

Effective Communication with visually impaired people

People with sight loss

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Prevalence of sight loss

- Two million “uncorrectable sight loss” in UK
- 350,000 registered blind and partially sighted
- Approx 50/50 split blind and partial sight

Identifying people with sight loss

75% of 2 million show no outward sign

25% may use white cane sometimes hidden

0.25% use a Guide Dog (approx. 5000 in UK)

The experience of a visually impaired person – Part 1

- Adversity when travelling to the pharmacy
- Finding the shop front and door
- Weaving past shelves loaded with products
- Finding the queue and counter
- Making eye contact

The experience of a visually impaired person– Part 2

- Following gestures and directions
- Signing forms
- Not confident to reveal inability to read

What to do about it – Part 1

Provide text directions to get to your pharmacy
Consider visual and auditory cues on shop front
Internal layout has easy route to the counter

What to do – Part 2

Communicate with sound as well as gestures
(useful learning from performance and theatre)

Have a comms plan for white cane users

Review your comms plan for everyone else too!

Being cool often doesn't work with
blind people!

What people with sight loss want...

- “Hi the counter is just over here”
- “This label is in small print do you need a different format?”
- If they say “no” gently explain the instructions verbally and then offer again...
- “I want you to be able to read this if no one else can help – what format do you read?”

Time to upgrade your
“Customer Comms”!

Make a beeline to these guides...

- Guide: Top Tips for Visiting Your Pharmacy
- Guide: Top Tips for Pharmacy Staff

Source:

<https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/pharmacy-support-for-people-with-sight-loss/>

NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS)

NHS England's Resources page contains valuable advice and guidance as you develop your Customer Comms Plan...

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/accessibleinfo/resources/>