

Scottish Council on Deafness

Communication Support in Scotland: Local Authorities and NHS Boards

Freedom of Information Requests

Policy & Research Officer
September 2009

Index

Introduction

Estimated Population by Council

Estimated Population by Health Board

Scoping Exercise

Letter to the Councils

Results – Community Languages

Results – Communication support for deaf people

Analysis – Councils

Letter to Health Boards

Results – Community Languages

Results – Communication support for deaf people

Analysis – Health Boards

Comment

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

The Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) and the Scottish Association for Sign Language Interpreters (SASLI) are putting together a campaign to raise awareness with public bodies about the need to use registered language support professionals when working with and supporting deaf people. As part of the planning process, the SCoD Policy & Research Officer agreed to carry out a piece of research based on Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002¹ requests to all 32 local councils and 15 health boards, including the State Hospital, to ask how much was spent on providing communication support for deaf people in Scotland.

Statistics

SCoD has produced two tables of statistics based on the General Registrar of Scotland²'s estimated figures for the population in Scotland for the year 2006/2007, by each council and health board area. SCoD has also produced estimated figures for the number of black and minority ethnic adults in Scotland and numbers of adults with a profound or severe hearing loss (Deaf BSL users, some Deafblind people and Deafened people) and those with a mild to moderate hearing loss (People who are Hard of Hearing, some Deafblind people and some Deafened people). These estimated figures are percentage projections of population based on Scottish Government figures and those produced for the UK by RNID³.

¹ http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2002/asp_20020013_en_1

² Figures given are less 0.9% of the 2008 figures stated on the GROS website: <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/council-areas-map/scotland.html>

³ RNID: http://www.rnid.org.uk/information_resources/aboutdeafness/statistics/statistics.htm#deaf

ESTIMATED POPULATION BY COUNCIL

Council	Total population⁴	BME population⁵	Adults with a profound or severe hearing loss⁶	Adults with a mild to moderate hearing loss⁷
Aberdeen City	208,506	4,190	2,293	28,356
Aberdeenshire	239,286	4,809	2,632	32,542
Angus	109,317	2,197	1,202	14,867
Argyll & Bute	89,685	1,802	986	12,197
Clackmannanshire	50,256	1,010	552	6,834
Dumfries & Galloway	147,242	2,959	1,619	20,024
Dundee	141,187	2,837	1,553	19,201
East Ayrshire	118,840	2,388	1,307	16,162
East Dunbartonshire	103,777	2,085	1,141	14,113
East Lothian	95,235	1,914	1,047	12,951
East Renfrewshire	88,417	1,777	972	12,024
Edinburgh City	467,405	9,394	5,141	63,567
Falkirk	150,205	3,019	1,652	20,427
Fife	358,632	7,208	3,944	48,773
Glasgow City	578,981	11,637	6,368	78,741
Highland	217,425	4,370	2,391	29,569
Inverclyde	80,052	1,609	880	10,887

⁴ Figures given are less 0.9% of the 2008 figures stated on the GROS website

⁵ 2.01% of the population

⁶ 1.1% of the population

⁷ 13.6% of the population

Council	Total population⁸	BME population⁹	Adults with a profound or severe hearing loss¹⁰	Adults with a mild to moderate hearing loss¹¹
Midlothian	79,840	1,604	878	10,858
Moray	86,980	1,808	956	11,829
North Ayrshire	134,696	2,707	1,481	18,318
North Lanarkshire	322,490	6,482	3,573	43,858
Orkney Islands	19,710	396	216	2,680
Perth and Kinross	142,882	2,871	1,571	19,431
Renfrewshire	168,271	3,382	1,850	22,884
Scottish Borders	111,418	2,239	1,225	15,152
Shetland Islands	21,782	437	239	2,962
South Ayrshire	110,664	2,224	1,217	15,050
South Lanarkshire	307,299	6,176	3,380	41,792
Stirling	87,554	1,759	963	11,907
West Dunbartonshire	90,121	1,811	991	12,256
West Lothian	167,984	3,376	1,847	22,845
Western Isles	25,964	521	285	3,531
Totals	5,122,103	102,998	56,352	696,588

⁸ Figures given are less 0.9% of the 2008 figures stated on the GROS website

⁹ 2.01% of the population

¹⁰ 1.1% of the population

¹¹ 13.6% of the population

ESTIMATED POPULATION BY HEALTH BOARD

Boards	Total population¹²	BME population¹³	Adults with a profound or severe hearing loss¹⁴	Adults with a mild to moderate hearing loss¹⁵
Ayrshire & Arran	364,200	7,319	4,005	49,530
Borders	111,418	2,239	1,225	15,152
Dumfries & Galloway	147,242	2,959	1,619	20,024
Fife	358,632	7,208	3,944	48,773
Forth Valley	288,015	5,788	3,167	39,168
Grampian	534,772	10,807	5,881	72,727
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	1,109,619	22,301	12,202	150,905
Highland	307,110	6,172	3,377	41,766
Lanarkshire	629,789	12,658	6,953	85,650
Lothian	810,464	16,288	8,913	110,221
Orkney	19,710	396	216	2,680
Shetland	21,782	437	239	2,962
Tayside	393,386	7,905	4,326	53,499
Western Isles	25,964	521	285	3,531
Total	5,122,103	102,998	56,352	696,588

