

# Meeting the Standard?

A review of the Accessible Information Standard in GP Practice



April 2026  
Thomas Carr

## Foreword

In my role as Deaf Advocate and Support Officer at Manchester Deaf Centre I receive regular requests for support around GP appointments. Manchester's deaf community faces a postcode lottery when it comes to information and communication. Some GP practice have the facilities they need for deaf patients, others don't. Or the standard or procedure for deaf patients is there but not supported in real terms.

I'll give you an example, one of our members reported recently that their GP practice understood the procedure for using a British Sign Language relay system through a mobile phone or tablet. However, it was left up to them to use their own device and therefore their own data to call up this service as the GP practice would not share their Wi-Fi login. Another example comes from GP Practice using an SMS text service, which as you'll know typically ends each message with 'you cannot directly reply to this message' and therefore makes the assumption that the patient can easily call in by telephone.

So as the lead trustee for the review of the NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS) compliance by GP practice I'm really pleased to provide the foreword to this Healthwatch Manchester report. Since June last year the small staff team at our Healthwatch have been visiting the 80+ GP practice in Manchester to check their compliance and assist them to achieve it. The NHS AIS has been around since 2017 as a guideline, but it's only been statute since June 2025 for the whole Health and Care sector. And although it's a shame that compliance is only being achieved recently, it's nevertheless a very welcome change. And not just for Manchester's deaf community but also for its learning disabled and wider sensory disabled and impaired communities.

This is ground breaking work and I'm hoping it provides the health and care sectors with the model needed to achieve compliance as we go forward.



*Toni Hanlon  
Deaf Advocate and Support Officer  
at Manchester Deaf Centre &  
Trustee at Healthwatch Manchester*

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## Introduction

1.1 This report aims to present the findings and recommendations of a review by Healthwatch Manchester (HWM). This review assesses compliance by Manchester GP Practice with the NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS)<sup>i</sup>.

## Background & Rationale

2.1 Healthwatch Manchester was established up to champion the rights and amplify the voices of the citizens of Manchester around health and social care. Where the rights of citizens are not being met, either by statute or by contractual commissioning requirements, reviews such as this one take place when local people raise these issues with us.

2.2 The AIS was launched in 2016 with the aim “to ensure that patients with communication needs receive accessible information and appropriate communication support, so they can access services independently, and make decisions about their health, wellbeing, care and treatment”<sup>ii</sup>. By law, all organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care are expected to follow this Standard<sup>iii</sup>.

2.3 In 2016, Healthwatch Camden reviewed access to GP services for people with communication support needs<sup>iv</sup>. This review involved speaking with three different groups of people who were deaf, visually impaired or learning disabled. This review concluded that GP Practice in the Camden area were not meeting the Accessible Information Standard. The following year, the work was showcased at the annual Healthwatch conference, and it was awarded a commendation for contributing to improvement in health and social care.

2.4 Through our membership of local people and the local Voluntary and Community Sector, it was understood that compliance with the AIS was poor across health and care services in Manchester. The Healthwatch Manchester Board agreed that the Camden review process was an effective tool and should be used to assess Manchester GP Practice.

2.5 On communicating this decision to the Manchester Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in 2017, Healthwatch Manchester was informed that this review was already taking place through their own arrangements and Healthwatch Manchester agreed to review Manchester community pharmacy instead and in tandem with the CCG GP practice review. It was later discovered that there had been no review of this kind by the CCG. The GP practice review work was placed on hold.

2.6 At HWM’s January 2025 board meeting, the lead trustee for people with sensory impairment formally requested a review of compliance with the AIS with a focus on GP Practice. This was approved and the review was added to our annual workplan commencing in June 2025.

2.7 In June 2025, NHS England updated the AIS to state “all providers and commissioners of NHS and publicly funded adult social care services must have regard to the Standard”<sup>v</sup>.

2.8 By meeting with the Equality & Human Rights Commission, HWM was able to clarify that:

- compliance with the AIS fell within the Public Sector Equality Duty<sup>vi</sup>
- this involved making reasonable adjustment
- this was an arrangement between the GP Practice and its patients.

