





# An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) on the lived experience of Deaf BSL users and NHS hearing aid services

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### Introduction

73,000 British Sign Language (BSL) users in England



Some wear hearing aids and access NHS adult hearing aid services



Little evidence exists of their experiences of these services from their point of view



They are not typical users of hearing aid services and are an under-represented group



Deaf BSL users who access hearing aid services are sharing anecdotal accounts of lack of equity



Aim is to identify what makes an effective adult hearing aid service from a Deaf BSL user perspective



Objective is to explore

Deaf BSL users
experiences of NHS
hearing aid services
underpinned by IPA



To use data from interviews to develop a survey of Deaf BSL users' experiences of NHS hearing aid services







# Methodology



Purposive expert sampling where researcher used own expert informants



BSL user, 18+, live in England, currently wear acoustic hearing aids, use NHS adult hearing aid services



No hearing aids, live outside England, under 18, non- BSL user, have a cochlear implant



8 culturally Deaf participants, 4 female and 4 male, age range between 30 – 76 years old



Design – Qualitative, semi-structured interview conducted in BSL by the Deaf researcher









Participants largely expressed dissatisfaction about clinic staff's lack of Deaf awareness



Participants did not feel understood and valued as a culturally Deaf patient

# **Findings**



Lack of person-centred communication contributed to participants' limited understanding of their hearing aid's potential



Participants reported that they wear hearing aids to make them feel comfortable, safe, confident and in control



Majority of participants do not use their hearing aid primarily for spoken language access







## **Conclusions**

- There is scope for further exploration of Deaf patients' experiences in order to build a more tailored service.
- Cultural-linguistic identity of Deaf patients is not prominent in person-centred service responses.
- The potential effect on Deaf patients of greater awareness of hearing aid capabilities is unknown.
- The findings may be applicable to other under-represented groups who are not typical users of NHS acoustic hearing aids.







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### Supervisors



**Professor Alys Young** 



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