



Independent Hearing Care Services

Hearability information sheet

EMPLOYMENT ADVICE FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE AND EMPLOYERS

There are an estimated 2.3 million hearing-impaired people of working age in the UK. Deaf and hard of hearing people are twice as likely to be unemployed as people in general, and 50 per cent more likely to be in semi-skilled or manual jobs than others in employment. However, there are very few jobs, which deaf and hard of hearing people cannot do given the right training, support and workplace adjustments.

The Employment Service

The Employment Service aims to offer disabled people help and advice in training or finding work and it encourages employers to make work or training opportunities available to disabled people through the Disability Services Team and the Access to Work Scheme.

Access to Work

The Access to work scheme helps people with hearing loss (disability) who are looking for work, in employment already or self-employed to overcome the practical problems caused by their hearing loss. The scheme also helps these people meet the cost of services and facilities that they need because of their disability to do specific jobs. There is no age limit for this service.

The Access to work scheme provides up to 80% of approved costs for people already in employment, with the remaining 20% covered by the employer/self funded. But for new employees of less than six weeks and for self employed, the grant is up to 100% of the approved costs.

The Access to Work scheme can pay towards the cost of:

- A communicator at an interview, meeting, training course or conference for people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment. A communicator or interpreter can also help the new employee become familiar with the tasks of a new job.
- Equipment or alterations to existing equipment to suit an individual's particular needs. This can include **hearing aids**, computer equipment or telephone aids (amplifiers or textphones).
- Alterations to premises or working environment – for example, help towards installing alarm systems with flashing lights or a pager system or help towards adapting or lowering machinery.
- Extra costs of getting to work if disability prevents an employee from using public transport.

For further information please contact Hearability on 01903 237732 It is important to note that application rules have changed (April 2005) and now anyone applying must have already tried the NHS service and have a written statement that what is currently available via your local NHS service is unsuitable for your needs.

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