

Deafblind Scotland vision – “A society in which deafblind people have the permanent support and recognition necessary to be equal citizens”



Deafblind Scotland Policy on Support Plans

What do we mean by Support Plan?

A support plan is a written document outlining or detailing the support needs of a deafblind individual. The main focus of Deafblind Scotland’s interest is in the communication and guiding needs of deafblind people. This plan will be agreed by Deafblind Scotland and the service-user and a copy in the format of their choice will be given to the individual service-users.

Policy Statement

Deafblind Scotland is committed to ensuring that individuals have maximum control over their lives and where required, are assisted to access the necessary support to meet their needs.

Support planning will aim to recognise:

- The deafblind person’s individuality
- The deafblind person’s right to dignity
- The deafblind person’s right to confidentiality
- The deafblind person’s communication, information and mobility needs
- The deafblind person’s desired outcomes
- The deafblind person’s right to complain
- The need to details how the service is to be monitored
- The need to detail how the deafblind person might be consulted about their service, and influence their support plan, or reject it if they view it to be unnecessary
- The values contained within the National Care Standards

Deafblind Scotland adopts the key purposes in support planning of:

- Having an agreed support plan that sets out how the needs of an individual service user can best be met
- Summarising what action is required, how that action will be carried out, who will be responsible and what the timescale will be for completion and review
- Enhancing the skills, knowledge, personal achievements, confidence and self-sufficiency of the service user.
- Improving communication within the staff team and enabling staff to plan collaboratively for the benefit of service users
- Ensuring actions which will minimise discrimination and oppression

Support planning will therefore be organised and arranged in a way that ensures each service user is valued as a unique individual and an approach that empowers and promotes the service users' rights will be adopted.

Deafblind Scotland will ensure opportunities will be made to listen and hear what their requirements are.

The diversity of individuals is recognised and Deafblind Scotland will seek to treat the service user group equally.

Deafblind Scotland recognises that the service user's right to choice in a support plan should be promoted and they should be supported to take calculated risks. However tensions will arise when the wishes of one individual may impact or adversely affect the rights of others. The beliefs and preferences of an individual worker should not impinge on the right of choice for the service user.

The Service-user should receive a Service-User Information Pack containing their updated support plan within it, in their preferred format e.g. Braille, Moon, Large Print, Audio Tape, Email, 1:1 support from a guide/communicator, BSL interpreter etc.

This policy seeks to provide a framework for individuals to exercise their choices and for Deafblind Scotland staff to assist service users with the complex, and sometimes difficult decisions they make about their lives.

Guide/communicators will be adequately trained and supervised in the principles and implementation of support planning and in the specific requirements of individual service users.

Confidentiality will be promoted by ensuring that support plans:

- Are handled and stored securely
- Are communicated with appropriate attention to confidentiality
- Are disclosed only to those with the right and the need to know and proof of identity is obtained where necessary.

Employees will inform their lines manager if it appears information is being misused.

The relationship of Deafblind Scotland's support plan to planning and review processes carried out by other relevant agencies will be clearly defined.

Deafblind Scotland Procedure for Support Plans

Aim of procedure

This procedure provides a framework, which if followed will ensure that Deafblind Scotland's policy on Support Plans is followed, implemented, and appropriately monitored.

Policy Statement

Deafblind Scotland is committed to ensuring that individuals have maximum control over their lives and where required, are assisted to access the necessary support to meet their needs.

1. Information required when preparing a basic support plan:

- Name – both proper and “known as”
- Date of birth
- Address
- Communication needs
- Service/support currently being funded/provided
- Any support needs the individual has indicated
- Any relevant health needs (where the deafblind person is agreeable to this being entered)
- Other matters which may impact on service (if the deafblind person has additional support needs, e.g. wheelchair-user, behaviours, etc)
- Family background, if relevant and available
- Outline of areas to be supported
- Service monitoring arrangements
- Brief outline of complaints procedure
- Follow-up issues from previous visits, service reviews
- Unmet need should be detailed and agreement made as to how these might be addressed, by whom, and in what timescale

2. When undertaking the development or updating of support plans:

- The support planning process will be allocated to a designated worker.
- The designated worker will ensure service user is given the opportunity, whenever appropriate, to co-ordinate their own support. Some services users will write their own support plan with assistance.

