



NHS FORTH VALLEY

British Sign Language (BSL) Plan 2017-2023

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Group Committee – NHS Forth Valley Board

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This document can, on request, be made available in alternative formats

Management of Policies Procedure control sheet

(Non clinical documents only)

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Area to be added to		* see areas available on the policy web-page		
Type of document	Policy	Guidance	Protocol	Other (specify) National Government Plan
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Understanding	Yes		No	
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Consultation and Change Record – for ALL documents

Contributing Authors:	Charlene Condeco Stacey Gourlay Annette McInnes		
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Section 1:

1.1 Introduction and Feedback

Welcome to NHS Forth Valley's British Sign Language (BSL) Plan.

A BSL version is available at: <https://nhsforthvalley.com/health-services/az-of-services/disability-service/>

Our Plan will support the national objectives, published in October 2017, which were developed after extensive engagement and participation with Deaf and Deafblind BSL users and those who work with them.

NHS Forth Valley's Plan follows the Government's *BSL National Plan* by identifying the actions we intend to take which will promote and enable BSL users accessing health across 2018 -2024

We have involved Deaf, Deafblind BSL Users, Deaf organisations, partner organisations, local communities and our staff when developing this BSL Plan and proposed actions. We will continue to engage throughout the lifetime of this plan, we will report locally on our progress via our governance structures and equality frameworks. After publication of NHS Forth Valleys Plan, a progress report will be submitted to the Scottish Government in October 2020 and thereafter on a six yearly basis. The initial review will report on progress, best practice, poor performance and innovation. It will enable the Scottish Government to influence future development of local BSL plans and assist boards in the sharing of best practice and learning.

NHS Forth Valley will review their BSL plan annually to ensure local governance and enable regular community feedback.

Giving us your feedback

We welcome any comments relating to BSL and Deafblind Services.

You can provide feedback in the following ways:

Email or video to: FB-UHB.disabilitydepartment@nhs.net

Text or call: 07990690605

FaceTime or Video: 07990690605

Via: contactSCOTLAND-BSL

Mailing Address: NHS Disability Equality and Access Service, Forth Valley Sensory Centre, Redbrae Road, Camelon, Falkirk, FK1 4DD

1. 2: Summary

NHS Forth Valley BSL Plan in a single plan for health, however during its development we have chosen to work in partnership with others to develop the best overall outcomes for people across Forth Valley. As some of our services are delivered on a joint basis or within a multi-disciplinary team, it is important that as partners we hold a shared knowledge of how we can work together efficiently and cost effectively with this community.

NHS Forth Valley currently has a strong infrastructure in place which supports the language, culture and needs of D/deaf and Deafblind BSL users accessing health services across Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire.

The Executive Lead, within the organisation, for Equality and Diversity, and overseeing this work, is Professor Angela Wallace, Director of Nursing Services.

This BSL Plan will enhance work already underway within NHS Forth Valley and provide a further level of reporting on our progress.

The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015

An Act of the Scottish Government which aims to PROMOTE the use and understanding of British Sign Language. This will enable Deaf, Deafblind and Tactile BSL users to be fully involved in daily and public life in Scotland, as active, healthy citizens and will be able to make informed choices about every aspect of their lives.

NHS Forth Valley embrace the long-term goals set out by the Scottish Government within their BSL Plan including:

- Improving access to health care and mental health services in BSL
- Improving access to health information in BSL
- Increasing staff knowledge and understanding of BSL, interpretation and Deaf Culture
- Increasing opportunities for BSL users to participate in engagement processes
- Encourage both BSL users and NHS Forth Valley staff to increase their use of contactSCOTLAND-BSL

1.3 Operational Lead and Contact Details

NHS Forth Valley's identified Operational Lead for our BSL Plan is Charlene Condeco, Disability Equality and Access Lead, and Manager of Interpretation and Translation Services

Contact details:

Charlene Condeco

NHS Forth Valley Disability Equality and Access Service

Forth Valley Sensory Centre

Redbrae Road

Camelon

Falkirk

FK1 3BA

Tel: 01324 590892 or 07867554478

1.4 BSL Plan and where it find it

Our BSL plan can be found at:

