

# S.I.S.G. Enterprises Limited

## Ayrshire Hearing Support

(Scottish Charity SCO29706)

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Audiology National Standards,  
FREEPOST NATN452,  
The Scottish Government,  
St. Andrews House (Mailpoint 1),  
Regent Road,  
Edinburgh, EH1 0BR

2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2008.

Dear Sir,

Re:- Draft Quality Standards for Adult Hearing Rehabilitation Services

I am employed by SISG (Ayrshire Hearing Support), which is a Scottish Recognised Charity (SCO29706), as Rehabilitation Officer for People who are Hearing Impaired. I was previously employed by NHS Ayrshire and Arran as a Senior Audiologist and I also have a unilateral, sensori-neural hearing loss myself.

I have read your draft document on "Adult Hearing Aid Rehabilitation Services" and I am astounded that a 100 page document on rehabilitation for people with hearing impairment only very briefly mentions lipreading.

Lipreading plays a vital role in communication for people with hearing loss. Not only does the lipreading class provide tuition in lipreading and the support of fellow members, but it provides a whole variety of information on everything relating to hearing loss and hearing aids and also communication strategies.

On page 6, you mention Hearing Therapists (are there any in Scotland?), Speech and Language Therapists (why?) and non verbal communication (very few people who come through Audiology are BSL users), but, you don't mention lipreading.

On page 7 of the document, you quite correctly describe the difficulties of hearing with a sensori-neural hearing loss such as distortion and recruitment and of course that the important parts of hearing for speech are worst affected i.e. high frequency consonants. Many people who attend my lipreading classes have severe high frequency hearing loss, for which a hearing aid is often of little benefit. Learning to lipread helps people see those sounds that they don't hear.

I have enclosed one of our leaflets which briefly outlines the rehabilitation work of our charity. We are also piloting some Deaf Awareness Training for staff within NHS Ayrshire and Arran at present.



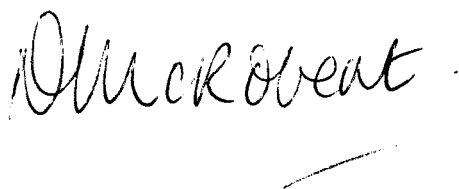
I have also enclosed an advertisement which I found in our local newspaper a few months ago. This has been instigated by the Equalities for Sensory Impairment Group in NHS Ayrshire and Arran. The report is not yet available, but I thought you may be interested in the results once completed, as it will give you the opinions of the service users, most of whom will be unaware of this document you are preparing. You will notice that the advertisement does not give an address for people to write to, or an email address so perhaps many of our hearing aid users were unable to contact by telephone. We still have a long way to go on the understanding of deafness and I think your document needs much more deliberation on what you term "rehabilitation".

Hearing aids alone, even the best digital aids, do not solve the problems of hearing loss and one must consider what happens **after** the optimal fitting of aids. Too often, nothing happens and, in some cases, not even a follow up appointment at the Audiology Clinic. Is it any wonder that 3/10 of hearing aids issued on the NHS are not worn. (RNID's statistics)

I enclose our Charity's Outcome Tracking Plan Analysis for services provided during 2007. In it, you will notice specific outcomes and personal comments made by those attending lipreading classes and other services. At present we carry out five lipreading classes in Ayr, Girvan, Cumnock, Irvine and Largs

If you wish to discuss the content of my letter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dorothy McRobert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

Dorothy McRobert,  
Rehabilitation Officer.

GlaxoSmithKline Impact Excellence in Health Care Award (King's Fund) winner  
2006  
Age Concern Scottish Group of the Year Award 2006