¹² Figures given are less 0.9% of the 2008 figures stated on the GROS website

¹³ 2.01% of the population

¹⁴ 1.1% of the population

¹⁵ 13.6% of the population

Scoping Exercise

In early 2009, letters were sent to all the Councils and Health Boards in Scotland asking for information for the financial year 2006/2007.

The questions that were asked were about the cost of providing translating and interpreting services for community languages; translating and interpreting services for Deaf BSL users; communication support services for Deafblind, Deafened and Hard of Hearing people.

The reason for asking for information about translating and interpreting services for community languages is to give a comparison in the gathering of information and on the amounts spent.

No council or health board was able to answer all of the questions asked.

LETTER SENT TO COUNCILS (Local Authorities)

The Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) is the lead organisation for deaf issues in Scotland. We represent 90 organisations working with and on behalf of Deaf British Sign Language (BSL) users, Deafened, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing people.

As Policy & Research Officer, I am writing a paper on access to interpreting and translation services for deaf people who use public services.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

For the financial year, 2006/2007,

1. How much money was spent on interpreting and translation services in total in your Local Authority area?

Of the total amount spent in your Local Authority area, how much was spent on:

2. Translating information materials into community languages?
3. Interpreting services for people who speak community languages attending appointments/meetings with social services staff?
4. Interpreting services for people who speak community languages needing/ arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
5. Interpreting services for parents who speak community languages attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?
6. Translating information materials into British Sign Language (BSL)?
7. BSL/English Interpreters for Deaf BSL users attending appointments with social services staff?
8. BSL/English Interpreters for Deaf BSL users needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
9. BSL/English Interpreters for Deaf parents who are BSL users attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?
10. Guide/Communicators for Deafblind people attending appointments with social services staff?
11. Guide/Communicators for Deafblind people needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
12. Guide/Communicators for Deafblind parents attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?
13. Electronic manual notetakers for Deafened people attending appointments with social services staff?
14. Electronic manual notetakers for Deafened people needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
15. Electronic manual notetakers for Deafened parents attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?
16. Lip speakers for Deafened people attending appointments with social services staff?
17. Lip speakers for Deafened people needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
18. Lip speakers for Deafened parents attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?
19. Palantypists/Speech-to-Text Reporters for Deafened people attending appointments with social services staff?
20. Palantypists/Speech-to-Text Reporters for Deafened people needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
21. Palantypists/Speech-to-Text Reporters for Deafened parents attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?

22. Electronic manual notetakers for Hard of Hearing people attending appointments with social services staff?
23. Electronic manual notetakers for Hard of Hearing people needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
24. Electronic manual notetakers for Hard of Hearing parents attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?
25. Lip speakers for Hard of Hearing people attending appointments with social services staff?
26. Lip speakers for Hard of Hearing people needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
27. Lip speakers for Hard of Hearing parents attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?
28. Palantypists/Speech-to-Text Reporters for Hard of Hearing people attending appointments with social services staff?
29. Palantypists/Speech-to-Text Reporters for Hard of Hearing people needing/arranging home support services for a) themselves; and b) a family member?
30. Palantypists/Speech-to-Text Reporters for Hard of Hearing parents attending appointments/meetings with school staff regarding their child's education?

RESULTS

COMMUNITY LANGUAGES

Council	Total Costs ¹⁶ £	Community Languages ¹⁷ £	Translation of Info £	Interpreting £
Aberdeen City	39,809.94	32,289.38	15,121.29	16,168.09
Aberdeenshire	15,366.00	-	-	-
Angus	-	2,492.73	-	-
Argyll & Bute	-	-	-	-
Clackmannanshire	644.51	644.51	644.51	-
Dumfries & Galloway	-	988.00	-	-
Dundee	-	-	-	-
East Ayrshire	-	-	-	-
East Dunbartonshire	-	14,140.00	6,067.00	8,073.00
East Lothian	3,408.11	3,340.11	927.61	2,412.50