<https://nhsforthvalley.com/health-services/az-of-services/disability-service/>

Section 2

2.1: Policy Context and Key Legislation

The BSL (Scotland) Act 2015 places a duty on all public bodies to promote and facilitate the promotion of BSL within their areas of responsibility. To support this, a National BSL Action Plan has been developed which national and special Health Boards will report on, however, territorial Health Boards are required to develop and produce local action plans. The deadline for the production of these plans is October 2018. The local plans must:

- Involve BSL users (including those who use the tactile form of the language) and those who represent them;
- Ensure that the consultation on the BSL Plan is accessible to Deaf and Deafblind BSL users; and
- Be published in BSL as well as in English in both draft form and in final form.

2.2: Consultation and Engagement Events

NHS Forth Valley held several engagement and consultation events and our staff were joined by representatives from Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils, Joint Integrated Board, from deafscotland (previously known as the Scottish Council on Deafness), British Deaf Association, Forth Valley Sensory Centre and by our local Deaf and Deafblind community members. Conversations and topics covered included:

- How will the BSL Plan be implemented, what will change
- Current services and access experiences
- More clarity regards mental health services for BSL Users
- Access to health and social care, who does what
- BSL interpretation provision across NHS Forth Valley
- Deafblind tactile BSL signing and guiding support
- Need for staff contactSCOTLAND awareness sessions
- Mental Health contact options
- In patient stay and isolation
- Staff training needs
- Contact methods available in BSL users
- Communication between GP's and Hospitals, how does it work

All of the public sector organisations have taken the evidence gathered from these events to influence BSL Plans within their own areas.

2.3 Working in Partnership

Alongside our professional partners NHS Forth Valley has a strong partnership with our third party organisations and our local communities. It is important to liaise, support and share skills and resources to improve the life opportunities of BSL users.

As part of a funding and partnership agreement with the charity Forth Valley Sensory Centre the NHSFV Disability Equality and Access Service is based within the FV Sensory Centre building and this provides direct access for service users, carers and staff. This hub type building and multi partnership working has been successful and we will continue to strengthen these links.

3.1: Across all our services

We share the long-term goal for all Scottish public services set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“Across the Scottish public sector, information and services will be accessible to BSL users.”

By 2023, we will:

- Analyse existing evidence we have about BSL users in our organisation; identify and fill key information gaps so that we can establish baselines and measure our progress by:-
 - Reviewing current use of communication support
 - Reviewing how our systems identify BSL users
 - Reviewing how we use this information
- Improve access to our information and services for BSL users, including making our website more accessible to BSL users by:-
 - Informing staff of the wide range of communication support available, including BSL and tactile BSL, in NHS Forth Valley
- Promoting the use of the Scottish Government’s nationally funded BSL online interpreting video relay services (VRS) called ‘contactSCOTLAND-BSL’ to staff and to local BSL users by:-
 - Increasing our staff awareness and understanding of Deaf Culture
 - Improving our staff knowledge of BSL as a language
 - Increasing the number of BSL video information clips on webpage

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3.2: Family Support, Early Learning and Childcare

We share the long-term goal for family support, early learning and childcare set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“The Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach will be fully embedded, with a D/deaf or Deafblind child and their family offered the right information and support at the right time to engage with BSL.”

Our Actions

By 2023, we will

- Provide early years staff with information about BSL and Deaf culture, and about resources that are available in BSL, so that they can meet the needs of families with a D/deaf or Deafblind child.

3.3: Training, Work and Social Security

We share the long-term goal for training, work and social security set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will be supported to develop the skills they need to become valued members of the Scottish workforce, so that they can fulfil their potential, and improve Scotland’s economic performance. They will be provided with support to enable them to progress in their chosen career.”

By 2023, we will:

- Work with partners who deliver employment services, and with employer groups already supporting employability to help signpost them to specific advice on the needs of BSL users.
- Raise awareness locally of the UK Government’s ‘Access to Work’ (AtW) scheme with employers and with BSL users (including those on Modern Apprenticeships) so that they can benefit from the support it provides.

