



# **Deafblind Enablement Ltd**

**The services provided - How they fit  
within the legislation and how they  
make a difference to Deafblind People**

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# Introduction

- I will discuss the role of Deafblind Enablement through the presentation, who we are, what we do & how we can help.
- I have worked with and for deafblind people for over 34 years, both in the Social Care, Charity and private sectors.
- I qualified as a Rehab Officer for VI over 30 years ago, and have always had an enablement focus. I am a qualified deafblind interpreter.
- I have managed services nationally for the over 20 years, including specialist training, volunteers, facilitating specialist assessments and interpreting/communicator-guides. For 8 years I was a CQC registered manager for Dom. Care.
- My view has always been to promote prevention services, creating deafblind awareness and assist deafblind people to have choice and control rather than the reality of continually dealing with crisis situations.

# Definition of Deafblindness

Persons are regarded as Deafblind “if their combined sight and hearing impairment causes difficulties with:-

- **communication,**
- **access to information and**
- **mobility.**

This includes people with a progressive sight and hearing loss”.

# Facts

- In 2010, it was estimated that there were 356,000 deafblind people in the UK.
- By 2020, it is estimated that it will rise to 440,000 deafblind people in the UK, mainly older people.
- People with both hearing and vision impairments will rise to approximately 569,000 by 2030.  
This is equivalent to 806 people per 100,000 in the general population.

<http://www.sense.org.uk/content/how-many-deafblind-people-are-there>

# Deafblind Enablement's (DBE's) services and how they fit with legislation

Specialist Assessments: “every deafblind person has a ‘right’ to a specialist assessment facilitated by a person who has specific training, expertise and experience” (6.92) Care Act, 2014.

“Ensure that when an assessment of needs for care and support is carried out, this is done by a person or team that has specific training and expertise relating to Deafblind persons - in particular to assess the need for **one-to-one human contact, assistive technology and rehabilitation**” (Care and Support Guidance, 2014).

Care/Support Planning: “Care plan input by a deafblind specialist” (10.85) Care Act, 2014

# DBE services – specialist assessments

DBE stands apart from other agencies because:-

- All our staff are highly trained to national standards with a wealth of experience.
- we assess and support the most complex acquired deafblind people, some have no sight, no hearing, no speech or some residual hearing/sight with other factors such as additional health needs, learning difficulties, mental health etc.
- Facilitate specialist assessments for deafblind adults and children.
- Communicate on a 1-1 basis using BSL/SSE Hands-on & Visual Frame, Deafblind Manual, Block, large print writing, clear speech, etc.

# DBE Can:-

- Be commissioned nationally to carry out specialist assessments.
- Facilitate specialist training for professionals to meet the Care Act, 2017 requirements:
  - Signature RCF Level 2 DBG, three impartial assessments (2 practical / 1 written paper)
  - Signature RCF Level 3 EDB3, two modules DK301: congenital deafblind adults and DK302: Insight into mobility and implications for communication for deafblind adults.
  - Specialist Assessment Training to look in-depth at dilemmas and situations, service provision, etc.
  - DBE works in partnership with Birmingham City University to facilitate Specialist Assessment and Rehabilitation for Deafblind People (two modules) for Rehab Officers, this qualification is Degree Level 6.
- Assist specialist assessors/professionals with advice and mentoring.

# Fluctuating needs: establishing the frequency and degree of fluctuation and consider the person's wellbeing (6.58 & 6.136)

- Recognising fluctuating needs is the most important part of facilitating any assessment, care/support or meeting a deafblind person.
- Many deafblind people struggle with lighting issues, to socialise, lack of environmental information and anxiety of frequently changing situations.
- How people act and understand their sensory needs and how this impacts on their daily lives
  - This will only be determined by:
    - gaining trust, confidence, honesty
    - the ability to communicate effectively,
    - to gain access to information
    - recognise movement, orientation and mobility
- DBE covers this in specialist assessments, specialist training courses and our ethos



# Advocacy, Prevention and Reviews

**Addressing prevention is vital for deafblind people:**

- **Deafblindness does not go away!**
- **Visual Impairment and Hearing Loss deteriorate – this can happen suddenly or not be recognised**
- **Deafblindness can be misinterpreted as dementia and the person determined as not having capacity**
- **Deafblindness is the most hidden disability**
- **As research has found, deafblind people have mental health issues and triggers are never addressed.**
- **Deafblind people do not have a network of friends who can advocate on their behalf.**

**To be Care Act compliant, reviews should be completed by either qualified specialist assessors/ staff so that the specialist assessment can highlight where advocacy, prevention and annual reviews are required.**

# 1-1 specialist support provision

## Care Act, 2014:

- Communicator-guides is detailed in market shaping section: each LA need to source communicator-guides so that they are available to meet assessed needs.
- RAS system does not apply to deafblind assessments (11.23) Care Act, 2014.

