



Scottish Council on
Deafness

Freedom of
Information
(Scotland) Act 2002
Requests (Fol)



Research request:

The Scottish Council on Deafness Social Inclusion Sub Committee requested that the Policy & Research Officer write to the Scottish Health Councils and Community Health Partnerships to ask how many Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing people are involved in decision making processes.

Action taken:

On 10 September 2007, the Policy & Research Officer sent 14 letters to the Scottish Health Councils local offices and on 13 September 2007 sent 40 letters to the NHS Community Health Partnerships.

The letters asked for the following information, under the FoI:

Scottish Health Council:

- How many Deaf people attend local Health Council meetings?
- How many Deafblind people attend local Health Council meetings?
- How many Hard of Hearing people attend local Health Council meetings?
- How do you involve the Deaf community in local planning matters?

NHS Community Health Partnerships:

- How many Deaf people attend local public partnership forum meetings?
- How many Deafblind people attend local public partnership forum meetings?
- How many Hard of Hearing people attend local public partnership forum meetings?
- How do you involve the Deaf community in local planning matters?

SCOTTISH HEALTH COUNCIL RESULTS:

On 17 September 2007, Richard McCrea (Scottish Health Council Information Manager) telephoned The Policy & Research Officer to inform her that all the local offices had contacted him as any information was held centrally. He replied in writing for the whole of the Scottish Health Council as one organisation. **See pages 11,12 and 13.**

To summarise his reply:

"The role of the Scottish Health Council is not to directly represent the views of the public, but to assess how well NHS Boards involve all members of the community in decision-making. We do, however, involve some people with



hearing impairments in our verification activity. As an organisation we are committed to involving “hard to reach” groups. For instance, our website is enabled with browse aloud technology. The information provided (– Appendix A): These members are volunteers, recruited through advertisement in the local press and voluntary sector bulletins, and these meetings are not open to the general public. The numbers do not include the many deaf and hard-of-hearing people who attend our public events and conferences. Hearing loop systems are available as a matter of course at all such events, and we work hard to provide other forms of assistance as required.”

NHS COMMUNITY HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS RESULTS

Definition of Public Partnership Forums (PPFs) have an essential role to play in how NHS Boards involve patients, carers, the public and community and voluntary groups. They were set up as part of the introduction of Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) in April 2006.

The forums are made up of patients, carers, local community groups and voluntary organisations. But participants do not need to be a member of an existing group and can take part as much or as little as they like.

PPFs are the main structure by which the CHPs link with the people of the communities that they serve, so that there is a meaningful and continuing dialogue with local people.

The statutory roles of the Public Partnership Forums are to:

- Inform local people about the range and location of services and information for which the CHP is responsible
- Involve local users of service, carers and the public in discussion about how to improve local health services
- Support wider public involvement in planning and decision-making about services that are delivered locally.

Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 Section 17 (1) (b)

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.



Summary of replies received:

All the NHS boards responded by letter, telephone or email. Several NHS boards submitted a central response, rather than one from each of the Community Health Partnerships in their area.

NHS Ayrshire & Arran:

No deaf people attended the meetings. No deafblind people attend meetings – the Board is carrying out a needs assessment to determine the number of deafblind people living in Ayrshire & Arran. There is representation from the hard of hearing community on the East Ayrshire CHP, but this information is unavailable under the FOI as the Data Protection Act 1998 applies. All meeting locations have a loop system. NHS Ayrshire & Arran would welcome any advice and/or assistance that SCoD can give to ensure that their meetings and information is fully accessible.

NHS Borders:

An initial meeting took place at the launch of the PPF in the Borders. One person attended to represent the Deaf community. Involvement in planning issues includes contact through the Scottish Borders Council Sensory Impairment Service with the key officers with access to users groups; involvement with the Deaf community in the Disability Scheme Public Consultation; a nominated Lead from Public Governance for ensuring that the Deaf community are involved in planning and service delivery; and provision of communication training jointly provided by NHS Borders staff and deaf people.

NHS Dumfries & Galloway:

The CHP is currently working with the Scottish Health Council to form a PPF as there have been difficulties in establishing a forum solely within NHS D&G.

NHS Fife – Dunfermline and West Fife:

“Invitations which were issued encourage any special needs, e.g. related to hearing, sight, diet, disabled access, interpreter support, etc to be identified in advance to the organisers, and any such requests are followed up and acted on.” An individual representing others and herself with sensory impairment contact CHP. A portable loop system was bought to be used by CHP at meetings and events and is loaned out to other NHS people; and conference pack materials have been produced (where requested) in 18+ font size to accommodate a delegate with a visual impairment.