3.4: Health (including social care), Mental Health and Wellbeing

We share the long-term goal for health (including social care), mental health and wellbeing set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have access to the information and services they need to live active, healthy lives, and to make informed choices at every stage of their lives.”

By 2023, we will:

- Signpost BSL users to health and social care information available in BSL (to be produced by NHS Health Scotland and NHS 24); and develop complementary information in BSL about local provision, as appropriate. (Engagement on this starts end of February 2018.)
- Work with our Local Authorities, providers and service users to improve the way that adult social care is delivered for BSL users, including how residential care is commissioned and how care and support is delivered to people at home.
- Signpost health and social care staff to an online learning resource toolkit to raise awareness of BSL and Deaf culture (this will be led by NHS Health Scotland and will be rolled out across Scotland by 2018).
- Through Integration Joint Boards (IJBs), ensure that psychological therapies can be offered on a fair and equal basis to BSL users. Consider the treatment options and the access for those options.
- Support and work with NHS Health Scotland to implement a new national Interpretation and Translation Policy which includes BSL provision. The guidance will be provided to support delivery across all NHS Boards by 2018.
- Work with partners (Local NHS Boards & NHS Health Scotland) to deliver and evaluate two training programmes aimed at supporting BSL / English Interpreters to work within the Health sector, with a view to informing a longer-term approach.
- Work with our Local Authorities to take steps to improve access to

information about sport, and to local sports facilities and sporting opportunities.

- Ensure that any local work to tackle social isolation explicitly considers the needs of BSL users.

3.5: Transport

We will work with our partners to ensure inclusive access to public transport highlighting the long-term goal for transport set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

“BSL users will have safe, fair and inclusive access to public transport and the systems that support all transport use in Scotland.”

By 2023, we will:

- Ensure BSL users can participate in the on-going feedback process of the ‘Going Further: Scotland’s Accessible Travel Framework’ as individuals and staff.
- Research technological solutions for providing accessible information in transport hubs (for example bus stations, train stations, airports etc.) for patients and staff.
- Create guidance for passengers and staff who use BSL on how to contact local / national transport providers when things go wrong on a journey.
- Develop and provide training for our local transport providers, including volunteers which provide strategies for communicating with BSL users (patients and staff).

3.6: Culture and Arts

We will work with our partners to ensure inclusive access to Culture and the Arts sharing the long-term goals for culture and arts set out in the BSL National Plan, which is:

BSL Users will have full access to the cultural life of Scotland, an equal opportunity to enjoy and contribute to culture and the arts, and are encouraged to share BSL and Deaf Culture with the people of

Scotland.

By 2023, we will support the ethos to:

- Enable BSL users to take part in culture and the arts as participants, audience members and professionals.
- Encourage and support BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts.
- Increase information in BSL about culture and the arts on relevant websites and at venues.
- Improve access to the historical environment, cultural events and performing arts and film for BSL users.

3.7: Democracy

We will work with our partners to ensure the long-term goal for democracy set out in the BSL National Plan, which states:

“BSL users will be fully involved in democratic and public life in Scotland, as active and informed citizens, as voters, as elected politicians and as board members of our public bodies.”

By 2023, we will support the ethos to:

- Take opportunities to promote public appointments as a way of participating in public life by producing information about public appointments in BSL, and promoting public appointments specifically to BSL users. For example public appointments for Local NHS Boards / IJB Boards.
- Take opportunities to promote Access to Elected Office Fund locally, which can meet the additional costs of BSL users wishing to stand for selection.

SECTION 4: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

NHS Forth Valley Board has given final approval for the plan at the September 2018 Board meeting. A local review of the plan will be held annually.

The approved BSL Plan will be shared on our web page in English and in BSL.

You can continue to contact us by:

Email or video to: FB-UHB.disabilitydepartment@nhs.net

Text or call: 07990690605

FaceTime or Messenger: 07990690605

Via: contactSCOTLAND-BSL

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