¹⁶ Total costs includes communication support for deaf people

¹⁷ Total spent on community languages

Council	Total Costs £	Community Languages £	Translation of Info £	Interpreting £
East Renfrewshire	4,023.12	739.07	281.68	457.39
Edinburgh City	166,038.00	157,643.00	123,854.00	33,789.00
Falkirk	-	-	-	-
Fife	156,063.55	-	-	-
Glasgow City	638,176.00	347,140.00	-	347,140.00
Highland	169,496.00	7,857.00	2,388.00	837.00
Inverclyde	-	-	-	-
Midlothian	2,958.74	2,333.56	260.00	2,073.56
Moray	12,703.00	12,703.00	9,685.00	3,018.00
North Ayrshire	6,000.00	5,500.00	-	-
North Lanarkshire	-	-	-	-
Orkney Islands	-	-	-	-
Perth and Kinross	2,529.45	-	-	-
Renfrewshire	35,674.83	-	-	6,484.09

Council	Total Costs £	Community Languages £	Translation of Info £	Interpreting £
Scottish Borders	1,224.00	-	-	-
Shetland Islands	155.70	155.70	95.70	60.00
South Ayrshire	1,961.40	-	-	-
South Lanarkshire	23,373.43	-	-	-
Stirling	18,390.73	9,745.08	6,105.00	3,640.08
West Dunbartonshire	16,159.73	-	-	-
West Lothian	30,467.75	30,467.75	18,095.00	12,372.75
Western Isles	33,354.00	33,354.00	-	-
Totals	1,387,977.99	661,160.14	183,424.79	436,525.46

COMMUNICATION SUPPORT FOR DEAF PEOPLE

Council	Total Costs ¹⁸ £	BSL £	Translating Info £	Interpreting £	Electronic Notetaker £	Guide/Communicator £
Aberdeen City	39,809.94	7,520.56	-	7,520.56	-	-
Aberdeenshire	15,366.00	-	-	-	-	-
Angus	-	2,259.86	-	2259.86	-	-
Argyll & Bute	-	-	-	-	-	-
Clackmannanshire	644.51	-	-	-	-	-
Dumfries & Galloway	-	851.25	-	851.25	-	-
Dundee	-	246.81	246.81	-	-	-

¹⁸ Total costs include costs for the provision of support in community languages

Council	Total Costs £	BSL £	Translating Info £	Interpreting £	Electronic Notetaker £	Guide/Communicator £
East Ayrshire	-	-	-	-	-	-
East Dunbartonshire	-	1,915.00	-	1,915.00	-	-
East Lothian	3,408.11	68.00	68.00	-	-	-
East Renfrewshire	4,023.12	481.96	-	481.96	-	-
Edinburgh City	166,038.00	1,559.00	-	1,559.00	-	-
Falkirk	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fife	156,063.55	-	-	-	-	-
Glasgow City	301,036.00	301,036.00	-	301,036.00	-	-

Council	Total Costs £	BSL £	Translating Info £	Interpreting £	Electronic Notetaker £	Guide/Communicator £
Highland	169,496.00	161,539.00	-	161,539.00	-	-
Inverclyde	-	-	-	-	-	-
Midlothian	2,958.74	625.18	-	625.18	-	-
Moray	12,703.00	-	-	-	-	-
North Ayrshire	6,000.00	500.00	-	500.00	-	-
North Lanarkshire	-	-	-	-	-	-
Orkney Islands	-	-	-	-	-	-
Perth and Kinross	2,529.45	-	-	-	-	-

Council	Total Costs £	BSL £	Translating Info £	Interpreting £	Electronic Notetaker £	Guide/Communicator £
Renfrewshire	35,674.83	-	-	-	-	60.00
Scottish Borders	1,224.00	-	-	-	-	-
Shetland Islands	155.70	-	-	-	-	-
South Ayrshire	1,961.40	500.00	-	500.00	900.00	400.00
South Lanarkshire	23,373.43	-	-	-	-	-
Stirling	18,390.73	8,645.65	-	8,645.65	-	-
West Dunbartonshire	16,159.73	-	-	-	-	-
West Lothian	30,467.75	-	-	-	-	-

Council	Total Costs £	BSL £	Translating Info £	Interpreting £	Electronic Notetaker £	Guide/Communicator £
Western Isles	33,354.00	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	1,387,977.99	487,748.27	314.81	485,173.60	900.00	460.00

ANALYSIS

Councils that did not reply despite a follow up email and phone call

Argyll and Bute
 East Ayrshire
 Falkirk
 Inverclyde
 North Lanarkshire

Councils that do not gather this level of information centrally¹⁹, although they did provide some information

Aberdeenshire	Shetland Islands
Angus	South Ayrshire
East Renfrewshire	South Lanarkshire
Perth & Kinross	West Dunbartonshire
Renfrewshire	
Scottish Borders	

¹⁹ See Appendix 1 for more information on the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the exclusions for provision of information.

