

24 HOURS IN THE LIFE OF THE DEAF HEALTH CHARITY

ANNUAL REVIEW 2014/15



THE DEAF HEALTH
CHARITY
SIGNHEALTH

This year's Annual Review offers a glimpse into 24 hours in the life of SignHealth in 2014/15. Every hour of the day – from London to Manchester, from the UK to Uganda – someone from SignHealth is working hard to improve the health and wellbeing of deaf people.

First thing in the morning, you'll meet tenant Joel preparing to go to college. Later in the day, Frank will be helping someone with mental health problems make important choices and our Outreach team will be visiting Bill at his London home. Finally at night, read about the team from our home in Leeds as they support a deeply distressed tenant.

Providing this level of essential, round-the-clock activity requires significant funding. All our projects and services rely on donations and we can't thank our supporters enough. With your help we can continue to make a real difference to deaf lives – whatever the hour.



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Message from the Chairman

2014/2015 was a rewarding time to be Chair of Trustees at SignHealth. Throughout the charity, staff, volunteers and trustees again worked hard to improve the life prospects and wellbeing of deaf people.

It's impossible to mention everything but I'd like to share a few highlights. Our domestic abuse project, DeafHope, became Disability Charity of the Year and both DeafHope and our volunteer project Deaf Health Champions held successful conferences. Our work in Uganda was featured in Channel 4's *Unreported World* documentary series, raising awareness of the enormous difficulties facing deaf children.

InterpreterNow, our online interpreting service, allowed deaf people to use British Sign Language (BSL) to access all government services in Scotland. Since then we've launched BSL access to the NHS111 service in England and to the Police 101 line in Leicestershire.

Our *Sick of It* Report, into the relatively poor health of deaf people, was launched last year. It was published in two respected medical journals. As a result of the report, deaf health was debated in the House of Lords. We've been working to make sure that its recommendations are part of the new NHS Accessible Information Standard. Furthermore, the SignHealth website is now home to the world's biggest collection of health videos in British Sign Language.

Finally, we strengthened the Board with four new trustees - Favaad Iqbal, Katy Judd, Raj Kambo and Sue Bean. We welcome them and look forward to their working with us to drive SignHealth on to bigger and better things.

In 2016, SignHealth will mark 30 years since we started back in 1986 as the Anastasia Trust. We look forward to welcoming you all to join us in marking the occasion.

I'm very proud to be Chair of Trustees at SignHealth. One cannot fail to be impressed by the range of services SignHealth offers or the commitment of our staff and volunteers. This year's Annual Review puts our staff and clients centre stage. I hope you'll enjoy their inspirational stories as you learn about a typical day in the life of SignHealth in 2014/15.

Richard Dunford
Chair of Trustees, SignHealth

NB: The term 'deaf' in this document denotes all deaf individuals. 'Deaf' denotes individuals who are pre-lingually deaf and for whom BSL is their first language.



24 HOURS IN THE LIFE OF SIGNHEALTH IN 2014/15 >>

Whether sitting at a desk, working in the community or taking part in an event our staff, volunteers and supporters share one aim – to make deaf lives better.

Discover how SignHealth works round the clock, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to support deaf people and how deaf people feel about the help they get from SignHealth.

NB: All client names have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals.





It's 7am at one of our CQC registered care homes and Joel is getting ready to travel to college. Since coming to the home three years ago he's gained confidence and become more independent. Today his journey to college will involve travelling by Tube, bus and on foot, something he would never have achieved before.

Joel used to live at another home where he felt stressed and unhappy. At Longley Road, he's happier and more settled. Staff have helped him to learn life-skills, such as managing his money, and he's able to talk to them about anything that worries him.

"At Longley Road, he's felt happier and more settled."

This year Joel started college; he's studying maths, English, cookery and gardening. His favourite subject is gardening. He likes cutting down trees and clearing plants and, when it's colder, he enjoys going into the greenhouse where he pots plants and cleans down.

Joel hopes to have a paid gardening job one day and has already had some work experience with the council. His skills have been useful at Longley Road too. Joel has helped maintain the garden, including helping to paint the fence. He's even given Longley Road 'kerb appeal' by choosing and buying pots and trees to display outside the front door.

7AM

***Joel is a
resident of
one of our
CQC registered
care homes.***





GAM

*Frank is
SignHealth's
Senior Advocate.
He works with
deaf people to
ensure they are
treated fairly
and that their
voices are heard.*



Today I'm supporting Adam, a patient at the Alpha Hospital in Bury. He's been detained for 16 years under the Mental Health Act. Alpha is a secure hospital where I support deaf patients on two wards as an Independent Mental Health Advocate. I'm deaf myself and work with deaf clients in British Sign Language.

