

Hearing Impairment



#PauseChangeShare

What is a hearing impairment?

A hearing impairment is a degree of hearing loss. It could be full deafness or small enough a degree to make certain aspects of day-to-day living a little more challenging.

Hearing loss is a problem that often develops with age or is caused by repeated exposure to loud noises. It is more common than you may think. According to the charity Action on Hearing Loss, 1 in 6 people in the UK have some degree of hearing impairment or deafness.

Some common challenges

- Telephone conversations can be tricky, particularly when there is significant background noise or the speaker has a strong regional or foreign accent.
- Hearing a telephone ring.
- Presentations when a presenter looks back towards the slides making it hard to lip-read.
- Meetings when lots of people talk at once.
- Notetaking – it's a challenge to lip-read and take notes at the same time.
- TV/Cinema – not many cinema showings are available in subtitles.

Resources

- Guernsey Hard of Hearing Association www.guernseyhardofhearing.org.gg
- Guernsey Deaf Children's Society www.gdcs.org.gg
- Hearing Therapy Services www.hearing-therapy-services.org
- Guernsey Deaf News www.guernseydeafnews.org.gg
- Hearing Dogs for Deaf
www.guernseydeafnews.org.gg/pages/organisations-groups/hearing-dogs-for-deaf-people

Our **Hidden Disabilities campaign** aims to promote positive attitudes towards people living with a disability which isn't immediately obvious. To find out more visit:



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Common coping mechanisms

Meetings – Sitting at the corner of the meeting table enables you to see (lip-read) more people; ask if someone is taking minutes for the meeting.

Telephone – To avoid asking for numerous repetitions, try repeating what you think was said for clarification, or even tell a little white lie - “sorry I am just popping out, would you mind emailing me?”

In person – to avoid asking someone to repeat their name several ask for their business card.

Top Tips

- If you need to contact someone with a hearing impairment, email or text messages are preferred over a telephone call.
- If you approach someone at a desk who is concentrating on something, tap them on the shoulder to allow them to turn around to face you before you start talking.
- When engaged in direct conversation, make sure you are looking directly at the other person so he/she can lip-read.
- If you are viewing the TV, ask if it would be helpful to turn on the subtitles. It's easy! For example on Sky, click on “Services”, select “Subtitles On” and then select the green button. For terrestrial television, there is usually a “subtitles” button on your TV remote.
- If you do need to call, be patient, articulate your words clearly and minimise any background noise (close your car window; turn off the radio).

Watch the video

Lorenzo has plenty of stories to share from living with a hearing impairment. Listen to his experiences, learn about the challenges he has faced, enjoy his amusing anecdotes and most importantly find out how easy it is for the community to make his life easier.

www.matter.gg/our-stories/hidden-disabilities/



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