Councils that did reply

Aberdeen

Aberdeen Council spent £32,289.38 on the provision of communication support for people who speak community languages. £7,520.56 was spent on BSL/English interpreters. No information available on translation into BSL.

“Advise that not all data in our system breaks down to the level of criteria requested.”

Although information was not asked for the Council did provide the total amount spent on Braille - £20, and recording documents onto audio tape - £63.

Clackmannanshire

Clackmannanshire Council spent £644.51 on translating information into community languages, but nothing on interpreting services for people who speak a community language or on communication services for deaf people.

Dumfries and Galloway

The Council spent £988 on services for people who use a spoken community language. The Council also employs one full-time BSL/English interpreter – “who meets the needs of all deaf signers in Dumfries and Galloway.” An additional £851.25 was spent to cover the interpreter’s leave periods. The Council could not give any figures for the provision of communication support for other deaf people in the area, as this information is not held centrally.

Dundee

The Legal Manager at the Council who is responsible for replying to Freedom of Information requests made to the Council did not appear to understand the request and so only gave a partial answer. He stated that he had instructed Tayside Association for the Deaf to send information on the provision of interpreting services – but SCoD did not receive any further information. A follow up email did not produce any further information as the Legal Manager still did not appear to understand the request or the need for the information asked for. A follow up telephone call was made, and again the Legal Manager did not appear to understand why SCoD had made this particular request, nor did he understand that it was up to him as a representative of Dundee City Council to

ask Tayside Association for the Deaf to forward the information requested, not SCoD. This was the most “informal” reply that was received – in an email with no contact details of the person that responded apart from his name, and no information on how to appeal or make a complaint.

East Dunbartonshire

The Council could not provide any figures on what was spent providing communication support for social work figures services, as this information is not held centrally. No communication support was provided for Deafblind, Deafened or Hard of Hearing parents or guardians attending meetings about their children’s education. The Council did give figures for what was spent generally on community languages - £14,140; and £1,915 was spent on BSL/English Interpreting.

East Lothian

The Council have an ongoing contract with Deaf Action for the provision of BSL interpreting that includes the year 2006/2007 but could not give a breakdown on what the interpreting service provided services for.

“During this period, we also employed a Deaf teacher, who did outreach work with Deaf children and their parents and carers.”

The Council suggested that SCoD contact the schools directly

“for information about how individual schools supply BSL, lip speaking and lip reading, as they will have various arrangements in place to support pupils.”

The request did not ask for communication support service provision for school pupils.

No information was provided for social services or home support services. Information was provided on communication support for parents attending meetings about the education of their children: £68 spent on BSL; £3340.11 spent on translating and interpreting for community languages including Cantonese, Bosnian, Lithuanian, Mandarin Chinese, Bulgarian, Urdu, and Polish.

Edinburgh City

The Council spent £157,643 on translation and interpreting services for people who use community languages. Apart from the contract that the Council has with Deaf Action for communication support for deaf people, the Council spent £1,559 on BSL/English Interpreting. £7,286 was unaccounted for in the figures that were received.

The Council referred the researcher to Deaf Action for information about what services BSL interpreters were provided for and the cost of each job. The Council response stated that they

“did not receive any requests from Deafblind or Deafened people for communication support services”.

Fife

The response provided a figure of £156,063.55, but “please not, however, that this was not the full amount spent.” No other information was provided as costs of retrieving the information “would have been prohibitive as the information is not held centrally”.

Glasgow

The Council provided information on the money paid to the Sign Language Interpreting Service - £301,036 for the service as a whole and the same for the Glasgow Translation and Interpreting Service - £347,140. There was no other breakdown given as this information is not held centrally.

Highland

The Council has a contract with Deaf Action for BSL interpreting services and spent £161,539 overall on BSL – no breakdown was provided for interpreting services or producing information in BSL. The Council does not use guide/communicators, only Deafblind interpreters. The Council had received no requests for any other communication support from deaf people in the area for the year given. The response did contain a breakdown for community languages – the total given was £7,857. There is a difference of £4,632 between the information provided on the costs of translation and interpreting services for community languages, but no account was given for the difference.

Midlothian

The Council provided individual costs of interpreting and translation for community languages: interpreting - £2,073.56 and translation - £260; and £625.18 was spent on BSL interpreting. The Council was unable to provide more information on any other communication support for deaf people. The Council did provide a list of the community languages that it has provided interpreting services for – Chinese, Bengali, Arabic, Slovakian, Polish, Thai, Lithuanian, German, Hungarian, Russian, and Filipino.

Moray

The cost to social services for community language interpreting was £104. The Council did provide a figure for all council services – £12,703, all of which was spent on translating information into community languages. The Council have not produced any information in BSL and stated “there were no requests for this”. As far as the Council is aware there is no record of any requests for BSL interpreters for social service appointments. There may have been requests made for BSL interpreters for single shared assessments but this would have been arranged by NHS Grampian. The council has received no requests to provide any other communication support for deaf people using their services. Did not provide any more information about community languages.