2.9 There is no provision in the Public Sector Equality Duty to involve the commissioning authority which funds local GP Practice. For this reason, primary care commissioning was not approached at the outset of this review. Instead, the infrastructure support organisation for GP Practice in Manchester, the Primary Care Partnership (PCP), was contacted and invited to an early stage meeting. At this meeting, representatives from the PCP expressed support for the review and offered collaborative input as the work progressed.

2.10 It should be noted that resistance to this local review process was received from the Institute of General Practice Management, a national organisation which aims to provide support for General Practice managers. They will receive a copy of this report for information.

## Methodology

3.1 Work on this project began in May 2025 when the survey questions were drafted. This survey was passed to HWM trustee Toni Hanlon who represents Manchester Deaf Centre for approval.

3.2 It was decided that all GP Practice should be assigned to one of three groups based on their geographical location; North, Central or South Manchester. The breakdown of which PCN area represents which of the three geographical locations is as follows:

North Manchester	Central Manchester	South Manchester
Cheetham Hill & Crumpsall	Ardwick & Longsight	Didsbury, Chorlton Park & Burnage
Higher Blackley, Harpurhey & Charlestown	City Centre & Ancoats	Northenden & Brooklands
Miles Platting, Newton Heath & Moston	Hulme & City Centre South	Better Health MCR
Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw	Gorton & Levenshulme	West Central Manchester
		Withington & Fallowfield
		Wythenshawe

3.3 To ensure we had the correct contact details for all GP Practice, HWM contacted Primary Care Lead at NHS Greater Manchester Pina Renzulli who shared this information.

3.4 Before each set of visits, all practice in a particular area were told which week the review would occur but not a precise day or time. This was done to replicate the experience of a citizen whose need of AIS support from a GP Practice cannot be predicted. Our first set of visits began in July 2025, and our final ones were conducted in March 2026.

3.5 We visited each Practice once and returned to some later if they were unable to facilitate our initial Enter and View visit. We visited 84 GP Practice in total, of which 3 refused to participate in this project.

3.6 During our visits, a member of HWM staff asked a member of staff (*ideally, although not necessarily, the Practice Manager*) a set of six questions designed to assess their knowledge and understanding of the AIS. Each question has a maximum number of marks available with the total being 22.

3.7 Following our visits to each PCN, all practice were provided with an individual report detailing their findings and score as well as a document containing accurate contact details for many AIS provider organisation in Manchester. Furthermore, each Practice were encouraged to send HWM further evidence of how they comply with the AIS.

3.8 When HWM had calculated an overall score for each practice after our initial visit, we created a league table which was shared with the relevant Practice Managers. We also published the table on our website.

3.9 The league table was dynamic throughout the duration of our review as we encouraged GP Practice to submit further evidence of how they provide AIS support to patients. Any new evidence was assessed by the HWM team and once approved, we updated the practice's score and thus their ranking in the table.

3.10 All Practice were given at least one week's notice to submit further evidence by the deadline of 11.59pm on Sunday 29 March. Following the publication of this report, the opportunity for GP Practice to submit further evidence will be reopened for a specified period of time.

3.11 In the Key Findings below, the phrase 'intervention' is used. This refers to a combination of actions taken by HWM to help a GP Practice improve their compliance with the AIS. This assistance included providing an individual report showing how we had scored their responses, a copy of our AIS league table and a support document containing information about numerous AIS resource providers, including contact details.

3.12 In collaboration with Manchester Deaf Centre, Manchester Disability Collaborative, Manchester People First and Manchester City Council, HWM created a certification which a Practice may be awarded, based on their score following our review. This certification will be distributed to the GP Practice who we have assessed as compliant with the AIS. The specification for this can be found in the appendix of this report.