## Care and Support Policy Guidance for Deafblind Children and Adults, 2014” 2014 states:

- Ensure they are able to access specifically trained one-to-one support workers for those people they assess as requiring one
- Ensure that appropriate services are provided to deafblind people, who are not necessarily able to benefit from mainstream services or those services aimed primarily at blind people or deaf people who are able to rely on their other senses.

# Accessible Information Standard, 2016 (SCCI1605)

## States:

- all organisations that provide NHS or adult social care must follow the accessible information standard **by law**.
- they should make sure that deafblind people get the appropriate communication support that they need, for example support from a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter (hands-on, visual frame), deafblind manual interpreter, communicator-guide or an advocate.

**DBE facilitates 1-1 specialists to work in social care, voluntary and health settings.**

# **1-1 specialist support services**

**DBE's dedicated teams of specialist workers support deafblind people in the following areas:**

- ❖ Peterborough/Cambridgeshire**
- ❖ Essex**
- ❖ Southampton**
- ❖ North Tyneside/Newcastle.**
- ❖ Ad-hoc bookings in variety of regions.**

**Facilitating specialist training i.e. Signature DBG2 communicator-guide training to PA's, support workers, communicator-guides, intervenors.**

**Communicator-guide funding for people using direct payments/personal budgets can be gained from Skills for Care, as DBE is a recognised provider.**

**DBE has approved provider status for NHS contracts and are sub-contracted by interpreter agencies, as we have found that deafblind people do not attend GP or hospital appointments due to the anxiety, well-being and lack of specialist 1-1 support.**

**DBE is looking to work in partnership with another area – if you are interested please contact me.**

# Access to information and advice: front line staff (6.4, 6.22)

**Identify, make contact with, and keep a record of, deafblind people in their catchment area, including people who have multiple disabilities which include dual sensory, (Care and Support Guidance).**

LA's have various way of collating statistics, however the main issues nationally are:

- lack of deafblind awareness,
- lack of formal registration system

## **DBE provides:-**

- consultancy
- advocates by referring deafblind people to LA's to ensure they receive the appropriate service
- provides deafblind awareness sessions / courses tailor-made to meet service / individual needs.

# **Provide information about services in formats and methods that are accessible to deafblind people, Care and Support, 2014**

**This includes making sure that people get information in different formats if they need it, for example in large print, braille, easy read or via email, (Accessible Standard 2016)**

DBE advocates on behalf of deafblind service users to receive information in their own format, including deafblind interpreters/communicator-guides to create independent choice and control over their lives.

**No charges for certain types of care and support (8.14), such as Community equipment (aids and minor adaptations). Aids must be provided free of charge whether provided to meet or prevent/delay needs. A minor adaptation is one costing £1,000 or less, Care Act, 2014**

**DBE has instigated many uses for this funding, i.e. trial communicator-guide, adapted lighting, equipment, etc.**

**Ensure that a Director-level member of the local authority senior team has overall responsibility for Deafblind services, Care and Support, 2014.**

Over to you!



# How does DBE make a difference?

- Provide Nationally recognised training for Specialist Assessments.
- Bespoke training to meet the individual needs.
- Use a holistic approach.
- Ensure realistic perceptions.
- Be outcome / wellbeing focused.
- Discuss aspirations with deafblind people/ carers.
- Ensure appropriate Intervention with outcomes/ reviews.
- Highlight safeguarding issues.
- Promote effective Communication, Choice, Control with an enabling ethos.
- Recognise mental health issues.
- Advocate on behalf of a deafblind person.

**DBE's Annual Rally enables deafblind people to network, gain new relationships and meet with their peers, coming together to socialise and communicate independently.**



**DBE has a growing team of Awareness Officers who are themselves deafblind, they assist with writing our training materials, training, assessments, and creating deafblind awareness nationally.**

# Conclusion

All our staff have Nationally recognised Signature qualifications, with many years of relevant experience and an enablement focus.

We hope you contact us if you require information, advice or discussion.

Thank you

[www.deafblind-enablement.co.uk](http://www.deafblind-enablement.co.uk)

Care Act, 2014

Care and Support (Assessment) Policy regulations, 2014, implementation of section 12(1) of the Care Act 2014

