




Review Sheet

Last Reviewed
7 Jan 2026Last Amended
31 Jul 2025This policy will be reviewed as needs require or at the following interval:
Annual

Business Impact:	 <p>Changes are important, but urgent implementation is not required, incorporate into your existing workflow.</p> <p>MEDIUM</p>
Reason for this Review:	Scheduled review
Changes Made:	No
Summary:	<p>This policy has been reviewed with no further changes as it was updated in July 2025 in line with new guidance released. The policy remains appropriate and supports staff to understand and implement the principles of the NHS Accessible Information Standard. Underpinning Knowledge and Further Reading links have been reviewed and updated where applicable.</p>
Relevant Legislation:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Care Act 2014 • Equality Act 2010 • The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 • Mental Capacity Act 2005 • Access to Health Records Act 1990 • Data Protection Act 2018 • UK GDPR • Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
Underpinning Knowledge:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Author: GOV UK, (2018), The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 [Online] Available from: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/852/contents/made [Accessed: 07/01/2026] • Author: NHS England, (2025), Accessible Information Standard [Online] Available from: https://www.england.nhs.uk/accessible-information-standard/ [Accessed: 07/01/2026] • Author: NHS England, (2025), Accessible Information Standard Implementation Guidance [Online] Available from: https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/accessible-information-standard-implementation-guidance/ [Accessed: 07/01/2026] • Author: CQC, (2025), Meeting the Accessible Information Standard [Online] Available from: https://www.cqc.org.uk/guidance-providers/meeting-accessible-information-standard [Accessed: 07/01/2026]



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Author: GOV.UK, (2024), Understanding Accessibility Requirements for Public Sector Bodies [Online] Available from: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps [Accessed: 07/01/2026]• Author: ICO, (2025), UK GDPR Guidance and Resources [Online] Available from: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/uk-gdpr-guidance-and-resources/ [Accessed: 07/01/2026]
Suggested Action:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage sharing the policy through the use of the QCS App
Equality Impact Assessment:	QCS have undertaken an equality analysis during the review of this policy. This statement is a written record that demonstrates that we have shown due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with respect to the characteristics protected by equality law.

Quality Compliance Systems Ltd
Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited
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OLAJUMOKE OMOLOLA



1. Purpose

1.1 To make sure that Service Users (and those important to them) who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss, get information that they can access, understand and receive any communication support that they need from Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited.

1.2

Key Question	Quality Statements
CARING	QSC2: Treating people as individuals
EFFECTIVE	QSE3: How staff, teams & services work together
RESPONSIVE	QSR1: Person-centred care
SAFE	QSS3: Safeguarding
WELL-LED	QSW7: Learning, improvement and innovation

1.3 Relevant Legislation

- The Care Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- The Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Access to Health Records Act 1990
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK GDPR
- Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018



2. Scope

2.1 Roles Affected:

- All Staff

2.2 People Affected:

- Service Users
- Family
- Visitors

2.3 Stakeholders Affected:

- Family
- Advocates
- Representatives



- Commissioners
- External health professionals
- Local Authority
- NHS



3. Objectives

3.1 To ensure that Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited complies with the NHS Accessible Information Standard, and that staff at Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited consider how they will apply the standard in a clear, consistent, transparent and fair way.

3.2 For Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited to have a clear, consistent, transparent and fair approach to the provision of accessible, inclusive information and communication support to all.



4. Policy

4.1 All staff at Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited have a responsibility to make information accessible and inclusive.

4.2 Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will comply fully with the NHS England Accessible Information Standard and will perform the following six implementation steps:

- **Ask:** Find out if people have communication and information needs
- **Record:** Record those needs in a clear and standardised way in electronic or paper based systems
- **Flag:** Use alert systems to generate specific formats or to clearly indicate needs to others
- **Share:** Include records as part of data sharing and treatment and referral processes
- **Act:** Take steps to ensure people's information and communications needs are met
- **Review:** Regularly review needs and ensure records are up to date

4.3 Staff will have a working knowledge of the NHS England Accessible Information Standard, and Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will be able to demonstrate compliance through audit and quality assurance processes.