3.13 The following are a list of questions HWM staff asked during our visits:

- Q1. Can you tell me what the Accessible Information Standard is?
- Q2. What resources do you provide for patients who are visually impaired or blind?
- Q3. What resources do you provide for learning disabled patients?
- Q4. What resources do you provide for patients who are deaf or hard of hearing?
- Q5. Does the practice provide a quiet space / room to discuss information with patients who require AIS support?
- Q6. Does the practice signpost to advocacy services?

## Key Findings

4.1 Before the HWM intervention, a significant number (80%) of GP practice had an understanding of the AIS. Following our intervention, this rose to 94%.

4.2 Before the HWM intervention, the average number of marks received per GP Practice was 11 marks. Following our intervention, this rose to 13 marks.

4.3 Before the HWM intervention, 57% of Practice scored 11 marks or more. Following our intervention, this number rose to 75%.

4.4 Before the HWM intervention, less than a quarter (20%) of Practice scored at least 1 mark per question. Following our intervention, this number has more than doubled to 42%.

4.5 Before the HWM intervention, a significantly small number (6%) of GP Practice achieved a pass mark for compliance (*see Appendix 2*). Following our intervention there has been a (threefold) increase to 18%.

4.6 Before the HWM intervention, awareness of advocacy services was shockingly low (20%). Following our intervention, this number of more than doubled to 44%.

4.7 The appetite to engage with this project was extensive with only three practice (5%) refusing to participate:

- Bodey Medical Centre
- The Maples Medical Centre
- Ashville Surgery

4.8 Resistance to this initiative was overcome by perseverance in the provision of information to Practice Managers and encouragement to take part

4.9 New Collegiate Medical Centre achieved the highest score with 21 marks.

4.10 Wilmslow Road Health Centre received the highest number of additional marks with 13. This refers to marks a practice was awarded by submitting further evidence of how they comply with the AIS following our visit.

4.11 Better Health PCN was the highest scoring PCN's with an average of 18 marks per Practice. Conversely, Hulme and City Centre South was the lowest scoring PCN with an average of 8 marks per Practice.

4.12 In 2022, all GP Practice in Manchester were contacted by Breakthrough UK and offered training in the AIS. A number of Practice attended this training. The vast majority (90%) of Practice who received AIS training in 2022 scored 11 marks or more marks.

## Conclusions

5.1 There is a significant level of understanding of the AIS, but this does not necessarily result in compliance with the statutory requirement.

5.2 This review and subsequent support has had a significant effect on increasing compliance with the AIS.

5.3 The compliance pass mark provides a simple objective for GP Practice to achieve although there is a danger that compliance may remain at a minimum level once achieved.

5.4 Perseverance in the face of resistance to this form of intervention is best conducted in the spirit of cooperation, collaboration and overall assistance in achieving the standard.

5.5 When trained by people with lived experience, a GP Practice is far more likely to be compliant with the AIS.

## Recommendations

6.1 Increasing the level of compliance by GP practice needs to be a continuous process and the pass mark must not be considered as the completion of this process.

6.2 Advocacy services should be clearly promoted through printed resources and signposted by GP practice staff to patients.

6.3 In rolling this work across the wider health and care sector it should be acknowledged that resistance is best overcome through collaboration, assistance and encouragement.

6.4 A training programme led by local and lived experienced based organisations like Breakthrough UK and Manchester People First should be offered to the wider health and care system.