- The worker will record accurately and legibly the information necessary for purpose.
- In order to involve the service user and stakeholders to the fullest extent possible, the worker will be mindful of setting, timing, use of language, communication methods, support needed and appropriate structure of the meeting.
- A worker will prepare a written record of the support plan. Appropriate circulation will be agreed with the user and stakeholders.
- The worker on behalf of Deafblind Scotland and the service user will agree the actions in the support plan.
- There will be a clear agreement for updating and reviewing the support plan.

The Service-user should receive a Service-User Information Pack containing their updated support plan within it, in their preferred format e.g. Braille, Moon, Large Print, Audio Tape, Email, 1:1 support from a guide/communicator, BSL interpreter etc.

3. Monitoring and review arrangements:

The Support Plan should be reviewed annually in timing with the Service Review, but at any time the deafblind service-user has the right to call for a service review and/or a review of their support plan.

Deafblind Scotland Guide/Communicator Service

Service-user information pack

Information for Service-users

This pack has information about Deafblind Scotland's Guide/Communicator service.

The information is in Very Large Print for ease of access.

This limits the amount of words used. If you would a full copy of any policy or procedure, please just ask.

Please keep the pack safe. It has phone numbers and useful information you might need.

If you have any questions, please a member of the guide/communicator staff.

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Section 1

The Aim of the G/C Service

- **Ensure equal access for Deafblind people**
- **Promote independence**
- **Provide stimulation**
- **Help maintain links with the community**

Support plan

Name of service-user Date

Name you like to be called

How you prefer to communicate

You have hours G/C service per week.

Funded by

These hours can be used for:

- **Communication support**
- **Going to meetings**
- **Help with mail**
- **To access information**
- **Shopping**
- **Social activities**
- **Medical appointments**
- **Health activities**
- **Life skills training**

- **Further education**

You may also be able to use a service to:

- **Attend doctor & hospital appointments**
- **Improve your English & numbers skills**
- **Improve your health**

To use the service please contact the office

Altering or stopping the service

If you wish to change your service please ask for a review of your service.

If you wish to stop the service please tell the Service Co-ordinator. Deafblind Scotland can help you find another service.

Your service is due to be reviewed

You can involve family or friends, whoever you want, in the review.

Keeping your information secure

Your information will be kept secure and given to no-one without your consent. Only the funder of the service will receive regular reports on the number of hours you use. No detail will be given.

If there is an emergency, who should we contact?

Emergency Contact name

Telephone number

Special notes:

-

-

What do you want to achieve in the next 12 months?

-

-

-

I understand this support plan and agree to it

Signed (user) _____

Signed (DBS) _____

One copy will remain with this pack.

One copy will be kept secure by Deafblind Scotland.

Section 2

The role of the guide is to:

Give you information on what is happening around you.

Help you get around, outside your home (on foot, or public transport or private transport) to the places you want to go.

Help you access information and enable you to make decisions by giving you full information in your preferred communication method.

Work to Deafblind Scotland's Code of Practice and Guidelines. This means they will, at all times:

- Provide the service as agreed
- Respect everyone's right to privacy and confidentiality
- Maintain a professional approach
- Work within their communication skills
- Take reasonable safety precautions
- Tell you about any risks to your safety
- Help you make a complaint
- Follow Deafblind Scotland's good practice guidelines

Follow Deafblind Scotland's Health and Safety Policy for guide/communicators

Report to the Service Co-ordinator any concerns they have.

Deafblind Scotland will use guides/communicators who have been:

Identified as being suitable to work with lots of different deafblind people

Trained in communication & guiding skills.

Protection of Vulnerable Adults membership.

Given satisfactory references.

Trained in Deafblind Scotland policies and procedures.

Deafblind Scotland will support guides/communicators by:

Arranging opportunities for new guides to work with senior guide/communicators, and with different deafblind people

Providing regular in-service meetings

Providing ongoing training

Providing regular support, supervision and Personal Development

Management and Staffing

Deafblind Scotland has a large team of

guide/communicators who are employed to provide the service.

The service is managed by the Operations manager and supported by a depute, admin team, senior guide/communicators and executive management team.

The Chief Executive and Board of Directors monitor the service by receiving regular reports and if required carrying out audit/reviews of the service.

The service is a standing agenda item at The Board of Trustee meetings

Deafblind Scotland will use a number of different guide/communicators to provide your service.