North Ayrshire

The Council spent £5,500 on community languages and £500 on BSL. The response stated that

“We have 3 social work assistants who are trained in BSL although they are not qualified interpreters; they would assist BSL users across social services. On occasion, social work assistants from the sensory impairment team have assisted BSL users at meetings in schools at the request of the BSL user. At the moment, we have one social work assistant who is a trained guide/communicator.”

And “Social work assistants will also assist Deafened people if requested”.

Orkney

The Councils' response stated that

“The Department of Community Social Services has advised that is incurred no specific expenditure...The Department has advised that Orkney has a very small level of demand in this area, and capability is embedded within the Occupational Therapy Team to meet the needs of this service user group...Costs for these services...are not disaggregated.”

There was no figure given for community languages either.

Stirling

The Council provided a breakdown for Education, Community Services, Corporate Services, Environmental Services, and Regeneration Services, but apologised for the lack of a detailed breakdown for Social Work services available. The Freedom of Information Officer for Stirling Council provided the most detailed response to the request and could not have been more helpful in putting together the information requested.

£9,745.08 was spent on community languages and the languages listed were – Japanese, Slovakian, Urdu, Cantonese, Arabic, Farsi, Hindi, Polish, German, Turkish, Hungarian, French, Latvian, and Italian. The Council spent £8,645.65 on BSL interpreting services. On one occasion a lip speaker was booked, but the costs for this are not held centrally.

West Lothian

West Lothian Council could not provide the breakdown for deaf people as this information is not held centrally, but did list the community languages that had been information had been translated into or interpreting services had been provided for – Urdu, Cantonese, Vietnamese, German, Polish, Hindi, Japanese, Mandarin, Thai and Russian.

Western Isles

The response stated that bulk of the money was spent on Gaelic translation.

“For all the questions (relating to deaf people) no money was spent on this in 2006/2007 but the sensory impairment teacher would have assisted schools with any meetings if they had requests from parents with sensory needs.”

The council received no requests from deaf people for communication support.

LETTER SENT TO NHS BOARDS

The Scottish Council on Deafness (SCoD) is the lead organisation for deaf issues in Scotland. We represent 90 organisations working with and on behalf of Deaf British Sign Language (BSL) users, Deafened, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing people.

As Policy & Research Officer, I am writing a paper on access to interpreting and translation services for deaf people who use public services.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request the following information:

For the financial year, 2006/2007,

1. How much money was spent on interpreting and translation services in total in your Board area?

Of the total amount spent in your Board area, how much was spent on:

2. Translating information materials into community languages?
3. Translating patients' notes into community languages?
4. Interpreting services for people who speak community languages attending appointments/meetings with health professionals?

5. Supporting people who speak community languages to access health promotion / health management services outwith clinical settings (e.g. weight management, smoking cessation, addiction management classes, chronic condition management)?
6. Translating information materials into British Sign Language (BSL)?
7. Translating patients' notes into BSL?
8. BSL/English Interpreters for Deaf BSL users attending appointments with health professionals?
9. Guide/Communicators for Deafblind people attending appointments with health professionals?
10. Electronic manual notetakers for Deafened people attending appointments with health professionals?
11. Lip speakers for Deafened people attending appointments with health professionals?
12. Palantypists or Speech-to-Text Reporters for Deafened people attending appointments with health professionals?
13. Electronic manual notetakers for Hard of Hearing people attending appointments with health professionals?
14. Lip speakers for Hard of Hearing people attending appointments with health professionals?
15. Palantypists or Speech-to-Text Reporters for Hard of Hearing people attending appointments with health professionals?
16. Supporting Deaf BSL users, Deafblind, Deafened or Hard of Hearing people to access health promotion / health management services outwith clinical settings (e.g. weight management, smoking cessation, addiction management classes, chronic condition management)?

RESULTS

COMMUNITY LANGUAGES

Health Boards	Total Costs²⁰	Community Languages	Translation of Info	Interpreting
Ayrshire & Arran	23,123.08	8,129.08	-	8,129.08
Borders	6,475.77	4,961.70	3,260.72	1,700.98
Dumfries & Galloway	1,820.75	1,820.75	778.75	1,042.00
Fife	122,620.00	97,540.00	-	97,540.00
Forth Valley	103,623.00	103,623.00	-	-