# Appendix

## 1). Healthwatch Manchester Accessible Information Standard League Table (31/03/2026)

Name of GP Practice	Total marks	Date of visit	Name of PCN the Practice represents
New Collegiate Medical Centre	21	01/07//2025	Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall PCN
Drs Khans	20	06/02/2026	Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw PCN
Five Oaks Family Practice	19	06/02/2026	Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw PCN
Barlow Medical Centre	18	06/02/2026	Didsbury, Chorlton Park & Burnage PCN
Brooklands Medical Centre	18	06/02/2026	Better Health PCN
New Islington Medical Practice	18	14/10/2025	City Centre & Ancoats PCN
The Whitswood Practice	18	06/02/2026	Better Health PCN
The Wilbraham Surgery	18	20/01/2026	West Central Manchester PCN
Fernclough Surgery	17	06/02/2026	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
Lime Square Medical Centre	17	06/02/2026	Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw PCN
Parkside Medical Centre	17	18/03/2026	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Peel Hall Medical Practice	17	17/11/2025	Wythenshawe PCN
The Robert Darbshire Practice	17	06/02/2026	Better Health PCN
Tregenna Medical Practice	17	17/11/2025	Wythenshawe PCN
Urban Village Medical Practice	17	14/10/2025	City Centre & Ancoats PCN
Willow Bank Surgery	17	06/02/2026	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
Wilmslow Road Health Centre	17	10/07/2025	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Brunswick Medical Practice	16	10/07/2025	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Church View Medical Centre	16	16/09/2025	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
Cornishway Group Practice	16	17/11/2025	Wythenshawe PCN
Crumpsall Medical Practice	16	06/02/2026	Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall PCN
Dr Ahmed Practice at Newton Heath Health Centre	16	18/12/2025	Miles Platting, Newton Heath and Droylsden PCN
Gorton Medical Centre	16	20/01/2026	Gorton & Levenshulme PCN
Manchester Integrative Medical Practice	16	10/07/2025	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Northenden Group Practice	16	06/02/2026	Northenden & Brooklands PCN
Vallance Medical	16	10/07/2025	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Ardwick Medical Practice	15	10/03/2026	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Ashcroft Surgery	15	20/01/2026	Gorton & Levenshulme PCN
Cornerstone Family Practice	15	06/02/2026	Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw PCN

Dam Head Medical Centre	15	16/09/2025	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
Dickenson Road Medical Centre	15	10/07/2025	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Simpson Medical Practice	15	18/12/2025	Miles Platting, Newton Heath and Droylsden PCN
Surrey Lodge Group Practice	15	10/07/2025	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
The Park Medical Centre	15	06/02/2026	Northenden & Brooklands PCN
The Range Medical Centre	15	20/01/2026	West Central Manchester PCN
West Point Medical Centre	15	20/01/2026	Gorton & Levenshulme PCN
David Medical Centre	14	06/02/2026, 10/03/2026	Didsbury, Chorlton Park & Burnage PCN
Drs Hanif & Bannuru	14	06/02/2026	Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw PCN
Eastlands Medical Centre	14	06/02/2026	Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw PCN
Fallowfield Medical Centre	14	22/08/2025	Withington and Fallowfield PCN
Ailsa Craig Medical Centre	13	10/07/2025	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
Cornbrook Medical Practice @ Booth Street	13	14/10/2025	Hulme & City Centre South PCN
Didsbury Medical Centre	13	06/02/2026	Didsbury, Chorlton Park & Burnage PCN
Florence House Medical Practice	13	06/02/2026	Clayton, Beswick & Openshaw PCN
Hawthorn Medical Centre	13	20/01/2026	Gorton & Levenshulme PCN
Hazeldene Medical Centre	13	18/12/2025	Miles Platting, Newton Heath and Droylsden PCN
Mount Road Surgery	13	20/01/2026	Gorton & Levenshulme PCN
Northern Moor Medical Practice	13	06/02/2026	Northenden & Brooklands PCN
Parkview Medical Centre	13	06/02/2026	Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall PCN
RK Medical Practice	13	17/11/2025	Wythenshawe PCN
Chorlton Family Practice	12	20/01/2026	West Central Manchester PCN
City Health Centre	12	14/10/2025	City Centre & Ancoats PCN
Conran Medical Centre	12	16/09/2025	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
St Georges Medical Centre	12	18/12/2025	Miles Platting, Newton Heath and Droylsden PCN
The Arch Medical Centre	12	14/10/2025	Hulme & City Centre South PCN
Valentine Medical Centre	12	06/02/2026	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
Whitley Road Medical Centre	12	18/12/2025	Miles Platting, Newton Heath and Droylsden PCN
Woodlands Medical Practice	12	06/02/2026	Northenden & Brooklands PCN
Ladybarn Group Practice	11	22/08/2025	Withington and Fallowfield PCN
Levenshulme Medical Practice	11	20/01/2026	Gorton & Levenshulme PCN
The Avenue Medical Centre	11	16/09/2025	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
Withington Medical Practice	11	22/08/2025	Withington and Fallowfield PCN
Benchill Medical Practice	10	17/11/2025	Wythenshawe PCN

