

Some advice on accessibility for people with disabilities

- Booking online: People with sensory and physical disabilities should be encouraged to note their access needs (including if they are bringing someone with them, e.g. carer or interpreter) in the **special assistance requirements** free text box. This information is reviewed by the HSC Trust Vaccination Centre team on the morning of the booking.
- The teams work as best they can to anticipate the appointments over the course of the day and take steps to meet the access needs that are flagged. A quick check of recent bookings shows that some use is being made of the **special assistance requirements** free text box with people expressing their needs very effectively (sensory impairment, difficulty hearing/understanding when people are wearing masks, mobility issues, etc). Please let service users know this option is there for them.
- If a service user requires a sign language interpreter, they should follow the guidance previously circulated (below) to book an interpreter separately to the vaccine booking process. But they should be encouraged to note in the free text box that they are Deaf and will be accompanied by an interpreter.
- People are also encouraged to remember that this is a healthcare appointment like any other: they should feel free to ring the relevant Trust booking line to ask questions they may have about access.

COVID-19 Vaccinations – interpreter support for the Deaf community

BSL and ISL translations of this information available here:

<https://www.facebook.com/BritishDeafAssociation.NorthernIreland/posts/3611858615576648>

- Your COVID19 vaccine is a Health and Social Care appointment.
- Some people will be contacted by their GP surgery to attend an appointment for the vaccination. People aged 70+, those who are extremely medically vulnerable.
- Most people will have two options:
 1. book online at <https://vaccinations.covid-19.hscni.net/>
 - or
 2. book by telephone: 0300 200 7813. You can use Interpreter Now to make that phone call.
- To book an interpreter for the vaccination appointment:
 - o When appointment date confirmed, then book an interpreter in the normal way to meet you at the vaccination centre or GP surgery.

- o Be quick, request interpreter as soon as you have the appointment date, time, and venue.
 - o If you live in the Northern Trust: you can telephone the NHSCT Equality Unit directly to book your interpreter. You can use Interpreter Now to make that call.
 - o If you have difficulty booking an interpreter, you can contact your Health & Social Care Trust Sensory Support Team. You can use Interpreter Now to make that call.
- For more information about the vaccination programme: <https://covid-19.hscni.net/get-vaccinated/>