NHS Fife – Glenrothes and North East Fife:

Do not collect information on equality and diversity of membership, and are in the process of rectifying this. Would like to talk to SCoD about how to increase access to PPFs for Deaf and Deafblind people in the community.

NHS Fife - Kirkcaldy and Levenmouth:

Information provided about the Healthy Living & Sensory Awareness Project as they have a representative on the PPF Reference Group. Contact will be made with Deaf Communication Service, RNIB Pathway Services, Fife Centre for the Deaf, and Hearing Dogs for Deaf People.

NHS Forth Valley:

Do not routinely record this information; therefore Section 17 (1) (b) applies. The PPF involvement officer gave a presentation about PPF and its function. They try to include people at events or give them feedback from events. PPF reps and general managers met with a Deaf and Deafblind group at Falkirk Stadium.

NHS Grampian:

At present, there are no functioning PPFs in the Grampian area.

“When the PPFs have meetings we do not ask people to advise us whether they are deaf, deaf/blind or hard of hearing. However, whenever we do anything with the public we do ask if they need assistance of any type including hearing support. We go to strenuous lengths to involve everyone on Grampian in the way we provide services. We do this in a variety of ways, via our website, questionnaires, public meetings and directly with service users. All materials about health service planning issues contain information on how to access documents in other formats.”

According to their website, information on health can be obtained in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Polish, Russian and Lithuanian. Latvian will be available shortly. There is nothing on their website about health planning and how to access documents in different formats.

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – East Dunbartonshire:

The PPF Executive Group has 25 representatives, none of whom have identified themselves as Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing. No specific requests have been made for communication support. A Joint Community Care Plan consultation took place recently and at one of the sessions, there were several members of the public who were deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing and appropriate interpretation facilities were made available for these individuals.

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – East Renfrewshire:



"In the early days of the PPF we had initial discussions with Deafblind Scotland on ways of making sure all/any deafblind people in east ren were aware of the PPF – whether that be facilitating a meeting that involved everyone and gave the opportunity to ask any questions or through the organisation passing info on etc but nothing really came of that to be honest. The PPF is aware that there is still a lot of work to be done to reach all members of the community. The first year has really been about getting the PPF established and up and running. Now hopefully we can concentrate on "harder to reach" communities." The respondent enclosed a copy of the "Working Agreement between ERPPF and ERCHP.

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – Inverclyde:

Are still in the planning stages and have a working group in place. Hope to have the PPF Executive Group in place by December 2007. About to start the first planning process and will be taking advice on how to be inclusive for Deaf and Deafblind people in their area.

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – North Glasgow:

The PPF Executive Group was established in April 2007 has 18 representatives, none of whom have identified themselves as Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing. No specific requests have been made for communication support. At PPF Executive meetings, care is taken in discussion to ensure that everyone is speaking at a correct volume to be audible to all. In September, a planning event took place to engage people in the design of older people's mental health services. 13% of the participants were deaf and had a workshop specifically to look at issues for deaf people in relation to older people's mental health services.

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – Renfrewshire:

The PPF network has over 130 members but no information is collected about sensory impairment of members. "In January 2007, we wrote to Deafblind Scotland asking if they had any local members who would like to join Renfrewshire PPF. There has been no response to this request, but the CHP is committed to exploring other ways of engaging with this population. In December 2006, a drama was organised and performed by a local theatre company about a patient with a hearing impairment. Following that, the PPF agreed that customer focused training for frontline staff should be a priority for the CHP, and this is reflected in the CHP development plan."

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – South East Glasgow:

The Executive Group has 25 members; no-one has identified themselves as Deaf or Deafblind. The PPF is aware that several of their members are hard of



hearing. The PPF is carrying out a gap analysis of deaf/deafblind people and other key groups that need to be represented.

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – South West Glasgow:

Answer to question 4 given as “A Loop system is available at our local South West Glasgow CHCP Public Partnership meetings.”

NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde – West Dunbartonshire:

“Although no member of the PPF has identified themselves as Hard of Hearing, several members do wear hearing aids. There are 3 people who wear hearing aids who attend the PPF routinely, however this number may vary. The PPF has a general attendance of some 15 – 20 attendees and we are conscious of the need to hold these meetings in acoustically suitable facilities and take care in discussion to ensure that everyone speaks at a correct volume to be audible to all.”

NHS Greater Glasgow – West Glasgow:

The PPF has one member who uses a hearing aid, and “occasionally a lip speaker when required and when we can get one.” There was an acknowledgement in the letter of the work done by Deafblind Scotland in trying to find a representative from the area who is Deafblind, and are now looking at other ways of engaging with the Deaf and Deafblind people in the area.