Charlestown Medical Centre	10	16/09/2025	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
The Alexandra Practice	10	20/01/2026	West Central Manchester PCN
West Gorton Medical Centre	10	20/01/2026	Gorton & Levenshulme PCN
All Saints Medical Centre	9	18/12/2025	Miles Platting, Newton Heath and Droylsden PCN
Cheetham Hill Medical Centre	9	01/07/2025	Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall PCN
Kingsway Medical Practice	9	06/02/2026	Didsbury, Chorlton Park & Burnage PCN
Princess Road Surgery	9	20/01/2026	West Central Manchester PCN
The Neville Family Medical Centre	9	01/07/2025	Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall PCN
Victoria Mill Medical Practice	9	18/12/2025	Miles Platting, Newton Heath and Droylsden PCN
Beacon Medical Centre	8	16/09/2025	Higher Blackley, Harpurhey and Charlestown PCN
Borchardt Medical Centre	8	22/08/2025	Withington and Fallowfield PCN
New Bank Health Centre	8	10/07/2025, 10/03/2026	Ardwick and Longsight PCN
The Docs	8	14/10/2025	Hulme & City Centre South PCN
Bowland Medical Practice	7	17/11/2025	Wythenshawe PCN
Mauldeth Medical Centre	7	22/08/2025	Withington and Fallowfield PCN
Wellfield Medical Centre	5	01/07/2025	Cheetham Hill and Crumpsall PCN
Cornbrook @ New Jackson Medical Centre	2	14/10/2025	Hulme & City Centre South PCN
Cornbrook Medical Practice @ City Road	1	14/10/2025	Hulme & City Centre South PCN
Ashville Surgery	0	20/01/2026, 10/03/2026	West Central Manchester PCN
Bodey Medical Centre	0	22/08/2025	Withington and Fallowfield PCN
The Maples Medical Centre	0	17/11/2025, 06/02/2026	Wythenshawe PCN

## 2). Accessible Information Standard Certification

### **Question 1 - Can you tell me what the Accessible Information Standard is?**

If a Practice receives 3 or more marks out of 7, we believe they are compliant with the AIS.

### **Question 2 - What resources do you provide for patients who are visually impaired or blind?**

If a Practice provides at least one resource for visually impaired and one resource for blind patients (2 in total), we believe they are compliant with the AIS.

### **Question 3 - What resources do you provide for learning disabled patients?**

If a Practice provides 2 resources to support learning disabled patients, we believe they are compliant with the AIS.

### **Question 4 - What resources do you provide for patients who are deaf or hard of hearing?**

If a Practice provides at least one resource for deaf and one resource for hearing impaired patients (2 in total), we believe they are compliant with the AIS.

### **Question 5 - Does the practice provide a quiet space / room to discuss information with patient who require AIS support?**

If the Practice provides a quiet space / room to discuss information with patients who require AIS support, we believe they are compliant with the AIS.

### **Question 6 - Does the Practice signpost to advocacy services?**

If a Practice signposts to the VoiceAbility advocacy service, we believe they are compliant with the AIS.

## 3). AIS Information Pack for service providers March 2026

### **THE ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION STANDARD (AIS)**

From 1 August 2016 onwards, all organisations that provide NHS care and/or publicly-funded adult social care are legally required to follow the Accessible Information Standard.

The Accessible Information Standard aims to make sure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss get information that they can access and

understand, and any communication support that they need from health and care services.

