RN Communication Tips for the general public

Remember that people who are deaf or have hearing loss have individual communication needs and you should ask someone how best you can communicate with them.

Not every tip below will be appropriate for every person who is deaf or has hearing loss.

Be patient and considerate, it is a stressful time for us all, but people with deafness and hearing loss who rely on facial expressions and lipreading are finding things especially difficult right now.

The below are particularly important when someone cannot use visual cues, such as on the telephone or when wearing a mask:



Re-phrase
If someone doesn't
understand you,
repeat what you
said or phrase it
differently, use
plain language



Face to face
Make sure you are
facing the person you
are talking to and speak
clearly – avoid shouting,
speaking too fast or
unnecessarily slow



Interpreter
If they ask, speak
to a relative
or friend



Write it down Use pen on paper, text on device screens, or whiteboards



Full Attention
Use simple gestures
such as pointing
or waving to get
someone's attention



Background noise In a noisy place, move to a quieter area if possible

Please be aware that different rules apply in health and social care settings. You can find guidance for health and social care professionals on the **RNID website**.

RNID is the trading name of The Royal National Institute for Deaf People. A registered charity in England and Wales (207720) and Scotland (SC038926).