4.4 In line with UK GDPR, data protection legislation, Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will enable Service Users to access their records when requested, and this includes the right to review and amend their documented communication preferences.

4.5 Where Service Users are unable to provide consent in relation to their wishes with sharing of information, all decisions regarding this area will be made in line with the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and best interests requirements.



4.6 Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will also comply with the Accessibility Regulations that came into force for public sector bodies in 2018 and require reasonable adjustments to be made to websites and mobile apps for those with disabilities to ensure that they remain accessible.

The regulations require a service's website to comply with [WCAG2.1 AA](#) by:

- Ensuring that the website is 'perceivable, operable, understandable and robust'
- Having an accessibility statement available on the website

Although some services may be exempt from the regulations (full government guidance can be referred to [here](#)), Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited recognises it has an obligation to ensure that reasonable adjustments are in place for disabled people.



5. Procedure

5.1 Steps to the Accessible Standard

There are six basic steps which make up the Accessible Information Standard:

- **Ask:** Find out if people have communication and information needs
- **Record:** Record those needs in a clear and standardised way in electronic or paper based systems
- **Flag:** Use alert systems to generate specific formats or to clearly indicate needs to others
- **Share:** Include records as part of data sharing and treatment and referral processes
- **Act:** Take steps to ensure people's information and communications needs are met
- **Review:** Regularly review needs and ensure records are up to date

5.2 Step 1 - Ask

At the earliest opportunity, e.g. when an enquiry for a care service is raised, receiving staff must establish any communication needs or wishes in a timely manner.

Pre-assessment

Before commencing any care, an assessment will be completed that identifies the communication needs and wishes of the Service User. This information gathering will include identifying how the Service User manages this and what support they will need from staff in order to enable effective communication.

Before commencing care, Olajumoke Omolola must determine that Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited can meet the communication needs of the Service User. Staff must avoid making any assumptions about Service Users' communication needs, and must take care to record people's communication needs specifically and separately from any recording of disability or other protected characteristic status.

5.3 Ongoing Assessment

As part of the Care Plan cycle, assessments will be reviewed in accordance with locally agreed timescales or as a Service User's condition changes. As part of this, staff will revisit and identify any new communication needs and support accordingly.



Olajumoke Omolola will consider how to promote enabling all individuals accessing Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited to express their communication needs and wishes.

There are a range of resources (e.g. posters and leaflets) that can be accessed via NHS England that can help to raise awareness that Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will accommodate different communication preferences (refer to the Further Reading section of this policy).

5.4 Step 2 - Record

Recording of communication needs and preferences will be highly visible and clear on paper formats (i.e. jargon free, in a simple language). Where electronic systems are used, coding must be in accordance with the defined terminology and assurance will be gained that persons receiving this shared information understand it.

5.5 Step 3 - Alert/ Flag/ Highlight

Staff at Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited must have systems in place to ensure that records (electronic or paper-based) clearly flag that the Service User has a recorded communication need - they will be highly visible and prompt staff to take action.

Where facilities are in place for automatically generated correspondence, alerts will pick up the requirement for alternative formats. Staff responsible for overseeing standard print letter releases to Service Users must have systems in place to not send these where it would be inappropriate or inaccessible for that person. Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will investigate and learn from any incidents of this nature.

5.6 Step 4 - Share

Consent will be gained from the Service User who has identified specific communication preferences and needs in relation to sharing this information. Any limitations to this must also be documented and clarity provided as to what information can be shared, with whom, in what circumstances, and for what purposes.

Where consent cannot be obtained due to reduced capacity, staff should refer to the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005 Policy and Procedure of Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited and best interest decisions made in line with the code of practice.

