

Information supplied by the petitioner

The total number of deaf people in the UK aged 16-60 is 8,945,00. The total number of deaf children in the UK aged 0-16 is 34,000. The total number of deaf people in the UK over the age of 60 is 6,471,000. It is estimated that 1 in 7 people are deaf.

I have personally managed to negotiate a great price for the purchase of portable Loop Systems. This firm supplied the Post Offices, and Bank in the UK with mobile Loop Systems. The price he has quoted me is £59.95 plus VAT & delivery per unit. Therefore the cost we are asking for to implement these changes in Wales is £151,074.00 inc VAT but plus delivery. The break down of this figure is as follows.

1. 475,000 over 16 year old deaf people in Wales
2. 520 GP Surgery's in Wales (1 Portable Loop System per Surgery)
3. 158 Hospitals in Wales (10 portable Loop Systems per Hospital)
4. Cost per deaf person in Wales to implement these changes is only 31p.

Obviously this cost can be brought down, as some Doctor's surgery's already have these in place, but many Doctor's Surgery's that I questioned didn't know how to use them!

By implementing these changes, it would help to lower consultation time, for example

1. Better communication with the patient (not having to use a chaperone). Therefore a faster consultation
2. Better Diagnosis, as the Hearing Impaired person can understand better what the Doctor/Nurse is asking them, therefore this will help reduce multi appointments for the same problem, due to communication problems.
3. It will help stop the problems that the Hearing Impaired have with lip reading medical professionals that originated from a different country to the UK, as their lip pattern is totally different to a UK person, and totally un readable for a hearing Impaired person.
4. When you request a chaperone, (in our personal experience) one doesn't turn up, as the hospital has forgot to ask for one. One isn't available for an emergency appointment.

5. Help with A&E appointments, especially when time is a major factor after an accident on whether a person lives or not. (Should have fixed loop systems in A&E)

6. Young female hearing impaired girls who want privacy to talk to their doctor about personal matters, they don't want to have a member of their family with them, they should have the freedom that a hearing young girl would have to talk about private problems with a doctor.

7. Hearing aids pick up background noise and override a person speaking to them, with using a Loop System, they can hear the person talking to them, and no background noise.

These mobile Loop Systems units, are only a little bit bigger than a piece of A4 paper, therefore they will not take up much storage space in a Doctor's Surgery or Hospital.

The other thing that we are asking for is a mobile text service and email service be provided for the Hearing Impaired to make appointments with their Doctor or Hospital. Yes there is such a thing as type talk and minicom, but the very large majority of the hearing impaired, DO NOT use this service. Type talk is very impersonal for the hearing impaired and also the recipient of the telephone call, as you have to talk to an unknown 3rd party, plus our experience of this is not very good, as the profoundly deaf persons spelling isn't very good, and the 3rd party struggles to understand. Text is better for the hearing impaired, due to being able to abbreviate words (text talk slang) the person. The hearing impaired always has to rely on someone to make appointments for them, which is taking their independence away from them. For example when your GP refers you to a hospital specialist, you receive a letter asking you to telephone to make an appointment, there are no facilities on this system for a hearing impaired person to make this appointment. This is so frustrating and it also knocks their self esteem, as they are unable to do simple everyday things for themselves, things that we take for granted.

With today's modern communications, why isn't a mobile text service or email available? This service would help almost 15 million Hearing Impaired people in the UK.