All guide/communicators receive training in helping you make a complaint

The senior guide/communicators are specially trained to monitor quality, and to maintain standards.

Please feel free to speak to any of the senior guides, the Operations manager, or members of the executive team at any time, in private

Section 3

How to book a guide/ communicator

You can phone, fax or email the office. If you have a telephone you can also ask a guide/communicator to call for you.

Phone: 0141 777 7774

Fax: 0141 775 3311

Email: info@deafblindscotland.org.uk

Please:

- **Give at least 7 clear days' notice of your needs**
- **Tell us on a Monday what you need for the whole of the next week**

If we get less notice it may be difficult to find a guide/communicator, but we will always try.

What we will need to know when you book a service:

- **Date and time guide/communicator should arrive at your house**
- **Where you want to go**
- **What you will do**

- Time of any appointment you may have
- How you and your guide/communicator will travel
- The time you and your guide/communicator will finish and arrive back at your house.

We need this information as guide/communicators often have other appointments.

Sometimes we cannot match the time you need, or jobs over run. Please tell us if the time is critical eg a medical appointment.

To ensure a lunch break is possible please try to book guides between 9.30am and 12.30pm or 1.30pm and 4.30pm.

Deafblind Scotland expects service-users to:

Follow Deafblind Scotland's Health and Safety policy.

Be ready when the guide/communicator arrives.

Finish at the agreed time. Remember the guide/communicator may need to travel to another job.

Treat the guide/communicator with respect

Tell Deafblind Scotland about any problems you have with a guide/communicator

Park using a disabled badge OR pay fees.

Pay on invoice mileage where you and the guide both agree to travel in the guide/communicator's car.

Pay any public transport costs or entry fees for the guide/communicator.

Tell the guide/communicator what they need to do to meet your needs.

Respect the guide's need to maintain confidentiality about other service-users and other guide/communicators

Your Guide/Communicator Should Not

Have to use their car unless they have agreed to do so.

Give lifts to anyone while they are working with you, except your children if they are under 16 and with prior agreement.

Guide or communicate with more than one person at a time.

Communicate when driving.

Go shopping for you, unless you are ill.

Make meals, help with cleaning, or personal care, unless in exceptional circumstances or as agreed as part of your support plan.

Use their mobile to make or receive personal phone calls or messages. Sometimes the office may phone the guide/communicator to discuss work issues.

Do anything, which is not legal, or not acceptable to those who fund the service.

Smoke while working.

Accept gifts, loans or money from you for any purpose except petrol costs for journeys made.

Section 4

Health and Safety

Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) demands that we know of any risks for Guide/Communicators at work.

Deafblind Scotland wants to keep you as safe as possible. To do this we need to do “Risk Assessments” This means

looking at any activity and thinking about all the things which could go wrong.

We will tell you if we think it is necessary to do a risk assessment around your service. We will involve you in that risk assessment by asking you questions and listening to your concerns about safety. We will give you a copy of the risk assessment when it is completed.

If you feel unsafe at any time, please tell the service staff who can arrange a risk assessment.

If an accident occurs while you are with the g/c please tell the service staff.

If any incident occurs which concerns you please tell the service staff.

In general to keep you both safe, please remember to:

Cover any cuts

Always wash your hands to stops germs spreading

Tell the guide/communicator if they are walking too fast, or if you feel unwell

Listen to the guide/communicator if they say there is danger, leave if they ask you to.

Do not ask the guide/communicator to carry shopping as they can't guide you safely when carrying shopping.

Guide/communicators can only work with one member at a time.

Sometimes two guides are needed to help keep wheelchair users safe.

A guide/communicator should interpret using Deafblind Manual for more than 30-40 minutes without a break.

Guide/communicators should have a minimum half hour break after 6 hours work.

At meetings take time to arrange your chairs before the meeting begins, so you are both comfortable, and will not suffer back pain.

Smoking

On 26th March 2006 a new law came into force,

“The Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act 2005”.

This new law was introduced to save lives and prevent diseases caused by passive smoking.

This law bans smoking in public places, including pubs, clubs, restaurants, hotels, halls, shops, even toilets.

This means that Deafblind Scotland cannot ask guide/communicators to work in smoky situations. This includes your home, if a guide/communicator is paid to be there.

We ask that if a guide/communicator is coming to your house please do not smoke in the house while they are with you or for half an hour before they are due to arrive. You can smoke while you are outside with the guide/communicator but not in an enclosed space.

