



ACCESS TO SERVICES SUPPORT SUGGESTIONS FOR ACCESS ISSUES



- Louise has been in the UK for four months and her son is one week old.
- She has one older child who is three years old; she is not in nursery.
- Louise was discharged from hospital three days after her son's birth.
- She has a low level of English. Her husband, Samuel, is not in the UK.
- Louise has received a letter about the newborn hearing check for her son.





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Print off this page. You could discuss your ideas with your team or work alone to fill the table. Check your responses overleaf.

Access issues	What support could be useful to help service users, like Louise, with each of these access issues?
Travel and transport costs	
Finding the venue	
Understanding what the appointment is for and what will happen	
Childcare for siblings during the baby's hearing test	
Accessing services alone, without support of family	



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SUGGESTIONS:

Access issues

What support could be useful to help service users, like Louise, with each of these access issues?

Travel and transport costs

- Ensure, as far as possible, appointments are made at most local clinic.
- Louise will qualify for help with travel costs – as an asylum seeker, she should have been sent a HC2 form with her first set of support payments. However this support will only provide a refund, therefore, Louise will still need to gather the money for the journey initially. Some venues have the capacity to refund in situ, in these cases, the HC2 form is needed; where this is not possible, Louise will need to fill a further form, go to the DH website for details.
- Travel information will be useful if Louise needs to use public transport: what is the bus number? Include information about where to get off – if it is written down, Louise could show the bus driver the place she needs to get off.
- Consider drop in or outreach clinics in local areas if a significant population in need exists (for an example, see the Levenshulme Roma ante natal group case study, or the outreach programme developed by McCartney House Psychotherapy service).
- In situations where the patient must travel to a specialist unit and has insufficient funds to pay for the travel, consider referral to community or non-statutory organisations who may be able to offer refundable financial support to allow the patient to make the journey.

Finding the venue

- Visual eg: map with location of building stated clearly. This could be made clearer by showing the location of the building in relation to nearby known landmark – eg: school, popular food shop etc.
- It is useful to accompany this with by a picture of the building with entrance marked clearly – and, if there are multiple receptions, a picture of the appropriate desk to approach to register on arrival.



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Understanding what the appointment is for and what will happen

- Plan ahead. Prepare patients for future information. Show examples of an appointment letter, point out key facts, listen for responses and try to give alternatives, if necessary/possible.
- Some services send an additional sheet with a visual explanation of the appointment. For example, with the hearing test, this includes clear, basic images showing three stages of the test and single sentence/phrase explanations in plain English. This is useful for people with low literacy, for those whose language is not catered for in translations, and for those who prefer simplicity to detail.
- Further translated information in leaflet and DVD format is available at: <http://hearing.screening.nhs.uk/languages>

Childcare for siblings during the baby's hearing test

- The reasons for having a quiet background should be clearly explained to Louise, through the interpreter, as they would be with an English speaker.
- Also consider that without family and/or social support in the community, it will be more difficult for Louise to arrange childcare.
- If Louise does come to the appointment with a friend who speaks both her language and English, it is important to remember that a professional interpreter is still preferable to ensure Louise and her baby receive the best possible care. The friend, however, may well provide a valuable support and should not be excluded.

Accessing services alone, without support of family

- Refer to a linkworker, a local migrant-friendly community group or drop-in centre, or an 'Access Facilitator' if available (see <http://www.bmehf.org.uk/projects/previous-projects/gpaw>).
- Good partnerships with advice centres, drop in centres, community organisations, volunteer befriending schemes and migrant-specific support organisations will help you here.
- Find out what they can do and the information they need to receive a referral/signposting from you (see the Resource Section for 'Key Steps to effective signposting and referral. Advice UK).



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Notes: