

Supporting residents with hearing loss

– tips for family members

If your family member has suspected or diagnosed hearing loss, check that care home staff:

- know about this and that it's recorded in your family member's care plan
- have any suspected hearing loss investigated (a GP will need to check for temporary causes of hearing loss, like an ear-wax blockage – if there aren't any, they should refer your family member for a full hearing assessment).

You can also ask care home staff to complete a:

- **Hearing aid care plan** for your family member, if they use hearing aids
- **How to support me with hearing loss** form with your family member – with your input, if necessary. This form records details of your family member's communication needs and any assistive equipment that they use or would benefit from,

such as a conversation listener or amplified telephone.

Notify care home staff if your family member is struggling to hear or has any problems with their hearing aids.

You can follow some simple communication tips to make it easier for your family member to communicate with you:

- Get your family member's attention before you start speaking, by gently tapping them on the arm.
- Make sure you have face-to-face contact to help with lipreading.
- Find a place to talk that has good lighting, away from noise and distractions (where possible).
- Speak clearly, not too slowly, and use normal lip movements, facial expressions and gestures.
- Get to the point: use plain language and don't waffle.

- Keep your voice down: it's uncomfortable for a hearing aid user if you shout, and it looks aggressive.
- Make sure what you're saying is being understood.
- If your family member doesn't understand what you've said, don't keep repeating it – try saying it in a different way instead.
- Use assistive equipment – for example, a conversation listener – if available.
- Be patient and take time to communicate properly.
- Writing may help if you are having difficulty communicating – avoid capital letters and use a thick pen if your family member has sight problems.

To find out more about what you can do to support people with hearing loss, please visit actiononhearingloss.org.uk/how-we-help/friends-and-family or contact the Action on Hearing Loss Information Line:

Telephone: **0808 808 0123** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

SMS: **0780 000 0360** (standard text message rates apply)

Email: information@hearingloss.org.uk

You can also visit the Action on Hearing Loss website for information and support: actiononhearingloss.org.uk

