

## Accessible Information Standard

### New statutory duties for Health and Adult Social Care services

The Accessible Information Standard required all organisations that provide NHS or adult social care to follow new standards in relation to providing accessible information to patients and service users.

The aim of the Standard is to set a framework and a clear direction such that patients and service users (and where appropriate carers and parents) who have information or communication needs relating to a disability or sensory loss receive:

- 'Accessible information' ('information which is able to be read or received and understood by the individual or group for which it is intended'); and
- 'Communication support' ('support which is needed to enable effective, accurate dialogue between a professional and a service user to take place');

So that they can access services appropriately and independently, and make decisions about their health, wellbeing, care and treatment.

### Requirements

The Standard directs organisations to:

- 1. Ask:** identify / find out if an individual has any communication / information needs relating to a disability or sensory loss and if so what they are.
- 2. Record:** record those needs in a clear, unambiguous and standardised way in electronic and / or paper based record / administrative systems / documents.
- 3. Flag:** ensure that recorded needs are 'highly visible' whenever the individual's record is accessed, and prompt for action.
- 4. Share:** include information about individuals' information / communication needs as part of existing data sharing processes (and following existing information governance frameworks).
- 5. Meet:** take steps to ensure that individuals receive information which they can access and understand, and receive communication support if they need it.

Full implementation of the standard was required from 31 July 2016.

## How the Standard is delivered for North Tyneside Adult Social Care service

The Adult Services approach for North Tyneside is detailed below.

Requirement	Adult Services process
<p><b>Identification of needs: Professionals and relevant staff must identify the information and / or communication needs of their service users (and relevant carers or parents), where such needs relate to or are caused by a disability, impairment or sensory loss. They must support them to describe the type of alternative format and / or support that they need, at their first or next interaction with the service.</b></p>	<p>At the first or next point of contact, we ask the person if they have any communication needs and what method of communication we should use in the future when contacting them.</p> <p>These questions form part of information gathering procedures within our Gateway Contact Centre and also form part of the review process with people who we are already working with.</p>
<p><b>Recording of needs: Professionals and relevant staff must record the information and / or communication needs of their service users (and relevant carers or parents), where such needs relate to or are caused by a disability, impairment or sensory loss.</b></p> <p><b>This should include;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Consistent and routine recording of patients', service users', carers' and parents' information and communication needs, as part of service user records and management administration systems;</b></li> <li>• <b>Use of specified English definitions indicating needs.</b></li> <li>• <b>Recording of needs in such a way that they are 'highly visible'.</b></li> </ul>	<p>We record the person's needs as part of our first or next contact process, as well as within our assessment and review processes. This information is captured within our Case Management database (electronically) as well as on standard assessment, support plan and review documentation (paper based).</p> <p>The person's communication support needs are recorded and cover the person's needs in relation to method, format, and support that they may require.</p> <p>The person's communication support needs are recorded within a dedicated section of the Case Management system and are also visibly displayed on the first page of the person's electronic file.</p>

<p><b>Flagging of needs:</b> Organisations must ensure that electronic service user administration and record systems include electronic flags or alerts to indicate that an individual has a recorded information and / or communication need. Such flags must be highly visible and must prompt staff to take appropriate action such that those needs can be met.</p>	<p>The person's communication support needs are visibly displayed on the first page of the person's electronic file as well as on standard assessment, support plan and review documentation (paper based).</p>
<p><b>Sharing of needs:</b> Organisations must ensure that information about individuals' information and / or communication support needs is included as part of existing data-sharing processes, and as a routine part of referral, discharge and handover processes.</p>	<p>The person's communication support needs are visibly displayed on standard assessment, support plan and review documentation (paper based), which is part of existing information sharing protocols. These existing information sharing protocols cover referrals, discharges and handover processes with our customers, their care providers and health professionals who are involved in their care and support.</p>
<p><b>Meeting of needs:</b> Organisations must ensure that patients, service users, carers and parents with information and / or communication needs related to or caused by a disability, impairment or sensory loss have these needs met.</p>	<p>We support the person's need for information or communication in various formats, methods and including additional support. This includes non standard printed formats, alternative contact methods, aids or equipment, interpreting support, and environmental adjustments or longer appointments. These are provided promptly and without reasonable delay.</p>
<p><b>Website requirements:</b> The accessibility of social care websites is out of scope of the Accessible Information Standard. However, where a social care professional would usually refer a</p>	<p><a href="http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk">www.northtyneside.gov.uk</a> and <a href="http://mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk">mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk</a> are compatible with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• basic operating system screen magnifiers</li> </ul>

**patient or service user (or their carer or parent) to a website for information, there is a duty to ensure that the website is accessible to the individual and, if it is not, to provide or make the information available in another way.**

- speech recognition software
- screen reading software
- operating system speech packages

We adopt W3C recommended best practice where possible. Processes are in place to adjust Information Factsheets and standard care management documents into various other formats for those who cannot access our websites.

**Staff training:  
Organisations must provide, arrange for and / or support relevant staff to receive any training which is identifiable as locally necessary to enable effective implementation of the Standard.**

We ensure that the Adult Services workforce receives proportionate training on these requirements, ensuring that our customers are supported appropriately. This covers all teams with direct and indirect contact with our customers. Training for the workforce will be carried out on an ongoing basis.

**For more information:**

Visit [www.england.nhs.uk/accessibleinfo](http://www.england.nhs.uk/accessibleinfo)