²⁰ Total costs include communication support for deaf people

Health Boards	Total Costs²¹	Community Languages	Translation of Info	Interpreting
Grampian	82,347.00	63,447.00	31,500.00	31,947.00
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	1,420,884.00	1,291,747.00	-	1,291,747.00
Highland	79,020.42	79,020.42	-	79,020.42
Lanarkshire	82,546.00	-	-	-
Lothian	277,915.32	253,715.34	16,089.36	237,625.98
Orkney	70.84	70.84	-	70.84

²¹ Total costs include communication support for deaf people

Health Boards	Total Costs²²	Community Languages	Translation of Info	Interpreting
Shetland	-	-	-	-
Tayside	33,568.97	-	-	-
The State Hospital	17,827.40	17,827.40	17,827.40	853.20
Western Isles	-	-	6,000.00	500.00
Total	2,251,842.55	1,921,902.53	75,456.23	1,750,176.50

²² Total costs include communication support for deaf people

COMMUNICATION SUPPORT FOR DEAF PEOPLE

Health Boards	Total Costs ²³	BSL	BSL - Information	BSL - Interpreting	Electronic Notetaker	Guide/Communicator	Loop System
Ayrshire & Arran	23,123.08	11,994.00	-	11,994.00	-	-	
Borders	6,475.77	870.94	432.32	438.62	-	-	
Dumfries & Galloway	1,820.75	-	-	-	-	-	
Fife	122,620.00	25,080.00	-	25,080.00	-	200.00	
Forth Valley	103,623.00	-	-	-	-	-	

²³ Total costs include cost of community languages

Health Boards	Total Costs²⁴	BSL	BSL - Information	BSL - Interpreting	Electronic Notetaker	Guide/Communicator	Loop System
Grampian	82,347.00	1,900.00	-	1,900.00	-	-	17,000.00
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	1,420,884.00	129,137.00	5,000.00	124,137.00	-	-	
Highland	79,020.42	-	-	-	-	-	
Lanarkshire	82,546.00	-	-	-	-	-	
Lothian	24,199.98	24,199.98	-	24,199.98	-	-	
Orkney	70.84	-	-	-	-	-	

²⁴ Total costs include cost of community languages

Health Boards	Total Costs²⁵	BSL	BSL - Information	BSL - Interpreting	Electronic Notetaker	Guide/Communicator	Loop System
Shetland	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tayside	33,568.97	-	-	-	-	-	
The State Hospital	17,827.40	16,974.20	-	-	-	-	
Western Isles		-	-	-	-	-	
Total	2,251,842.55	210,156.12	5,432.32	187,749.60	0.00	200.00	17,000.00

²⁵ Total costs include cost of community languages

ANALYSIS

Ayrshire and Arran

NHS Ayrshire and Arran provided the costs for providing interpreting for people who use community languages - £8,129.08; and for Deaf BSL users - £11,994. The majority of the costs for community languages was spent on accessing the Language Line²⁶. During January to March 2007, the health board ran a pilot project providing communication support for deaf people. The pilot cost £3,000. This has now become an ongoing service.

Borders

The only records kept centrally by NHS Borders are:

- Translation of information into community languages - £3,260.72
- Interpreting services for community languages - £1700.98;
- Translation of information into BSL - £432.32; and
- Interpreting services for Deaf BSL users - £438.62.

Dumfries and Galloway

NHS Dumfries & Galloway spent less than £1,000 spent on communication support services for deaf people. The response did give a detailed community languages breakdown - Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portugese, Punjabi, Russian, Spanish, and Turkish. The Board uses the Language Line, but provided the information in minutes used rather than in costs.

²⁶ More information about the Language Line can be found in Appendix 2

Fife

The only information that was provided was the costs for Guide/Communicators – less than £200; Community Language Interpreting - £97,540; Visually Impaired Interpreting - £21,190; and Hearing Impairment Interpreting - £25,080.

Forth Valley

Gave a total cost figure, but have no record of profession or actual work undertaken. The Board applied Section 17 (1) (b) of the Act as the Board do not record the detailed condition of their deaf patients. This ties in with ISD information received by SCoD in the context of the Making the Case²⁷ paper. It also highlights a fundamental flaw as Deaf, Deafblind, Deafened and Hard of Hearing people all have very different communication needs, and how does the Board ensure that their needs are being met by the services they provide?

Grampian

The reply from the Equality and Diversity Manager gave a “clarification of terms” used in the request as:

- Translation is changing the written word from one language to another; and
- Interpretation is changing the written word from one language to another.

“Accordingly, the inquirer by the use of the word ‘translators’ has restricted themselves to the written work. However, I am not sure that this was their intention. Accordingly, I have provided information on both translation and interpretation.”

It is not clear why the Health Board responded as it did, with a document listing the following detail for community languages:

- Face to face interpreting: 35 different languages offered.
- Telephone contact: use the Language Line. 1764 calls made – Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic.
- 62 Mobile Kits have been bought and issued to enable Community Health staff to use the Language Line during home visits.
- Translation of personal information averages at five pieces per week.
- Key pieces of local health care information is translated into community languages – approximately £12,000 per year.

