



# Accessing British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreting Support



By law, we must ensure that our Deaf BSL patients have interpreting support.

## When should I use a BSL interpreter?

You must **always** use a BSL interpreter for your Deaf BSL patient at the following stages -

- on admission - planned or unplanned
- on transfer - between wards or Acute receiving to in-patient ward
- on discharge
- at doctors' rounds - every day
- at significant nurse interventions
- for pre and post-surgery
- for the entire period of labour in Maternity
- for all ED assessments - including triage

Your Deaf BSL patient must also have interpreting support available to speak to staff for a period of time every day during a hospital stay.

While a BSL Interpreter is present, it is vital that you talk to your patient and agree a plan for how best to communicate with each other at all other times.

This may include accessing BSL Online interpreting support or writing things down. This will be an individual choice. Some Deaf BSL users will not be comfortable with an online service and not all Deaf BSL users can read English - BSL is their first language.



## How do I access the BSL interpreting service?

To book a face-to-face BSL Interpreter, contact the NHSGGC Interpreting Service.

Patients may have a preferred interpreter and this information should be passed on to the Interpreting Service who will make the booking. In an emergency situation it may not always be possible to use the patient's preferred choice.

Where possible, book interpreters in advance of any appointment(s). In an emergency, or if you require an interpreter within the next 24 hours, please call the service and explain the circumstances.

**NHSGGC Interpreting Service (8am - 6pm Mon to Fri,  
8am - 4pm Sat to Sun)**

✉ [interpretingservice@ggc.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:interpretingservice@ggc.scot.nhs.uk)

☎ 0141 347 8811

## Out of Hours Procedures

Contact the patient's preferred agency or call ☎ 0141 347 8811 to be connected to an appropriate service. You can also access the BSL Online Interpreting Service which will allow you to communicate with your patient while waiting for an interpreter to arrive.

## BSL Online

The BSL Online interpreting service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This means that in an unplanned or emergency situation, you can quickly link up to an interpreter at any time and communicate with your Deaf patient. It can also be used during hospital stays, or to enable Deaf patients to communicate with staff if waiting for a face-to-face interpreter to arrive.

The BSL Online service can be accessed at sites across NHSGGC – for a full list of sites, more information and a short instruction video, go to 🌐 [nhsggc.scot/bslonline](https://nhsggc.scot/bslonline)

For further information on how to support Deaf BSL patients, including training opportunities, go to 🌐 [nhsggc.scot/bsl](https://nhsggc.scot/bsl)