Existing internal and external communication systems such as the referral, transfer of care and handover processes will include reference to communication support required for Service Users.

5.7 Step 5 - Act

Staff must be aware of how to adapt their own communication styles to meet the needs of a Service User, and they must also be competent with the use of any techniques or aids used by Service Users.

It is acknowledged that it may take time to establish communication needs from Service Users that choose to not disclose this information, and they must be encouraged to discuss their needs with staff.

Service Users who use limited or no English, and those who use British Sign Language (BSL) or the deaf-blind manual alphabet, will have access to a professional interpreter. Staff will support the Service User to access this and will work with any advice and support offered by the interpreter.



Where staff are required to support Service Users to source an interpreter or communication professional, this must be based on the following considerations:

- Qualifications
- DBS clearance
- Professional code of conduct
- Experience
- Preference of the Service User (e.g. in relation to gender)
- Specialist skills needed

Any concerns in relation to the suitability or practice of the interpreter will be discussed with Olajumoke Omolola.

5.8 Step 6 - Review

Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will regularly review Service Users' accessible information and communication needs to ensure they remain accurate and appropriate.

This review will occur in line with the Care Plan review cycle at Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited, or sooner if there is a significant change in the Service User's health, communication ability, or care and support setting.

Any updates must be clearly documented in the Service User's Care Plan and promptly acted upon to maintain effective and equitable communication.

5.9 Environment

Although the Accessible Information Standard does not include environmental or facilities matters, some aspects apply to Service Users with a disability, impairment or sensory loss, in order to facilitate communication.

Staff must always consider whether some rooms are 'better' than others for people with communication needs, e.g. less clutter, improved lighting, soundproof. As part of the Care Plan process, the environment must be considered and appropriate locations detailed in the Care Plan where specific rooms might provide better support to facilitate communication.

Staff will consider lighting, in particular where lip reading is vital for the Service User.

Olajumoke Omolola will accommodate communication aids that support individuals with communication, such as loop systems, in agreement and review with Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited.

5.10 Conversion of Format

Olajumoke Omolola must consider in advance how to facilitate the conversion of key documents, policies and procedures in a timely manner. Olajumoke Omolola will identify which communication formats can be used or produced within Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited, for example, email and text message (for people who are deaf as an alternative to telephone, and for people who are blind as an alternative to printed information), and large print.

Staff should also refer to the Recite Me tool within QCS Compliance Centre, which will support with the conversion of policies and resources into different languages, large print and audio amongst other available functions.



A local suite of support services and points of contact will be made available in readiness for accessing specific communication requirements that cannot be met within Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited. Olajumoke Omolola will consider how needs can be met by the use of remote, virtual, digital and telecommunications solutions, as well as paper format.

5.11 Staff can refer to the Supporting Communication and Sensory Needs Policy and Procedure of Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited for practical support and procedures that can extend to any person accessing Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited.

Time should be factored into accommodating communication needs, as some Service Users may need longer periods of time to process information than others.

5.12 Training and Education

New staff joining Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will receive an induction that includes communication. For new Care Workers, they will also be required to complete the Care Certificate which includes standards around communication.

Ongoing, staff will be encouraged to develop their learning further. This will be identified through supervisions and appraisals, and by training needs analysis.

5.13 The self-assessment framework

Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will measure its compliance against the set of performance measures by using the [self-assessment framework](#).

There are 8 steps to completing the framework

- **Step 1:** Understand the Accessible Information Standard
- **Step 2:** Assemble a self-assessment team
- **Step 3:** Review current practices
- **Step 4:** Conduct staff and user surveys
- **Step 5:** Undertake gap analysis
- **Step 6:** Develop an action plan
- **Step 7:** Implement the plan and monitor
- **Step 8:** Deliver continuous improvement

NHS England states that organisations should be in a position to annually publish their compliance with the 2025 version by March 2027.

5.14 Audit and Review

Olajumoke Omolola will ensure that processes are in place to make sure that information recorded is current and accurate.