As part of the Accessible Information Standard, organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care must:

**Identify** - ask people if they have any information or communication needs, and find out how to meet their needs.

**Record** - report and document needs clearly and in a set way.

**Flag** - highlight or flag the person's file or notes so it is clear that they have information or communication needs.

**Share** - share people's information and communication needs with other providers of NHS and adult social care, when they have consent to do so.

**Meet** - ensure people receive information that they can access and understand, and receive communication support if they need it.

**Review** - consistent and regular reviews of people's information and communication needs in patient or service user records and on clinical management or administration systems.

## **Easy Read**

*(Information collected May 2025)*

‘Easy Read’ refers to the presentation of text in an accessible, easy-to-understand format. Putting information in simple language with accompanying images makes information more accessible for people with learning difficulties. Easy Read is also useful for anyone who may have problems with reading and writing, for example people with autism and also people for whom English is not their first language.

**People First** offer an Easy Read translation service. Their service is unique as it is led by people with learning difficulties. People First have worked with the NHS, local authorities, government departments, funders, service providers, self-advocacy organisations and other voluntary sector organisations. If you are interested in using this Easy Read service, please contact:

- Email: [easyread@peoplefirstltd.com](mailto:easyread@peoplefirstltd.com)
- Telephone: 020 7274 5484
- Website:  
<https://www.peoplefirstltd.com/pages/easy-read-translation>

**Manchester People First** also offer a service similar to this. They can be contacted via:

- Email: [mcrpeoplefirst@gmail.com](mailto:mcrpeoplefirst@gmail.com)
- Website: <https://www.manpf.org/easy-read>

## **Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)**

*(Information collected March 2026)*

PECS is a technique that supports communication skills using pictures. It's an easy programme to follow that starts with simple pictures to communicate needs and builds to the person forming complex sentences.

PECS can be used by people of all ages with a wide range of abilities and is successfully used with adults and children.

Pyramid Education Consultants provide information and training regarding this resource:

Email: [pyramiduk@pecs.com](mailto:pyramiduk@pecs.com)

Telephone: + 44 (0)1273 609555

Website: <https://pecs-unitedkingdom.com/pecs/>

## **Colour and contrast printed materials**

*(Information collected March 2026)*

The [Royal National Institute of Blind People](#) state that some people with sight problems like to read black text on white or yellow paper, as this provides good colour contrast.

The black type on yellow paper colour combination is often used by organisations, as they believe it is what

all partially sighted people prefer but please be aware that this isn't the case and that not every partially sighted reader will be happy with this. Regardless, resources such as this can be found on their website:

Website: <https://shop.rnib.org.uk/collections/writing-paper-and-guides>

## **Video Relay Systems for patients using British Sign Language**

*(Information collected March 2025)*

New technology allows any person with a smartphone, tablet or PC to connect to a live BSL interpreter using a free app. This is an excellent back up if an onsite BSL interpreter is not available.

## **SignVideo**

**SignVideo** is a remote interpreting company offering Video Relay Services, Video Remote Interpreting and BSL/English Translation Services. Standard opening times are Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Sat 8am to 1pm, however service hours can be increased or decreased to meet the specific requirements.

If you are interested in this, contact SignVideo's Business Development Manager Jennie Forrest:

- Email: [jforrest1@sorenson.com](mailto:jforrest1@sorenson.com)
- Direct contact: 0753 5554 3657

- Sign Video Landline: 0333 344 7712
- Website: [www.signvideo.co.uk](http://www.signvideo.co.uk)

*Please note, services such as SignVideo (there are other similar companies listed in your info) are not always liked by deaf patients. It very much depends on the patient's preference and often these are used a last resort.*

## **Deaf Awareness Training**

*(Information collected May 2025)*

Deaf awareness training can be organised via **Manchester Deaf Centre**. You can call their Bookings Officer directly to organise training or make an enquiry. Contact:

Manchester Deaf Centre

- **Phone:** 0161 273 6699
- **Email:** [corporate@manchesterdeafcentre.com](mailto:corporate@manchesterdeafcentre.com)

Alternatively, the **Royal National Institute for Deaf People**(R.N.I.D, formally known as Action on Hearing Loss) offer a range of e-learning courses including deaf awareness and BSL for Beginners for businesses.

