

# BEING DEAF AWARE AT RNID STAFF SUMMITS

Top tips for everyone to follow!

## RNID Deaf Awareness Group

We use a rich variety of communication methods and support at our Staff Summits. We all have a responsibility to make sure communication at the events – whether you're leading a workshop, taking part in a discussion, or having a chat over dinner - is accessible for everyone.

By following these simple top tips, we can all help to make sure every single colleague at RNID is fully included and involved in all aspects of our time together.



- **If you're presenting a session or skillshare:** Get into the habit every time of asking at the very beginning whether everyone can hear or see the communication support they need before starting the session.
- **If you're asking a question or speaking from the audience:** Make sure you access a roving microphone (and personal listener receivers, if in use), rather than relying on speaking loudly – otherwise colleagues accessing communication support or assistive tech may miss what you're saying.
- **If you're presenting:** Repeat questions as needed – there may be times when it is necessary to relay a question from the audience, for example if it isn't possible to access a roving mic. Bear in mind that mics may also be required for interpreters who are voicing over for staff using BSL to ask questions.
- **If you are using a microphone:** If you are using a lectern mic, stand close and make sure the mic is adjusted so it's at mouth height. Do not pull away from the lectern mic or a roving mic when speaking.
- **Interpreters are not just there for deaf staff:** Hearing staff can and should feel able to approach them to support with communication, including for social chats with colleagues using BSL. Familiarise yourself with our team of communication support professionals who will be wearing badges to indicate their role.
- **Everyone:** if you're in a session and notice that any type of communication doesn't seem to be working (examples: no BSL interpreter in the session, STTR screen isn't working), raise it. We are all responsible for ensuring communication is accessible, not just the member(s) of staff using the comms support.
- **Consider background noise for colleagues with hearing loss:** For colleagues with hearing loss it can make it more difficult to pick up speech, and for colleagues with tinnitus it can become very stressful. Consider moving to a quieter area if noise levels are high.
- **Make use of your BSL skills:** Make an effort to chat with colleagues who are BSL users and adapt your communication methods as needed. An RSLI interpreter is also available if needed.
- **Don't make audio only announcements:** (for example, verbally announcing that sessions are starting) - engage with communication support to ensure announcements are also signed and consider visual alerts common among the deaf community – turning the light off and on, gesturing to ensure attention etc.