

Accessible Information Standard

Legal Duties to meet individual's information and communication and support needs

[The Equality Act](#) became law in October 2010 and places a legal duty on all service providers to take steps or make “reasonable adjustments” in order to avoid putting a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage when compared to a person who is not disabled. The Act is explicit in including the provision of information in “an accessible format” as a ‘reasonable step’ to be taken.

[The Care Act 2014](#) details specific duties for local authorities with regards to the provision of advice and information, this includes the requirement that, “Information and advice provided under this section must be accessible to, and proportionate to the needs of, those for whom it is being provided.”

[The NHS Constitution](#) also states that, “You have the right to be involved in discussions and decisions about your health and care and to be given information to enable you to do this.”

The Accessible Information Standard is building upon existing legal duties which public sector bodies and all service providers are already obligated to follow, including as set out in the Equality Act 2010. And their existing legal obligations to respond to requests for information, to reduce inequalities and to avoid discriminating against ‘protected characteristic’ groups when making decisions about the publication and availability of corporate documents in alternative languages and formats

In implementing the Standard, all professionals and organisations should take care to ensure that they follow relevant existing legal duties, including those set out in the [Data Protection Act 1998](#) and [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#) around the handling and processing of data.

For further guidance of the legal context of the standard please refer to the [Specification](#) and [Implementation Guidance](#).