

## Approved communication supports for Deaf patients in Healthcare Settings during Covid-19

This short document is intended for use by both Deaf patients whose first language is Irish Sign Language (ISL) and HSE staff and details approved communication supports that should normally be provided in healthcare settings.

Healthcare staff have access to guides on communication with Deaf people and working with interpreters on HSE Partner Resources web page.

Healthcare staff will book a sign language interpreter, which may be face-to-face or remote interpreting.\*

Patient can bring their own smart device to facilitate remote interpreting using WiFi.

If an onsite interpreter is required (for example tactile interpreting for Deafblind) healthcare staff will provide PPE.

Face masks should be removed at social distance to facilitate lip reading if required. Healthcare staff do not need to wear a facemask if physical distance can be maintained. If physical distance cannot be maintained and the person is not known or suspected to have COVID-19, healthcare workers can wear a face visor instead of a face mask.

Lip reading comprehension can be lower than 30%, please support communication by writing information.

\* Deaf patients will normally arrange for the booking of a sign language interpreter for GP visits and Covid testing through the GP access scheme managed by SLIS. Bookings for interpreters during subsequent healthcare appointments should be made by HSE staff.