NHS Highland – Argyll & Bute:

Are in the process of setting up locality PPFs. They would like more information from SCoD on how to make the PPFs more accessible.

NHS Highland:

The Highland HealthyVOICES Network does not hold face-to-face meetings as such. Members are contacted about specific health-related topics and asked to participate in consultation events. The equal opportunities monitoring form does not differentiate between deaf and hard of hearing but 6% of the network describe themselves as deaf or hard of hearing. “One of these also described short sight and colour impaired vision.” The number of members that stated they had a specific interest in hearing loss is 33; this number may include carers and family members.

NHS Lanarkshire – North and South:

Does not routinely record the number of deaf, deafblind or hard of hearing people who attend PPF meetings, therefore Section 17 (1) (b) of the FoI Act applies – see below. The FoI Officer suggested looking at the minutes of the



meetings for information on the organisations involved. There are no deaf organisations involved in the PPF in either South or North Lanarkshire.

Further to the original response, SCoD received another response from the Patient Focused Public Involvement Facilitator, which stated that 1 member of the South Lanarkshire PPF is Hard of Hearing. A Disability Engagement Group has been set up to look at how best to meet the DED scheme.

NHS Lothian – Midlothian:

In answer to how many deaf people attend the local PPF meetings, the number given was 6 – 15 may attend, possibly meaning that none actually do. The Forward MID is the Community Care Forum's disabilities forum. This forum does not record types of disability. British Deaf Association in Edinburgh is on their mailing list. Catherine Evans, Patient Involvement Worker would welcome any support and/or advice that SCoD can give to ensure that Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing people are involved in planning matters.

NHS Lothian – West Lothian:

A support worker is building up a database of contacts in order to increase the numbers involved in West Lothian.

NHS Orkney:

NHS Orkney's PPF is a virtual forum and does not have formal meetings; therefore there is no record of members who may be Deaf, Deafblind or Hard of Hearing.

NHS Shetland:

Do not have any records at the present time as they are in the process of developing PPFs.

NHS Tayside – Perth & Kinross, Angus, Dundee:

Are in the process of developing virtual PPFs, so no information known as to who is involved. Do have Patient Partnership Groups that have representatives from local communities - these groups carry out specific pieces of work. NHS Tayside has well developed links with Sound Sense, Deafblind Scotland, and Tayside Association for the Deaf and Tayside Deaf Forum. NHS Tayside is about to launch a pilot of "e-consult", an online engagement tool that will help to collect and analyse information about who is



involved in consultations and who should be targeted. The Board hopes to explore the use of more effective communication methods, including BSL.

NHS Western Isles:

The CHP is still in the process of developing PPFs.

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS – see pages 14 and 15

The results of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 requests to the Scottish Health Council and the Scottish Community Health Partnerships show that in general, Deaf, Deafblind and Hard of Hearing people, are not involved in the processes and planning of health services in Scotland.

The figures of people actually involved make dismal reading:

- Three Deaf people,
- No Deafblind people, and only
- Twenty (39 – 42) Hard of Hearing people.

Considering the estimated number of Deaf sign language users is 6,500; Deafblind people is 5000; and 1 in 5 of the population has some kind of hearing impairment, these figures show just how much work has to be done in Scotland to ensure the Deaf community is fully involved.

Some of the CHPs have asked for information on how to make their PPFs more accessible; others are in regular contact with the Deaf organisations in their areas. Most though appear to think that by asking the question on booking forms and questionnaires – do you need communication support? – they are doing what they can to include and consult the deaf community.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

The CHPs and PPFs who have asked for advice and information can be contacted and directed to their local Deaf organisation.

But there needs to be Deaf and Deafblind awareness raising carried out among the CHPs and Scottish Health Council staff and members of the PPFs who have not responded in this manner, to make them realise that they may have to be more creative in reaching out to the Deaf community in order to be more inclusive in their membership and involvement in planning processes and matters. It is not a case of simply asking someone what form of support they need on a form written in English. Information needs to be available in a number of different formats.



It should become standard practice, as is the monitoring of Black and Minority Ethnic communities and individuals, that people with hearing loss should be monitored in the same way. South East Glasgow CHP is carrying out a gap analysis and NHS Tayside are going to carry out an “e-consult” to look at who should be targeted. All Community Health Partnerships and the Scottish Health Council should be carrying these out as standard.



