

## Re Draft Standards

Our working group is made up of professionals in Audiology, Speech and Language Therapy, Social Work for the Deaf, ENT Service, Voluntary organisations and patient representatives. We met on 20th March 2008 to discuss these draft standards with a video conferencing link to the Western Isles. Representatives from the new NHS Highland area (Argyll and Bute) were also invited. All Audiologists in NHS Highland (Inverness base) were also given the opportunity to comment.

We have the following comments to make about the Draft Quality Standards for Adult Hearing Rehabilitation services.

1. The standards were difficult for non Audiologists to understand, not in plain English, and therefore difficult for some of the group to comment upon.

2. Standard 1a.i. Is this just the first referral and via a GP - this was not clear.

3. Standard 1.c.ii In remote and rural areas where a lot of hearing aid repairs are by post this could not be delivered.

4. Standard 1.c.iii In remote and rural areas in the Highlands it is difficult to see how one clinic each month could be met.

This could be met in an urban area where patients can travel to the Audiology department.

5. Standard 3a.iv More and more patients are housebound and in hospitals so conforming to this standards could not happen "always".

6. Standard 8a.ii. Accreditation is usually by an official body. Perhaps this needs a change of wording.

Any standards not mentioned above we agreed that we may meet in the future and would be of benefit to our patients/clients/selves. However, we would require increased resources for services to be able to meet many of them. Many of the standards could not be fulfilled here just by redesigning our current services or by taking money from one part of the service and putting it elsewhere.

Many of these standards will require more funding in remote and rural areas either for patients visiting our services or us visiting patients own communities. We feel that these standards could be met in Urban areas easier than here.

We feel that standards do not ensure that we "live happily ever after" unless monitoring and advice and resources are supplied, after they have been set.

Name and address for correspondence

Karen Williamson, Head Of Audiology Services, NHS Highland  
Raigmore Hospital  
Perth Road  
Inverness  
IV2 3UJ