

Dear Sir

I am one of the 1 million people in Scotland who has a hearing loss. I read this document with great interest and would like to make the following comments.

P14 – Standard 1 – Accessing the service

I have found that my lipreading tutor has been of great help in dealing with problems relating to my hearing aid. Lipreading tutors should be referred to in this respect.

P15 – Standard 2 - 2a iii – criteria

I feel that lipreading should be specifically mentioned rather than grouped in with other agencies, as it is a very important part of the rehabilitation process.

P19 – 4ai – criteria

Again lipreading should be mentioned specifically rather than being grouped in with other agencies.

P25-26 - Standard 8 – communication support and collaborative working.

Lipreading should be specifically mentioned here.

P40 – Good information prior to and after assessment

I feel very strongly that when someone is referred by their GP to Audiology that they should be given information about local lipreading services at that time. There can be a long period of time where you are left without a hearing aid and without any other support or rehabilitation. A great loss of confidence can occur during this period. I would like to see closer links between GP's, Audiology departments and lipreading services.

P42 – Meeting specific communication/information needs
Deaf Awareness and Communication Training

I know that many lipreading tutors are qualified in both of the above and it would make sense to tap into these resources to train GP's and Audiology service personnel.

P51 – Factors for consideration in developing the IMP

Lipreading should be specifically mentioned here under options for rehabilitation.

P53 – Referral to other agencies and services

Again lipreading needs a specific mention and referrals need to be made at the time of the initial visit to the GP.

P55 - Achieving ongoing use and benefit from hearing aids

This is one of the most important benefits of attending a lipreading class. I know of many people who before attending a lipreading class had given up trying to use their hearing aids as no support was provided.

P70 – Support for patients

Lipreading needs to be specifically mentioned here.

P72 – Working together

I believe that if lipreading services worked together with both GP's and Audiology services then a much better rehabilitative service could be provided.

I have greatly benefited from attending a lipreading class and it has prevented me from losing my confidence and becoming socially isolated. Since attending classes, I have a greater feeling of control and self-assertion. Most people are unaware of exactly what happens within a lipreading class and the breadth of help and advice that a lipreading tutor can provide – it is not just about learning to lipread, it is a full rehabilitation service. I feel very strongly that lipreading is a big part of the rehabilitative process for people with a hearing loss and that it needs to be a bigger part of this document. I could only find 2 specific mentions of lipreading within the document and on both occasions they were at the end of a list of other agencies.

I trust my comments will be taken into account.