Office	# deaf	# deafblind	# hard of hearing	Involving the deaf community
Ayrshire & Arran	0	0	0	For any events or meetings we organise, we always ask if a hearing loop, signer, documents in Braille etc. are required
Borders	1	0	0	The Local Office works with Borders Disability Forum to involve the deaf community.
Dumfries & Galloway	0	0	0	When arranging public events locally (or regionally) for the Scottish Health Council we use the Accessibility Checklist prepared by the Events and Publicity Officer, which prompts us to arrange for accessibility requirements (hearing loop/signers/interpretation) at the venue.
Fife	0	0	0	We invited sensory impairment to our local "Hard to Reach" event last November. Apart from that we have not done any other events in Fife specifically targeted at deaf people. Palm typists and interpreters were provided for deaf people at a Regional Event last October. Newsletters, etc. are sent to most voluntary organisations in Fife, which includes Sensory Impairment groups.
Forth Valley	0	0	0	There has been no specific involvement with the deaf community but representatives were invited by Scottish Health Council Forth Valley to a meeting in March 2007 with groups which may experience difficulties in being involved in health matters. Invitations to meetings held by Scottish Health Council Forth Valley always ask if special arrangements are required, such as signers which would then be hired. The office reception has a loop system installed and a portable system is available for meetings.
Grampian	0	0	0	The Local Office has a hearing loop installed, but this has not been required to date. We involve people with hearing impairment by visiting local organisations (e.g. Aberdeen and North East Deaf Society) that represent and work with hearing impaired people. They give us feedback on how well the local board involves them in health services. We contact groups for feedback for our annual reports and consultations. We also contact groups if they have been involved in a specific piece of work, e.g. disability equality duty. We keep individuals/organisations informed of the work of the Scottish Health Council via letters and reports.
Greater Glasgow & Clyde	0	0	2	The Local Officers in Glasgow tried to arrange a meeting with a local Deaf organisation, 'Deaf Connections' but they did not get back to us. In the Local Office we have a text phone and a hearing loop system. In addition, one of our Local Officers has a certificate in Deaf Awareness from the RNID and can also do some Makaton.

Freedom of Information Request – Scottish Council on Deafness

Office	# deaf	# deafblind	# hard of hearing	Involving the deaf community
Highland	0	0	1	We have visited some voluntary organisations which support the deaf and hard of hearing, for example, Deaf Action Highland and Lochaber Deaf Care, and, in addition to encouraging their direct contact with healthcare providers, we have also, when appropriate, raised issues which they have brought to our attention. We also tried to arrange for a signer to come along to one of our events, but were unsuccessful due to a shortage of qualified people able to work in Highland. A portable loop system is available in the local office.
Lanarkshire	0	0	0	We have not undertaken to involve anyone from the deaf community in local health matters to date. We do not have a loop system installed in the office, but if we were to host an event involving the deaf we would hire a hall/facility that had a loop system available.
Lothian	0	0	2	Although the Lothian Office does not have a specific project identifying or involving the deaf community, we do support our members and those on other committees who have hearing requirements, such as needing the loop system. These people can have involvement in health matters. For example, our Local Advisory Council (LAC) members review NHS Lothian's assessment evidence etc.
Orkney	0	0	2	We send our newsletter and information to Orkney Disability Forum and update them on forthcoming events. We also circulate this information widely in the community, for example, libraries, public transport, clubs, etc.
Shetland	0	0	0	Our assessment reports have been widely circulated, including to the local Deaf and Hard of Hearing Club Two lay members of the Audiology Modernisation Steering Group were involved in the verification of last year's assessment of NHS Shetland's Redesign of Audiology Services. A Local Advisory Council member contacted one lay representative and the Local Officer contacted the second representative (from the Shetland Deaf and Hard of Hearing Club). Questions were asked about their involvement in the redesign of Audiology services; whether they had received sufficient information to understand the redesign process; how they were involved in the planning and design of the modernised Audiology service in Shetland; how they were invited to join the Audiology Modernisation Steering Group; how confident they felt to take part and whether they were involved in making decisions. Two representatives of the local Deaf and Hard of Hearing Club met the Health Minister last year at his Annual Review One LAC member attends meetings of the Audiology Modernisation Steering Group as