- **Phone:** 0808 808 0123
- **Email:** [contact@rnid.org.uk](mailto:contact@rnid.org.uk)

Moreover, the **Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust's [Recovery Academy](#)** offers a module of Deaf Awareness Training.

- **Phone:** 0161 938 5122
- **Email:** [recoveryacademy@gmmh.nhs.uk](mailto:recoveryacademy@gmmh.nhs.uk)

*Please note, some of these options will involve a delegate fee.*

### **Hearing Loops**

*(Information collected May 2025)*

People who use hearing aids find that it can still be very difficult to decipher what is being said when there is background noise because the hearing aid amplifies all noise and not just the voice they want to listen to. A hearing loop solves this.

There are multiple types of hearing loops available.

### **Counter Loops**

A counter loop is used in areas of initial patient contact i.e. your reception desk.

Counter loops are mains-powered and discreetly installed out of view, with only the microphone visible.

The system enables easy voice communication through such barriers as security screens, other conversations, or background noise.

Information about this can be found via **Contacta UK**

- **Phone:** 07771 955117
- **Email:** [AMayes@contacta.co.uk](mailto:AMayes@contacta.co.uk)
- **Website:** <https://www.contacta.co.uk/>

## Portable Loops

A Portable Induction Loop amplifier is another option. The Portable Loop is a versatile solution, providing movable desktop assistance for your customers where a fixed loop cannot be installed. It is used for conversations between two people.

It's a small pack and can be moved around the practice to where it is needed - including in consultation rooms.

Information about this can be found via **Contacta UK**

- **Phone:** 07771 955117
- **Email:** [AMayes@contacta.co.uk](mailto:AMayes@contacta.co.uk)
- **Website:** <https://www.contacta.co.uk/>



*(Information collected May 2025)*

## Advocacy providers in Mancheser

### VoiceAbility

VoiceAbility are an independent charity and one of the UK's largest providers of advocacy and involvement services.

- **Phone:** 0300 303 1660
- **Email:** [helpline@voiceability.org](mailto:helpline@voiceability.org)
- **Website:** [voiceability.org](http://voiceability.org)
- **e-Resource:** [voiceability.org/about-us](http://voiceability.org/about-us)

### Coram Voice

Coram Voice is a leading children's rights organisation who champion the rights of children.

- **General Phone:** (+44) 020 7833 5792
- **Advocacy Helpline:** 0808 800 5792
- **General Email:** [info@coramvoice.org.uk](mailto:info@coramvoice.org.uk)
- **Helpline Email:** [help@coramvoice.org.uk](mailto:help@coramvoice.org.uk)
- **Website:** <https://coramvoice.org.uk/>

*(Information collected September 2025)*

## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> [Accessible Information Standard](#). *Helping people to get the health and care information they need*. (NHS England). Date Accessed: 24/03/2026
- <sup>ii</sup> [NHS Accessible Information Standard: frequently asked questions](#). *What is the NHS England Accessible Information Standard*. (RNIB). Date Accessed: 24/03/2026
- <sup>iii</sup> [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#). *Section 250. Powers to publish information standards*. Date Accessed: 24/03/2026
- <sup>iv</sup> [Access to GP services for people with communication support needs: Experiences of Local People](#). (June 2016). Date Accessed: 01/04/2026
- <sup>v</sup> [Accessible Information Standard - requirements \(DAPB1605\)](#). *Which organisations does the standard apply to?* (NHS England). Date Accessed: 06/01/2026
- <sup>vi</sup> [Public Sector Equality Duty: guidance for public authorities](#). (GOV.UK). Date Accessed: 24/03/2026



Railway Cottage  
Off Castle Street  
Manchester  
M3 4LZ

0161 228 1344

[info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchmanchester.co.uk)

[www.healthwatchmanchester.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchmanchester.co.uk)

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