

NHS Norfolk and Waveney CCG received a query relating to interpretation services.

The query and answer provided in a written response can be found below:

**I am alarmed to read the agenda for the above meeting and see absolutely no mention of the current dire situation regarding profound Deaf patients' access to primary healthcare. There are several groups which have been identified as 'at risk' yet no recognition of the Deaf patients who use BSL and are effectively linguistically and digitally excluded. Can I ask the CCG to address this at the next meeting and obtain a clear understanding of the current situation regarding the Interpreting and Translation contract and Deaf access.**

Ensuring services are accessible for all patients is a clear part of our access improvement plan which has been approved through primary care commissioning committee. Minutes of this committee meeting are included with the governing body papers.

Training has been rolled out to GP practices on the accessible information standard, as well as how to access BSL interpreters through the new Language Empire contract which went live on 1 November 2021.

As you are aware, the contract for interpreter services is commissioned by NHS England and NHS Improvement (NHSEI). We are engaging directly with NHSEI around the deaf enhanced support service they have commissioned, which is designed to offer support to individuals in the deaf community unable to use the existing arrangements in making primary care appointments. We believe this service is not working well enough and want to ensure improvements are made quickly to support the Deaf community.

As part of this work, we are meeting with members of the Deaf community in a few weeks' time to explore this further and to follow up from our previous meeting in August. We would also be keen to meet with you separately and discuss your concerns in more detail. This proposed meeting would be with members of our primary care team. Please could you let us know if this is something you would be prepared to do, and my team can arrange a suitable date and time.

I can also confirm that from December 2021, all corporate meetings in public of the CCG and Interim Integrated Care System Partnership Board will have BSL interpreters present.