Today Adam has a special meeting to review his situation called a 'section review meeting'. Before it starts, Adam and I discuss a report written about him by all the professionals involved in his care.

It's important that Adam identifies any evidence in the report that may influence the panel's decision, also he needs to understand what is going to happen at the hearing. He's unhappy at first, but soon feels more prepared and knows what to expect.

Adam and I go into the hearing and I sit with him as he listens to the professionals giving evidence. Without my help Adam would have difficulty knowing what is happening. He has an opportunity to challenge the evidence through his solicitor and, with Adam's approval, I answer questions for him about his treatment.

After the meeting the panel leave to consider their decision. To prepare Adam, I inform him that the outcome looks in favour of him continuing to be detained. When the panel come back they tell Adam that this will, indeed, be the case.

I go with Adam to meet his solicitor who tells him he's entitled to go to a Tribunal; Adam decides that is what he'd like to do, asking if I will support him again at future meetings.





Deaf Health Champions aims to improve the health of deaf people in Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Cumbria. The project is a partnership of the UK Council on Deafness, SignHealth, Manchester Deaf Centre, Merseyside Society for Deaf People and Deaf Vision Cumbria. It's funded by the Department of Health and we're half way through our grant.

It's 10am and I'm going to the Manchester Deaf Centre's Over 50s group. The group attracts deaf people from all over Greater Manchester, including many of our volunteer Deaf Health Champions. It's a good way to meet a lot of people at the same time.

One volunteer has a complaint about her treatment at a local hospital. She had an operation on her elbow and there was no interpreter available. It's an opportunity to highlight the lack of access for deaf people, so I ask her to let me film her complaint.

We make a quick film to send off to a Director at Wigan Clinical Commissioning Group and the Chief Executive of Wigan Healthwatch who are collecting case studies on deaf patients.

I'm then off to a meeting with the Community Engagement Manager for Manchester Deaf Centre. We are discussing setting up gym sessions for deaf people and have found a deaf volunteer interested in helping people with exercise and managing their weight.

I then travel to support a Deaf Health Champion in Salford, who has become an Ambassador for his area, before heading off to Bolton Deaf Society where I ask the members for their feedback on the accessibility of local health services.

It's a busy day but worth it when you see the difference our volunteers are making for deaf people. Hopefully we will see some positive changes!

10AM


*Simon is
a Volunteer
Coordinator
for Deaf Health
Champions,
based in
Manchester. All
our volunteers
are deaf.*





HAM

Chris is one of SignHealth's Psychological Wellbeing Practitioners (PWP). Deaf clients can have therapy with a therapist who signs.



I'm meeting Mel at her GP's surgery – it's the first time she's ever had therapy because it's only available in British Sign Language through BSL Healthy Minds. Mel is very nervous; she's had difficulty communicating before and doesn't know what to expect. I say 'hello' in BSL and she looks really pleased.

The GP's surgery is familiar, which makes Mel feel more at ease. I explain that the focus of BSL HealthyMinds is to help people with depression and anxiety using psychological therapies.

Mel tells me her depression and anxiety started because of money problems. Worries about paying bills led her to withdraw socially. She also lost interest in daily activities such as cleaning, cooking or going shopping.

"Mel tells me her depression and anxiety started because of money problems."

I ask if she's had any thoughts about suicide or self-harm. She hasn't but she is drinking more than usual – two to three glasses of wine each evening.

We agree to start her therapy with Behavioural Activation, which tries to gradually decrease avoidance and isolation and increase engagement in activities that improve mood. Mel hopes it will give her motivation to do things such as cleaning and cooking.



We'll work on motivating Mel to do other things such as adult colouring books and walks in the park. As her confidence increases we'll talk about contacting her friends again.

I'll also signpost Mel to her local Citizens Advice Bureau and deaf organisations to help sort out her money problems. With financial worries reduced, hopefully Mel will start to take back control.



Today I'm in London at an NHS England workshop on the implementation of the Accessible Information Standard. I'm with Paul Stemman, SignHealth's Head of Policy and Campaigns.

SignHealth's *Sick of It* report revealed shocking inequalities in the health of Deaf people compared to everyone else. Medical staff are failing to listen to their Deaf patients and failing to explain things to them. The result? Poor diagnosis and treatment from the doctor and poorer health for the Deaf person.

