing and / or visual impairments.
- To assist them to achieve a level of independence, and to restore their ability to carry out ordinary, everyday activities.
- To provide people with an informed choice, and to support people to find solutions for themselves.
- The service should provide an outcomes focussed model of delivery, and cover the whole of Bath & North East Somerset area.

## **2. What data was analysed as part of this Equality Impact Assessment and what did it tell us?**

Monitoring Data from people using the service, in terms of satisfaction with service received, is collected and reviewed by the provider, which is then reported to the Council's Link Officer every 6 months. Officers have consulted with 3 social groups in person and sent questionnaires out to users of Centre for Deaf. Questions asked were -

- Type of impairment
- How it affects them
- Who currently helps them with the difficulties they experience
- Where are the gaps
- If had 3 wishes, what would they be
- How would they like to access information on what is available
- How do they wish to continue to be involved / informed of the outcome / progress of work we are doing?

Key issues raised were that people wanted a flexible service, better information and response times, person centred service, more social / physical support in general and for small one-off tasks, and there were issues around equipment. Both services reported a substantial proportion of users had both impairments.

In economic and quality terms there needs to be better access for all people to local services across B&NES, a one stop shop for people with sight or hearing loss, or dual sensory impairments.

### **3. Assessment of impact on equality groups**

All people contacting the Sensory Impairment service are to be treated in a non discriminatory way. The service is to be provided in a manner that respects the individual's culture and personal preferences.

An increase in older people is forecast in the future, and older people are more likely to have one or both sensory impairments. There also needs to be provision for all ages and an awareness of issues for younger people. There needs to be better access for all people to local services across B&NES, a one stop shop for people with sight or hearing loss, or dual sensory impairments. There needs to be knowledge of, or provision for, other languages.

### **4. Monitoring arrangements**

There will be 6 monthly monitoring / review by Link Officer of data collected by the service provider. The data will be both qualitative and quantitative, and will provide evidence of the impact of new provision on dual impairments, accessibility across B&NES and especially rural areas, use of Community Resource Centres, fitting of modern equipment, and collection of data around younger people, BME groups, service user's first language.

### **5. Conclusions and action plan**

The service provided is applicable to all equality target groups. The equalities data collected will be extended as in the above paragraph to inform wider service provision for the Council, and this opportunity will be further explored.

### **6. Update**

Deafplus has been commissioned to provide the Sensory Impairment Service from 1 July 2009 as an outcome of a competitive tendering process, following the rewriting of the service specification.

**Signed off by** Janet Rowse  
Deputy CEO  
NHS Bath & North East Somerset

**Date...** 27 July 2009