Record keeping audit processes will include a review of the communication preferences of Service Users. Overarching quality assurance checks of Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will identify meeting the needs of any Service User accessing Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited. Any findings of discrepancy will be immediately acted upon and reflected upon to ensure the risk of reoccurrence is reduced.

Service Users will be supported to provide feedback about their experiences, with information received by Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited in the most appropriate forum. Information received will be acted upon as part of the continuous improvement cycle.



6. Definitions

6.1 Accessible Information

- Information which is able to be read or received and understood by the individual or group for which it is intended

6.2 Alternative Format

- Information provided in an alternative to standard printed or handwritten English, e.g. audio, braille or large print

6.3 Deafblind

- Deafblindness is a combined hearing and sight loss that causes problems with mobility, communication and access to information



7. Key Facts - Professionals

Professionals providing this service should be aware of the following:

- Effective information and communication are vital components of a person-centred approach to care and support
- The Accessible Information Standard was introduced to standardise how organisations consistently meet communication needs of individuals
- There are 6 steps to the Accessible Information Standard; these are Ask, Record, Flag, Share, Act and Review
- The standard dovetails alongside equality and diversity and data protection legislation
- The standard is mandatory for NHS and social care providers



8. Key Facts - People Affected by The Service

People affected by this service should be aware of the following:

- Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited recognises that you may have specific communication requirements and will ensure this is accommodated
- Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will ensure information is presented in an accessible way and, where appropriate, in a range of languages and formats that are easily used and understood
- Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited will seek your feedback on information sharing as a means of improving its service



Further Reading

Skills for Care - Care Certificate - Communication:



<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Developing-your-workforce/Care-Certificate/Care-Certificate.aspx>

National Register of Communication Professionals Working with Deaf and Deafblind People:

<https://www.nrcpd.org.uk>

National Register of Public Service Interpreters:

<https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/>

The Royal National Institute of Blind people and Sense can offer further information about braille and communication formats:

RNIB - Braille: Tactile Codes:

<https://www.rnib.org.uk/practical-help/reading/braille-and-moon-tactile-codes>

Sense - Total Communication:

<https://www.sense.org.uk/get-support/information-and-advice/communication/total-communication/>

Action on hearing loss and SignHealth can provide resources for hearing loss:

RNID - Hearing Loss:

<https://rnid.org.uk/information-and-support/hearing-loss/>

SignHealth - Who uses British Sign Language (BSL)?

<https://www.signhealth.org.uk/about-deafness/sign-language/>

GOV.UK - Guidance - Accessible Communication Formats:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-communication/accessible-communication-formats>

The Stroke Association has produced an animated guide to communicating with people with aphasia, as well as a guidance sheet:

The Stroke Association - Aphasia Etiquette:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTh86NoQh7Q>

The Stroke Association - Communication Problems After a Stroke:

<https://www.stroke.org.uk/resources/communication-problems-after-stroke>

Please refer to the QCS Resource Centre for useful Easy Read support, which includes:

- How to Create Easy Read Documents
- QCS Easy Read Template
- Accessible Information Flag



Please refer to the 'Recite Me' function within QCS Compliance Centre which can be accessed by clicking on the person icon.



Outstanding Practice

To be "outstanding" in this policy area you could provide evidence that:

- Different formats of key policies such as the Complaints, Suggestions and Compliments Policy and Procedure are readily available for access
- Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited actively advertises to any visitors that it can accommodate different communication needs and actively supports a culture that encourages people to disclose their needs
- Staff receive additional training in relation to communication skills, such as lipreading, sign language, use of electronic communication aids.
- Records clearly state communication needs and audits demonstrate adherence to the standard
- Any feedback and suggestions received in relation to communication within Wellspring Recruitment and Care Services Limited is acted on in a timely manner as part of quality assurance processes
- The wide understanding of the policy is enabled by proactive use of the QCS App

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