The NHS England Accessible Information Standard is a set of rules to ensure that "people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss get information that they can access and understand, and any communication support they need." SignHealth was one of the organisations asked by NHS England to help with the consultation process. Paul also co-ordinated and wrote the views of the UK Council on Deafness (UKCoD).

All organisations that provide NHS or adult social care must follow the Accessible Information Standard by law. They will need to comply fully by 31 July 2016, having embedded them into their day-to-day practice, so that deaf people receive the same care as everyone else.

Paul and I have been working closely with Paul Welsh and other SignHealth colleagues to ensure that the Standard takes into account the recommendations of the *Sick of It* Report. We want to make sure it's as strong as possible, so that it can make a positive impact on the health of deaf people. As the father of a Deaf daughter and a doctor for over thirty years, I am aware of the barriers and attitudes deaf people face.

SignHealth are continuing to work with the NHS and deaf people to raise awareness of the Standard, to ensure it is properly complied with, and that providers are challenged where provision falls short. It will take time to improve attitudes and care, but the Accessible Information Standard is a big step along the way to improving health care and health for deaf people.



12PM

*Andrew is
SignHealth's
Medical
Director.
2014/15
has been a
significant year
for his work.*



IPM

*Rachael
is running
to raise
money for
SignHealth.*



It's lunchtime and I'm on a run, practising for the London 10K. I'm running to raise money for SignHealth. This will be my first 10K. At first running two miles was hard but I've gradually built up my stamina.

As someone living with depression, I was seeking a fitness goal for my own health. I find running a healthy way for me to process my thoughts. Once you're out there you have to keep going or you won't get home!

I'm really pleased to be running for SignHealth. I'm in the third year of a course on theatre arts, education and deaf studies, so I've gained an awareness of the difficulties deaf people face when trying to access health care. What really brought it home, though, was seeing first-hand the infuriating struggles faced by my best friend, who is deaf.

I was also really affected by a television programme in which an elderly deaf man was looking for a care home. He found a home for hearing people but, because he couldn't communicate, he was really isolated and lonely.

"I'm making my life better by helping others."

Doing the London 10K is a great way to show my support for SignHealth. It's a full circle: I'm making my life better by helping others.



I'm getting ready to make a film in British Sign Language (BSL) on calories. I'm standing in front of a screen and my colleague is looking through the camera lens, checking I'm in focus and that my hands are in shot so that my signing is clear.

Making this film is the culmination of weeks of work. I've been researching what calories are, how to check how many calories are in your food and how to work out your BMI. I then wrote a script, which has been validated by NHS Choices who ensured the information was accurate and up-to-date.

Although I'm deaf and fluent in BSL, some of the words I use in our health clips are medical jargon or are complex English, which some BSL users may not be familiar with. For that reason, my signing is always checked by a qualified BSL monitor who ensures that the signing is accurate and conveys the meaning correctly.

Once the film is edited and subtitled, it will be uploaded on to our website and Facebook page as part of our collection of 183 BSL health clips covering around 60 topics – the biggest library of BSL health videos in the world!

Information like this is vitally important for deaf people. The *Sick of It* report found that a lack of health information in BSL is one of the reasons deaf people are likely to have poorer health than hearing people.

We get some fantastic feedback from BSL users on the health clips. If we didn't do this work, deaf people couldn't access health information in their own language.



2PM

*Samantha
works as a
Communication
Researcher,
researching and
making health
information
films in BSL.*





3PM

Yvonne is part of SignHealth's fundraising team. She works with businesses, schools and individuals.

I'm at Starbucks HQ in London with Toro Manca and his team from the Starbucks branch in Canary Wharf. The team have been raising money for SignHealth by taking part in our annual fundraising event sign2sing.

It all started when Toro was working at another branch and noticed that he was serving a lot of deaf customers. He decided he could provide a better service if he learned BSL. Toro is now studying for Level 3 in BSL and has been encouraging other staff to learn too. As a result, the team decided to get involved with sign2sing. They learned the specially written song, *Joining Hands Together*, and accompanying signs. They even made a video of their performance.

Today they're sharing their achievements with support centre staff, including the Starbucks UK leadership team and managing director Mark Fox. Toro and deaf colleague Chris lead a signed coffee tasting session and teach their colleagues a few simple signs. Then it's my turn to present to the group. I tell them how fundraising by corporate businesses like Starbucks makes a huge difference to the lives of vulnerable deaf people.