²⁷ http://www.scod.org.uk/pdf/scodpublications/SCoD_Making_the_Case.pdf

- “Why you should register with your local GP” guide available online and in hard copy in English, Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian, Russian and Portuguese. “The booklet is now in its third reprint. The cost of producing the Guide and having it printed in large volumes in 2007/2008 was £9,000.”
- Large print and CD format – costs £700.
- Pictorial material (2008/2009) – costs approximately £2,300.

The reply also gave an explanation on

“Why does NHS Grampian provide these services?” and went on to quote Section 71 of the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 and the Scottish Government’s Fair for All policy.

The Board bought 200 portable induction loops in 2007. 186 were immediately issued to outpatient clinics, wards and departments. The response estimated that another 40 are required to cover all hospital areas that do not have an integrated loop system, but did not provide details as to when they would be purchased. No record of usage was given.

NHS Grampian trained 8 members of staff as BSL/English interpreters, but all have moved on to other employment out with the health board area. BSL interpreters are sourced through the Aberdeen and North East Deaf Society – paid by use at £25 per hour. The cost for 2006/2007 was approximately £1900.

“There are a few older patients who use a local sign language – ‘One elderly instructor still alive who interprets for us.’ And ‘when necessary, we also make use of family members to interpret for a patient.’ Guide/Communicators are sourced from Deafblind Scotland as and when required, but there are no figures available on how much this costs.”

Greater Glasgow and Clyde

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde do not collect data on translating information and patients notes into community languages or BSL.

The cost of interpreting in community languages for appointments and access to community services was £1,291,747. 75% of this was for primary care services; 25% for acute services.

The board spent £5,000 on a BSL microsite on its website.

£124,138 was spent on BSL/English interpreters for appointments; some of this total was also spent on health promotion appointments.

£126,000 was paid to Deafblind Scotland for Guide/Communicators and health board staff awareness training, health improvement activities for Deafblind people, involvement and consultation with Deafblind people, and advice on how to work with Deafblind people. This amount was not included in the total figure provided.

Highland

NHS Highland could not provide information for the time period requested; but did provide information on spending in 2008. Spoken community languages – face to face and telephone interpreting is recorded on a “use” basis. There is no central record of the cost of materials or records translated into either community languages or BSL. Interpreting services for deaf people is paid for on a block contract with Deaf Action – use of interpreters = 128 occasions; Deafblind interpreter = 1 occasion. No requests were made for Lip Speakers, Electronic Notetakers, Palantypists, and Speech to Text Reporters.

Lanarkshire

The board could only supply the total budget for translation and interpreting services used as £82,546. No other information is held centrally and it is not specifically recorded in a way that can be extracted to answer the questions, therefore Section 17 (1) (b) of the Act applies.

Lothian

The response from NHS Lothian was that they have overall figures for Community Languages: Interpreting - £237,625.78 and Translation - £16,089.36; and BSL: Interpreting - £24,199.98. A Guide/Communicator had been booked on one occasion but not cost was not recorded specifically.

Orkney

NHS Orkney gave information for financial year 2007/08 – not the year asked for. The response contained the cost for use of the Language Line for Polish and Czech. The board did not spend anything on BSL translations. The board does hold a range of HRIS BSL DVDs, but has received no requests for access to this resource. The board “do not provide anything specifically for deaf people”.

Shetland

NHs Shetland’s response was:

“£493.50 was spent on interpreting/translating in the financial year 2006/07 however we are unable to break this figure down to the level you requested. Since 10 January 2008 we have an agreement for provision of sign language interpretation via videophone.”

Tayside

The only information provided was “interpretation, translation and communication aids” - £33,568.97. No other information held centrally therefore Section 17 (1) (b) of the Act applies.

The State Hospital

The State Hospital did not have any deaf patients in the time requested.

The total spent on translating and interpreting for community languages was £17,829.40, with £853.20 of this spent on translating patients’ notes.

The hospital could not provide any information on how much was spent for interpreting at appointments or for health promotion, but “have revised our data collection in relation to interpreting services to include level of detailed information requested.”

Western Isles

“NHS Western Isles will spend in the region of £500 this financial year on telephone interpretation and £100 on face to face interpretation for non English as a first language patients. We are also part of a partnership which provides BSL interpretation via video link. The running costs of this service are £100/annum plus the cost of time at £55/hour. This service is available 24/7 throughout out board area of operations. We also have access to a lip reading interpreter. WE use electronically available translation materials from organisations such as HRIS and Heath Scotland Supplies HSS but do have a budget of £6000 to cover any Local Translations required.”

