

All Party Group on Deaf Issues

20<sup>th</sup> January 2015  
Conference Room 21, Tŷ Hywel

### **Attendees**

Ann Jones (Chair)  
Donna Cushing (Minute Secretary)  
Katie Chappelle (Secretariat)

### **Representatives/Stakeholders**

Janet Pinder  
Michelle Fowler  
Patrick McNamara  
Jim Edwards  
Catrin Edwards  
Jonathan Arthur  
Elin Wyn  
Olivia Retter  
Wendy Marshall  
Nigel Williams  
Barbara Rees  
Hilary Maclean  
Julie Doyle  
Rachel Williams

### **Assembly Members**

Mark Isherwood  
Mike Hedges

### **Communication support**

Rachel Williams (Interpreter)  
Julie Doyle (Interpreter)  
Hilary Maclean (palantypist)

### **Welcome and apologies**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Debbie Thomas, Paul Redfern, Jacqui Bond, Sue Williams, Sian Morgan, Meryl Roberts, Cathie Robins-Talbot

Minutes of the last meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

## **Standards on accessible communication**

Richard Williams gave an overview of work carried out on Accessible healthcare standards. The document is a collaborative piece of work which was released in December 2013 and was meant to be used alongside Equality Laws and to assist Health Boards by clearly stating what they need to do to help people with sensory loss. It gave clear guidelines on booking of interpreters, information on Loop systems in meeting areas and advice on training of staff for people with sensory loss.

A review of the services was carried out and the results were rather shocking. 120 patients took part and when asked if they had seen any improvement in services – 91% of people had seen no improvement and what was disturbing 58% of patients wouldn't know how to complain if they had been given a bad service. This does show a lack of accessibility. The full results of this will be published in the coming weeks. Copies will be distributed to members.

The Minister currently has a copy of the report and a meeting is set to discuss this on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

AOHL, RNIB and Sense are pressing for these standards to be implemented and for Health Boards to prioritise them. Patients need to be aware of the standards so they can hold the Health Boards and its workers accountable. We are seeking the support of the Minister to set a deadline and to drive the Health Boards to implement them fully and to make mandatory training available.

Richard Williams requested the group forward a joint letter of support to the Minister on this issue.

## **Access to Work**

Jim Edwards gave a brief insight to actions conducted by Access to Work in the last year. Access to Work conducted a review of their services and they have begun to share their findings and what needs to be done.

Additionally the Work and Pensions Select Committee have undertaken a review of Access to Work and this was completed at Christmas. They found that there were some problems with the scheme in particular how it affected deaf people. It is expected that the Minister will give a formal response on this in March. There is a positive dialogue between Action on Hearing Loss, NDCS, British Deaf Association and Signature and some of the officials around where some of the solutions might be.

There are concerns however, over a possible cap on funding or even joint funding – via the employer - over services. This may have a detrimental and disincentive effect for employers to employ individuals with disabilities.

I request members consider writing to the minister in response to his announcements before Christmas and emphasising in particular issues around cost sharing and some form of cap.

Members discussed this at length and agreed to contact the Minister on this matter.

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## **AOB**

**Lipspeaker registrations** – Olivia Retter requested she highlight a concern of a member who was registered with ASLI as an interpreter but also registered with ALS (Association of Lipspeakers). The concern was around registration and useage of level 2 lipspeakers for assignments.

This issue was discussed at length by members and in particular the absence of a route to qualification at level 3. Members were informed a level 3 qualification is imminent and the committee would revisit this issue in the future.

**Tinnitus Awareness Week** – Richard Williams informed those present of an event taking place on 7<sup>th</sup> February in Llandudno to highlight issues on Tinnitus. He requests that members promote this within their organisational contacts.

**Audiology; Under Pressure report** – Richard Williams informed members of research that will be available next month on Audiological services in Wales. It is a service which is under pressure and they are struggling to cope with patient demand.

**RNIB/Tinnitus/Sense Welfare Advice Service** – Richard informed members of a new joint service with RNIB to assist individuals with welfare benefit support, from filling in their forms and attending tribunals. RNIB have been operating this service for a number of years and is very successful and this has now been expanded to people with hearing loss. Members discussed this issue.

## **Date of Next meeting**

The next meeting of the APGDI will be held on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015 in North Wales, which will be a public meeting.

Members discussed at length format and theme for the meeting.