It's brilliant to have the support of Starbucks and other businesses. Research shows that giving makes us happier than receiving. You can really see that with our corporate supporters. The staff have lots of fun and get involved in so many ways; they run races, take on challenges, hold team building days and come up with creative fundraising ideas of their own.

Being a corporate supporter sends a really powerful, positive message about your business while you're helping improve the lives of others. Everyone's a winner!





It's the end of the school day at the Uganda School for the Deaf, Ntinda. The children have been at school since 8am, working hard learning in sign language. Now all they're thinking about is playing and going home.

It's particularly hectic today as it's the last day of term. Children are running around looking for lost belongings and collecting their reports from the teachers. Others are crowding round the school gate, waiting to be collected by their parents, arguing and teasing one another.

"Sadly not all the children want to go home or are able to."

Sadly not all the children want to go home or are able to. Some are orphaned, others have been neglected or abandoned by their families. There is no parent to pick them up from school, instead they are being cared for by kind well-wishers. Others have a home but there is no one there who can communicate with them.

With support from SignHealth Uganda, though, the school is starting to make a difference. We're not only teaching the children sign language but also their parents and carers. And it's making a really positive impact.

The children are now happier and less isolated as their friends and families begin to understand that they are capable of becoming valuable members of the community. Being deaf doesn't mean you're stupid and deaf people have a contribution to make to society. Today's graduation ceremony is proof of this as children show off their talents in poetry, drama and sport.

4PM

***Uganda School
for the Deaf
and community
outreach projects
are supported by
SignHealth.***





*Thanks to
the support
of DeafHope
Chenelle has now
started a new
safe life.*



12

When I met Mark, my children's father, we were happy at first. After James (6) was born, Mark became very controlling and wouldn't let me look after our baby properly. He had violent mood swings, particularly when he'd been drinking.

Things got worse when Lucy (4) was born but I didn't know what to do or who to go to for help. Where could I go with two young children?

The police and social services became involved and the children were put on the Child Protection Register. I was terrified I would lose them but I still loved Mark and hoped he would change. Eventually social services said I had to choose – if I decided to stay with Mark my children were at risk of being taken into care.

In 2014 I found SignHealth's DeafHope. They were brilliant and helped me move to a refuge with the children. DeafHope assured me they would support me through everything. And they did!

"DeafHope assured me they would support me through everything. And they did!"

Although we were in the refuge for nearly a year, we were safe and settled. Now we have our lovely flat and the children are settled into schools. My key worker still visits from time to time to catch up.

The DeafHope survivor workshops were great. They have helped me understand more about what happened to me and how that affects my children, they've also helped improve my confidence and assertiveness. There is no other service that can give you the same support in British Sign Language.

If you are suffering like me, don't give up – remember you DO have a choice and can change your life. DeafHope will support you.



I'm waiting for the Outreach worker from SignHealth to arrive. They come during the week to help me manage my money and keep my flat tidy and clean. Today someone is going to have a look at the food in my fridge and make sure it's all in date.

They help me with all sorts of things, from cleaning out my tropical fish tank and walking my dog to ordering my medication. Sometimes they take me to the local café.

Things used to be very different. I was struggling with my finances. People would ring my door and ask for money. I was frightened, so I gave it to them. This had an impact on my savings.

When I met SignHealth they organised for a door camera to be fitted. Now, before I open the door, I can see a picture of the person ringing and decide whether I want to answer. This gives me peace of mind.

They helped me set up direct debits, so I don't have to carry lots of cash. My flat was full of things I thought I needed or were useful. I had to sleep on the sofa as I couldn't get into my bedroom. SignHealth helped me make a plan to reduce my collection of things.

Now my kitchen is clean and staff help me keep it that way throughout the week. I can now go to my bedroom, but I choose to sleep on the sofa watching TV until I fall asleep.

It's been a good year for me. I really look forward to seeing my Outreach workers. With their help I feel back in control of my life and able to make the choices I want.



7PM

Bill is 90 years old. He is deaf and has mild dementia. He's supported by SignHealth's Outreach service in London.





***Lisa lives in
Staffordshire.
She is deaf
and prefers to
communicate
in British Sign
Language.***



2014/15 saw the launch of the NHS111 BSL service, which allows me to contact non-emergency services in British Sign Language – a fantastic benefit.

Recently I used the InterpreterNow service to contact NHS111. The service is really easy to use. I logged on, clicked the Connect button and waited for a response. When the interpreter appeared on the screen I explained I needed to phone NHS111. She asked where I was and then searched for my local NHS area.