COMMENT

As stated at the start of this report, SCoD and SASLI are putting together a campaign to raise awareness with public bodies about the need to offer and to use registered language support professionals when working with and support deaf people.

There are 752,940 people (approximately) in Scotland that have some degree of hearing loss. Of that 56,352 people have a profound or severe hearing loss. Between all the local authorities and health boards that responded, and actually could provide figures - £697,904.39 - was spent on providing communication support for deaf people. As a comparison, there are approximately 102,998 people who are in BME communities (this does not cover tourists, and some of the communication costs may have covered visitors to the local authority or health board areas); £2,571,062.67 is the cost of providing communication support in community languages.

It is worrying that many local authorities and health boards do not record the level of information that was requested centrally. How can local authorities and health boards ensure that deaf people using their services have access to appropriate registered communication support when they need it if they do not have these figures? Surely, in order to plan for service provision, especially in the current climate, there must be some recorded level of need in order that this can be projected into cost when planning services.

It is also worrying that public authorities think that they are providing a service to people often at very vulnerable times in their or their families' lives by allowing

“Social work assistants who are trained in BSL although they are not qualified interpreters; they would assist BSL users across social services.” (North Ayrshire Council).

And

“There are a few older patients who use a local sign language – ‘One elderly instructor still alive who interprets for us.’
(NHS Grampian)

And

‘When necessary, we also make use of family members to interpret for a patient.’ (NHS Grampian)

What is the Scottish Government prepared to do to ensure that this takes place?

APPENDIX 1

Freedom of Information Exclusions

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 asp 13

Responses to Requests

16 Refusal of request

(1) Subject to section 18, a Scottish public authority which, in relation to a request for information which it holds, to any extent claims that, by virtue of any provision of Part 2, the information is exempt information must, within the time allowed by or by virtue of section 10 for complying with the request, give the applicant a notice in writing (in this Act referred to as a “refusal notice”) which—

(a) discloses that it holds the information;

(b) states that it so claims;

(c) specifies the exemption in question; and

(d) states (if not otherwise apparent) why the exemption applies.

(2) Where the authority’s claim is made only by virtue of a provision of Part 2 which does not confer absolute exemption, the notice must state the authority’s reason for claiming that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs that in disclosure of the information.

(3) The authority is not obliged to make a statement under subsection (1)(d) in so far as the statement would disclose information which would itself be exempt information.

(4) A Scottish public authority which, in relation to a request for information, claims that section 12(1) applies must, within the time allowed by or by virtue of section 10 for complying with the request, give the applicant a notice which states that it so claims.

(5) A Scottish public authority which, in relation to such a request, claims that section 14 applies must, within that time, give the applicant a notice which states that it so claims; except that the notice need not be given if—

(a) the authority has, in relation to a previous identical or substantially similar such request, given the applicant a notice under this subsection; and

(b) it would in all the circumstances be unreasonable to expect it to serve a further such notice in relation to the current request.

(6) Subsections (1), (4) and (5) are subject to section 19.

17 Notice that information is not held

(1) Where—

(a) a Scottish public authority receives a request which would require it either—

(i) to comply with section 1(1); or

- (ii) to determine any question arising by virtue of paragraph (a) or (b) of section 2(1), if it held the information to which the request relates; but
- (b) the authority does not hold that information, it must, within the time allowed by or by virtue of section 10 for complying with the request, give the applicant notice in writing that it does not hold it.
- (2) Subsection (1) is subject to section 19.
- (3) Subsection (1) does not apply if, by virtue of section 18, the authority instead gives the applicant a refusal notice.
- 18 Further provision as respects responses to request
- (1) Where, if information existed and was held by a Scottish public authority, the authority could give a refusal notice under section 16(1) on the basis that the information was exempt information by virtue of any of sections 28 to 35, 39(1) or 41 but the authority considers that to reveal whether the information exists or is so held would be contrary to the public interest, it may (whether or not the information does exist and is held by it) give the applicant a refusal notice by virtue of this section.
- (2) Neither paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section 16 nor subsection (2) of that section applies as respects a refusal notice given by virtue of this section

APPENDIX 2

Definition of the Language Line

Language Line Services Telephone Interpreting Service (TIS) provides services in 170 languages 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. They can connect a person to a professionally Qualified Interpreter by phone.

“Language Line Services is the largest provider of Telephone Interpretation in the world, and with recent investment in ‘state of the art’ computer and telephone systems, our Disaster Recovery capability is now the best in the world. In addition to our Frequent Subscriber service, we have now launched our [Pay as You Go Interpreting service](#), which you can set up immediately using your credit card. We have the most stringent Criminal Record Bureau and vetting processes in place to guarantee the confidentiality of our clients' communications.”

For more information, go to <http://www.language.co.uk/page/welcome/> .