

FOI_0476_21/22 – FOI request concerning - NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS)

1. Do you currently have:

a) A specific local AIS policy?

Solent NHS Trust does not have a specific AIS policy; however, AIS is cross referenced throughout Trust policies, where appropriate.

b) An accessibility policy which references the AIS?

No – Since NHS England launched the Accessible Information Standard (AIS) in August 2016, Solent NHS Trust have been proactive, including devising and implementing Accessible Information (AI) screening tools for patients and service users. When a patient or service user has contact with a health professional, our electronic patient systems have a screen to complete. This mirrors the questions and codes set out by NHS England around accessible information screening. If an accessible information need is identified, the systems will flag this up to any clinician accessing the patient records.

Solent NHS Trust has a dedicated Accessible Information Team comprising an Accessible Information Lead and an AI Assistant. There is also an Accessible Information Champions Network and a staff AI SolNet (intranet) page (please see question 5 for more information).

2. How many of the following have you received since 1st April 2019 regarding provision of accessible information:

a) complaints?

None

b) compliments?

This information is not recorded centrally and therefore we are unable to provide this information

3. **How many of the following items have you issued to patients since 1st April 2019 under an AIS request?**
- a) **large print letters**
 - b) **braille letters**
 - c) **audio files**
 - d) **email letters**
 - e) **text messages**

We are unable to pull data for specific number of items issued but have the following data from our accessible information patient screening since 1st of April 2019:

Patients requiring information in the following formats:

Large print letters: 726

Braille letters: 6

Audio files: 3

Email letters: 77

Text messages: 380 (from preferred contact method question).

Since 1st of April 2019 there have been 16,781 discussions with patients to specifically ask for the purpose of identifying if they have any communication or information needs. This had led to 8,785 accessible information questionnaires being completed. These have highlighted that 4,182 patients require a full communication needs assessment.

Staff are able to offer patients information in different formats. The AI Team is on hand to support with this. Many services are producing Easy Read resources (with font size 14 or 16) routinely to offer patients a choice. Service leaflets and introduction letters are often produced in Easy Read and sent to all new patients before they are seen and receive an AI screening. Some recent examples include Wheelchair Services Referral letters, Children's Public Health Nursing letters on continence and sleep and the Portsmouth School Nursing Service.

4. **What engagement do you have with people with a visual impairment regarding your implementation of the AIS?**

The Accessible Information Team work with service users with lived experience of a communication or information need. We endeavour to increase staff awareness and understanding of communication and information needs and have some fantastic videos made with people with lived experience in our AI training. One of these people worked with us to co-deliver our face to face training and was able to give insight into what life is like living with acquired communication needs including visual impairment and speech difficulties.

We encourage all services to work collaboratively with patients and service user groups when developing projects and resources. Some examples are an inpatient ward for dementia patients looking at patient information; they used Easy Read large

print information review forms to support patients to give feedback on how easy it was to see, read and understand the patient information on the wards. Other examples include patient engagement events for example when developing sleep resources including animations and videos for the CHAMS LD team.

The AI Team have produced an Access to Communication and Information Support flyer for staff to easily find how to access relevant support such as interpreting services for deaf, deafblind and blind people, Braille, Makaton and large print resources.

5. What proportion of your staff has received formal accessibility training in the last year?

Staff have access to self-directed learning via our Accessible Information SolNet intranet page where they can find training videos, ready to use resources, how to guides, updates on AI and links to external resource as well as specific sections on BSL, AI screening, helpful information for new staff and more.

The page has generated:

- **1828 hits** on the site in the last year
- **an average of 152 hits a month**

The Trust AI Team produce regular updates on AI which are distributed to all staff via our Staff News emails. These updates flag up new AI resources, support, and training available to staff.

Widgit symbols software training delivered to 8 AI Champions and made available via MS Teams for Champions to access.

Makaton training session delivered to 9 AI Champions and made available via MS Teams for Champions to access.

The AI Team are currently redeveloping their full day Accessible Information Training (which was delivered face to face) into more accessible online training modules which can be delivered via MS Teams to Solent NHS Trust staff.

6. What percentage of current online material has been officially checked for compliance with the Government's Digital Accessibility Regulations?

Solent NHS Trust's main websites have been checked for compliance against the Government's Digital Accessibility Regulations through third party providers. The Trust continues to work with services who have independent microsites to ensure we are compliant with relevant standards. A review cycle is in place, to ensure that content remains compliant with these Regulations and processes are in place for the implementation of new content, again to ensure ongoing compliance.