



Making health and social care information accessible

The new Accessible Information Standards for GP Practices has been launched by NHS England and comes into force on 31 July 2016. Practices must ensure that all information and communication support is provided in appropriate formats for people who have a disability, an impairment or have experienced sensory loss. The aim is for them to have access to information that can be easily understood, for example in large print, braille or translation via a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.

By 1 September 2015, practices should:

Prepare for implementation of the Standard, including assessing their current systems and processes, develop and commence roll out of a local implementation plan.

Ensure implementation guidance accompanying the Standard has been read and used to inform local decision-making.

By 1 April 2016, practices are required to:

Review how they will ensure that people will be able to receive information/communications which they can readily access and understand.

Practices will need to be in a position to identify and record information/communication needs when patients first contact/register.

Identify and record information/communication needs as part of ongoing contact by patients already registered

By 31 July 2016, practices will need to have done the following:

Identified all patient information/communication needs

Highlighted or 'flagged' in the person's file or notes so it is clear that they have information or communication needs and how those needs should be met.

Recorded the details clearly

Flagged the patients' notes accordingly

Shared people's information and communication needs with other providers of NHS and adult social care, when they have consent or permission to do so.

Ensure people receive information they can access and understand, and receive communication support if they need

Requirements, criteria and timelines practices must follow are outlined in the specifications.

Enquiries regarding implementation of the Accessible Information Standard should be directed to NHS England by emailing england.nhs.participation@nhs.net

Further information and documentation about the Accessible Information Standard can be found at www.england.nhs.uk/accessibleinfo