I found the process simple and was able to quickly establish a good relationship with the interpreter. NHS111 are known for asking a lot of questions but having the interpreter there made me feel at ease as it gave me the opportunity to explain everything fully.

I didn't have to worry about problems with communication, translating jargon or misunderstanding the meaning of a word. I didn't have to worry, either, that I wouldn't have the opportunity to ask for further explanation if needed. Having the interpreter there meant the information was explained and clarified. I thought 'Yes, I've got it.' It was all really easy.

It's a fantastic service – really great for other deaf people.





Claire is extremely distressed. She has seriously self-harmed and needs to go to hospital.

It's 2am at Constance Way, where Claire lives, and I'm on call. The ambulance arrives but Claire refuses to go with them. She becomes violent and lashes out.

Eventually, Claire calms down. I leave the other staff to look after the home and go with her to Accident and Emergency. Claire is referred to a duty psychiatrist who, after assessing her, decides to discharge her back into the care of SignHealth. He says a social worker and a member of the out-of-hours crisis team will see Claire within the hour.

So we return to the project and I wait with her. I try to help her stay calm, but one hour becomes three and she becomes increasingly agitated.

"She says she wants to return to her flat and hang herself."

The crisis team arrive and, as I'm deaf myself, I help them communicate with Claire in BSL as no interpreter is booked. They decide to admit her to hospital, but she refuses. She says she wants to return to her flat and hang herself.

The team say they cannot help Claire without her consent, so she must stay at Constance Way. I keep watch over her to prevent further self-harm but she won't allow me to stay with her in her flat. I ask the other member of staff on sleepover duty to check her every 15 minutes and return home at about 9am.

At 10.30 am the alarm is raised again. Claire is having breathing difficulties and I go with her by ambulance back to Accident and Emergency. She is put on a nebuliser and I stay with her until 12pm, when the hospital says she is stable.

I return to Constance Way tired but satisfied that I've supported Claire.



2AM

***Sue Gill
manages
Constance Way,
SignHealth's
residential and
outreach services
in Leeds.***





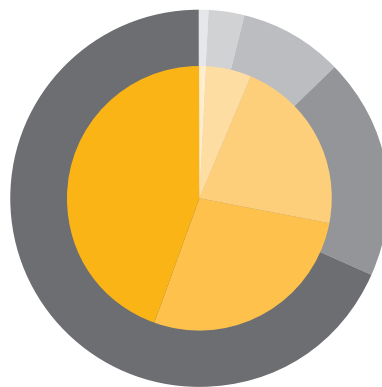
The year in NUMBERS

Income

Incoming resources from charitable activities	£3,656,995	■
Voluntary income	£1,018,617	■
Gain on invested assets	£469,074	■
Investment income	£163,563	■
Activities for generating funds	£40,294	■

Expenditure

Supported living	£2,255,129	■
Outreach, Counselling & Advocacy	£1,404,857	■
Campaigning & Health promotion	£1,094,483	■
Costs of fundraising	£285,933	■
Governance	£31,719	■



22% increase in
fundraised
income

86 clients given
advocacy
support

328 deaf women and children supported
through our domestic abuse work

1122 advocacy
sessions
delivered

Registered care
provided for

35
deaf people
with mental health
problems

97 deaf people supported
by outreach

BSL Healthy Minds has
achieved a recovery rate of **75%**



2016 will be our 30th
year of supporting
deaf people!



We hope you've enjoyed spending 24 hours with SignHealth, we're really proud of the work we've done. During 2014/15 we have:

- Helped our deaf tenants lead happier more fulfilled lives, gaining confidence and new skills.*
- Supported deaf people in British Sign Language, enabling them to make important life decisions.*
- Funded deaf volunteers to help other deaf people live healthier lives.*
- Offered the only BSL-based service for abused deaf women and young people.*
- Given deaf people access to psychological therapy in British Sign Language.*
- Ensured deaf people have equal access to healthcare and health information, in their own language.*
- Raised money to improve the health and wellbeing of deaf people in the UK and abroad.*
- Worked in the community, both in the UK and Uganda, to provide Outreach and other support to deaf people.*

We know none of this is possible without your support. We're very grateful to all the grant-makings trusts, donors and fundraisers who have helped us improve deaf lives in 2014-15.

Your support doesn't just help us now, it helps us plan for the future too. A future where deaf people can expect to have lives which are as healthy as those of their hearing peers, with the same opportunities to meet their full potential.

Your help will make that not just an aspiration but a reality.

Thank you



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