Freedom of Information Request – Scottish Council on Deafness

Office	# deaf	# deafblind	# hard of hearing	Involving the deaf community
				an observer.
Tayside	0	0	2	We have held one 'involving communities' event and plan to hold another later this year in Tayside. We invited representation from voluntary and community groups we had previously met including Sense Scotland and other groups who support people with sensory impairment. Prior to the events invitees were asked to tell us whether they had specific requirements, i.e. hearing loop etc. When we have previously visited the above voluntary/community support groups as part of our ongoing work, we also discuss the role of our Local Advisory Council and encourage representatives of the groups to apply for membership of the Local Advisory Council.
Western Isles	0	0	0	
National Office	1	0	0	<p>We do try to be as inclusive as possible and to ensure that delegates with any form of disability can participate as fully as non-disabled delegates we carry out an accessibility check on the venue before confirming the venue.</p> <p>We also ask delegates to highlight any particular requirements they may have on registration forms. This allows us to arrange whatever support delegates may need – this may range from hearing loops, large print, particular dietary requirements, assistance with travel, etc.</p> <p>Participants at meetings are also welcome to bring along any support they require, such as hearing dogs, to meetings.</p> <p>The National Office also has a text phone.</p>
Total	2	0	9	



NHS Board/Area	Deaf People	Deafblind People	Hard of Hearing People	Involvement in local planning matters
Ayrshire & Arran – 3 districts	0	0	Not recorded	PPF holds meetings, has an active network and a virtual group.
Borders	possibly	0	0	User involvement through Borders Disability Forum. Links with Deaf staff member of Joint Health Equality Group.
Dumfries & Galloway	No information	No information	No information	Do not have any PPFs at present
Fife – Dunfermline and West Fife	Not known	Not known	Not known	See paper.
Fife – Glenrothes and North East Fife	0	0	1	Are in the process of looking at other ways of including Deaf and Deafblind people in the planning process.
Fife – Kirkcaldy & Levenmouth	0	0	1	No active PPF at the moment – still at the planning stage. There is a representative from the Healthy Living & Sensory Awareness Project on the PPF Reference group.
Forth Valley	Not recorded	Not recorded	Not recorded	Meet Deaf and Deafblind people who attend the Sensory Centre in Camelon.
Grampian	Not recorded	Not recorded	Not recorded	PPFs are in the development stage in Grampian.
Greater Glasgow & Clyde – East Dunbartonshire	0	0	0	Joint Community Care Plan consultation session involved the Deaf community
Greater Glasgow & Clyde - East Renfrewshire	0	0	2	Have organised a number of public/consultation/info events over the last year.
Greater Glasgow & Clyde - Inverclyde	1	0	1	Have not yet established a PPF; have a working group in place.
Greater Glasgow & Clyde - North Glasgow	0	0	0	Links have been made with Deaf Connections in order to reach the Deaf community
Greater Glasgow & Clyde - Renfrewshire	Not known	Not known	Not known	Organise engagement events for the local community.
Greater Glasgow & Clyde – South East Glasgow	0	0	A few	Link with Deaf Connections; manage the Glasgow Centre of Sensory Impairment.
Greater Glasgow & Clyde – South West Glasgow	0	0	8 -10 over several meetings	A loop system is available at all meetings



NHS Board/Area	Deaf People	Deafblind People	Hard of Hearing People	Involvement in local planning matters
Greater Glasgow & Clyde – West Glasgow	0	0	1	To increase links with local organisations and community groups to raise awareness of the PPF.
Greater Glasgow & Clyde – West Dunbartonshire	0	0	3	Consultation takes place through the West Dunbartonshire Sensory Impairment Strategy Group – can nominate reps for PPF.
Highland – Argyll & Bute	0	0	4	Links with voluntary sector organisations, patients groups, community groups and members of the public.
Highland – Highland HealthVOICESNetwork	?	0	?	Links with Lochaber Deaf Care, Scottish Deaf Association, Deaf Action Highland, Highland Deaf Centre, Caithness Deaf Centre, Deafblind Scotland, RNID Scotland, and Edinburgh and East of Scotland Deaf Society.
Lanarkshire – North/South	Not recorded	Not recorded	1 in SL	Works with a number of organisations to take account of public opinion.
Lothian - Midlothian	6 – 15 may attend	0	1	Forward MID are represented on the Joint Physical Disabilities Planning Group.
Lothian – West Lothian	0	0	0	Support Worker building up a database of community contacts in order to increase the diversity and numbers of people involved.
Orkney	0	0	0	NHS Orkney works closely with Orkney Disability Forum whose membership includes deaf people.
Shetland	No information	No information	No information	Do not have any PPFs at present
Tayside	Not known	Not known	Not known	Do not have formal groups, but are developing the PPFs as virtual groups.
Western Isles	No information	No information	No information	Do not have a PPF at present
Totals 26 Boards/Areas	1	0	11(19 – 22)	6 areas/Boards do not have PPFs at the time of request.