

# **Working with a LSP - Deafblind Manual**

## **Users**

There are several methods of communication commonly used by deafblind people. The method used by a particular deafblind person will be determined by several factors including age of onset of deafness and visual impairment and order in which they occurred. For example, a born deaf person whose first language was BSL and who later becomes blind may use 'hands on' sign language and require a BSL/English Interpreter skilled in this technique; whereas a blind person who later becomes deaf may use the deafblind manual alphabet. Some users of the deafblind manual will be capable of (and in some settings, will expect to) receive the manual at speed.

## **Role of LSP - Deafblind Manual**

The role of this LSP is, through the deafblind manual, to relay at an appropriate speed, what is said by a third party to a deafblind person. The LSP – Deafblind Manual will also relay visual and other non-verbal information, for example reactions to what has been said, movement of other people and what they are doing. LSPs – Deafblind Manual will be in a position to respond to work requests in a wide variety of settings eg:

- Health
- Legal
- Social services
- Child protection
- Counselling
- Employment and training
- Education
- Social
- Religious

## **Position of the LSP – Deafblind Manual using the manual**

Because use of the deafblind manual requires 'hand to hand' contact, the deafblind user and the LSP – Deafblind Manual will need to be seated comfortably, side by side. Some LSPs – Deafblind Manual may prefer a chair without arms and if the LSP – Deafblind Manual needs to refer to papers whilst working, a table at an appropriate height will be required.

## **Communicating Process**

The process of communicating using the deafblind manual involves listening to a spoken message of up to 150 words per minute and/or reading a written message and observing relevant visual information and spelling out the words required to convey the message onto the hand of the deafblind person. This means:

- Although some deafblind people can receive information through the manual at speed, even with the use of shortened abbreviations and Braille contractions, there will be a time lag between the LSP – Deafblind Manual hearing the message and the deafblind person receiving it.

- Only one message can be conveyed at a time. It is therefore important that participants at meetings involving a LSP – Deafblind Manual speak one at a time.
- Using the deafblind manual can be physically and mentally tiring for both the LSP – Deafblind Manual and the user. Regular breaks will be needed and for assignments of more than two hours it may be necessary to book two LSPs – Deafblind Manual.
- A LSP – Deafblind Manual should not be expected to work for more than 20 minutes at a time without a break or the quality of the communication support may suffer.

### **Communicating Using Deafblind Manual Alphabet**

This method of communication involves spelling out the words of the spoken message and visual and non-verbal information using the deafblind manual alphabet onto the hand of the deafblind person. A consequence of this is that it can only be a one-to-one service and the message may be paraphrased. As with other LSPs it is essential that the LSP – Deafblind Manual is suitably qualified and experienced for the assignment. Before booking a LSP – Deafblind Manual it is important to consult the deafblind person as to the kind of communication service they require.

### **Before the Meeting**

- Inform the LSP(s) – Deafblind Manual of the duration of the assignment and venue.
- Inform the user who the LSP(s) – Deafblind Manual will be
- Where the LSP(s) – Deafblind Manual and/or the deafblind user do not know each other, arrange for them to meet at the venue before the assignment begins
- Ensure that the LSP – Deafblind Manual receives details of the assignment and/or copies of relevant papers at least a week before the assignment.

### **How to book a LSP - Deafblind Manual**

- LSPs – Deafblind Manual may be booked through one of the specialist organisations of/for deafblind people or through agencies.
- They may also be booked individually through the CACDP Online Directory.

### **Use of the CACDP Kitemark**

Some registered LSPs - Deafblind Manual may use the CACDP kitemark in their publicity material. This kitemark is shown below.