This law has changed the smoking habits of Scottish people. Deafblind Scotland is obliged to protect guide/communicators from passive smoking.

Travelling in the Guide's Car

Wear your seatbelt at all times, and until the car is stopped and parked.

Understand the guide/communicator cannot communicate in manual or sign when driving.

Driving is stressful and roads are busy. It can be difficult to park. Please be patient.

Dogs must be safely seated on the floor.

Do not smoke in the car.

Section 5

Sometimes we cannot provide a service

If the guide/communicator is ill or their car breaks down. Deafblind Scotland will try to find another guide/communicator but sometimes it is not possible.

If Deafblind Scotland has to cancel your guide/communicator we will try to give you as much notice as possible. We will make up the hours at another time.

We may ask you to change your arrangements if your guide/communicator is needed for a medical emergency.

Guide/Communicators must go to meetings and training courses 6 times a year. On these days only emergencies can be dealt with.

We provide a limited service on Easter Monday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and 2nd January.

At the beginning of each year we will give you a list of dates for staff in-Service days, when only medical emergencies will receive a service.

Cancelling a Guide/Communicator

If you need to cancel please give us as much notice as possible. If you give us less than 2 days notice we will charge a cancellation fee as per your support plan, which will be paid to the guide.

If at weekends you are unwell and don't want to go out with the guide. When the guide arrives just tell them you are unwell and can't go out, the guide/communicator will be paid for their time.

During the working day if the guide/communicator does not turn up please phone/contact the office immediately. Don't wait.

When the office is closed if a guide/communicator does not turn up for an evening or weekend job, please phone 07715 421 388. This number is **ONLY** to be used to report a guide not turning up.

For other emergencies outside normal working hours you may contact Deafblind UK's 24-hour help-line:

Or contact
social

0800 132320

**your local standby
worker:**

Section 6

Any Problems

Please tell us if:

The guide/communicator doesn't tell you what is happening.

The guide/communicator leaves you alone.

You feel unsafe.

You think the guide/communicator has broken confidentiality.

There was an accident or incident, even although no one was hurt.

The guide/communicator asks you to buy something from them.

The guide/communicator tries to sell you something

You are worried about anything the guide/communicator does.

The guide/communicator asks you to keep a secret.

Abuse

Deafblind Scotland wishes to ensure that no service-user is abused in any way.

Abuse includes verbal, physical, mental, sexual, emotional, financial abuse or neglect of your basic needs.

Please tell us if any guide/communicator:

- Pushes, hits or hurts you.
- Says cruel things or bullies you.
- Doesn't look after you properly.
- Takes money or possessions from you.

You have a right to be protected from any abuse and Deafblind Scotland has procedures in place to protect you.

In the first place please report the problem direct to a staff member who will take your concern seriously and make sure the correction action is taken.

How to Make a Complaint

You can make a complaint if you are unhappy about your service.

Any concerns about the guide/communicator service should be reported to Deafblind Scotland by phone, fax, e-mail or in person.

For minor complaints a member of staff should be able to discuss the concern and deal with most problems quickly.

If they are unable to help you can make a formal complaint.

Formal Complaints Procedure

A formal complaint should be made in writing, or by phone, fax, e-mail, in person or by your representative.

We can help you to make a complaint.

We will keep a copy of your complaint.

You will receive a letter to acknowledge your complaint within 7 days. If we need to get further information from other people involved and this takes some time we will let you know.

Normally you will receive a written answer to your complaint within 28 days.

This will let you know what will happen as a result of your complaint.

If you are unhappy with the decision you should appeal to the Chief Executive within 28 days of receiving the letter.

If you have a complaint about your guide/communicator service you can also report your complaint to the Local Authority who funds your service and/or the Care Inspectorate.

Independent Advocacy

Independent advocates do not make decisions for you.

An Independent advocate is there to help you decide what you want to say, and then help you say it.

If you think you have been abused in any way you have the right to independent advocacy, just ask.

The following addresses may be helpful if you feel you need independent advocacy:

Section 7

Useful contact names & numbers

Care Inspectorate

Social Work Services

Deafblind Scotland

1 Neasham Drive

Kirkintiloch

Glasgow

G66 3FA

Tel 0141 777 7774

Fax 0141 775 3311

Email: info@deafblindscotland.org.uk

