A poster with a person holding a megaphone

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This booklet has been designed by members of the Hear Me, See Me Voice Groups across the East of England.

Sometimes due to being really anxious about a situation you may find it very difficult to talk to a professional about the issue you have gone to see them about.

We hope you can use this booklet which details a variety of situations to make notes of what you may need to say or ask for when you are finding it difficult to think or speak.

The information you write down in here may be useful for any situation you are in for example:

* within a healthcare setting,
* talking to your social worker
* talking to a plumber if you have a water leak
* getting ready for a meeting with your child’s teacher
* talking to your employer

We have designed it so that you can print out the page you need or you can print out the whole booklet.

If you have prepared questions to ask the professional, print them out and take them with you just in case you are too anxious to speak.

There are pages for you to write down your sensory differences so that you know what to ask for with regard to reasonable adjustments.

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Reasonable adjustments**

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There are pages for you to write down your sensory differences so that you know what to ask for with regard to reasonable adjustments

**What is a reasonable adjustment?**

The Equality Act (2010) places a requirement on public services to anticipate and prevent discrimination against people with disabilities, which includes people with a learning disability, autism or both.

***NHS England***

**Reasonable adjustments explained:**

“Reasonable adjustments are changes that organisations and people providing services or public functions have to make for you if your disability puts you at a disadvantage compared with others who are not disabled.”

***Hear Me, See Me Voice Group Attendee***

“Establishments are asked to make reasonable adjustments to adapt to their disability such as putting up a wheelchair ramp or put all notices in braille, If they have a noise sensitivity then turn off any music playing and warn if the are going to be any imminent fire drills.”

***Hear Me, See Me Voice Group Attendee***

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**My Personal Information**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Email address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**How do you prefer to be contacted?**

(Tick which you would prefer)

Text Phone Email

Other (describe how you want to be contacted)

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**In an Emergency**

**My preferred person to contact in case of an emergency:**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**If they cannot be reached this is my second**

**preferred person to contact in case of an emergency:**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**My support network** (who helps me on a day to day basis)

Example: **Name:** Family Member

**Contact Details:** Address/Telephone

**How do they help me:** eg communicating with strangers,

how to socialise

**Name:**

**Address**:

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**How do they help me**:

**Name:**

**Address**:

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**How do they help me**:

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Name:**

**Address**:

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**How do they help me**:

**Name:**

**Address**:

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**How do they help me**:

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Preparation beforehand**

**What do I need to do before going to see ….:**

Example: Write list of questions to ask when I get there

Know what the appointment is about

How long is the appointment for

Do I need to book a double appointment – request extra time

Tell the professional how I prefer to communicate with them if I am not able to sit and talk with them

Do I need to take someone with me

**What does the person I am going to see need to do before I see them:**

Example: send the information about me before the meeting

Map sent out beforehand

Clear directions

Quiet sitting area

Make sure the lights aren’t too bright

**What does the person I am going to do while I am with them:**

Example: Doctors/Dentists/Hairdressers etc – need to tell you before they touch you what they are going to do

Give clear instructions

Be clear with questions and answers

Check the person has understood them as the question may need to be rephrased

Be honest

Do not be afraid to repeat questions

Give more of an explanation of what is going to be happening

Give information in written format as well as verbal so the information can be read again at home

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Description automatically generated with medium confidenceW**hat do I need to do to make the meeting/appointment more comfortable for me:**

Example: What do I need to take (fidget toy)?

A notepad

Sunglasses

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**What do I need to do before phoning …. :**

Example: Prepare text/questions before phoning

Prepare answer to leave on an answerphone

Re-negotiating the contract with suppliers, be succinct, speak clearly – ask for it in writing if you cannot understand what they are saying

Ask person to send information to you in writing after the call

**What to do if I cannot handle making a phone call:**

Example: Check the company website for a contact email

Use the ‘Live Chat’ feature

Ask companies to send a letter/email

There can be a difference between a live chat and a Bot – the robot will not understand what you are saying and may say hello again to you.

Sometimes the Bot will pass you over to a human or get a human to email you later.

Ask at the end of the phone call for the interaction to be followed up with a letter or email so you have the information in writing.

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**About Me**

**My Favourite Subject:** Example**:** Cats, languages, motorbikes, films

**Eye Contact:** Example: I do not like to have to look at people’s eyes or have them

looking at me. When talking to me please do not look at me.

**Anything else you would like others to know about you:**

**Sensory Differences:**

**Touch**

Example: I hate to be touched/I don’t mind touch

Hospital Gowns will irritate me too much, I need to wear my own clothes

I cannot have the dentist putting their finger in my mouth

**Hearing**

Example: May find things too loud

May hear buzzing/ringing noises that others cannot hear

Ticking clock – may need clock removing while I am there

High pitched sounds

**Taste:**

Example: May find some food stuffs too spicy/salty and can only eat bland foods

Texture of some foods may be difficult to have in their mouth

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**Smell**

Example: Some may have some comfort smells

Perfume and after-shave can be overpowering

Other strong smells too can be overwhelming

**Sight**

Example: Artificial lights can be too bright and overwhelming

I wear coloured lens glasses to help me with bright lights

Checking that obstacles are not left in the middle of the walkway

Dentists may have glasses which can help you while you are sat in the chair

**Balance**

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Description automatically generated with medium confidenceExample: May need to use stairs as the lift can be hard to use

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**Movement**

Example: May trip on steps/chair legs

May need to say if steps are up or down especially for non-sighted

Not having spatial awareness

**Inner body feelings**

Example: May not feel hunger or thirst – so may need reminding to eat or drink

May not feel the hot or cold – so may need to be told to put appropriate clothing on

May not feel pain

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**High Anxiety**

**If I am anxious you may see me:**

Example: Sweat, need the toilet more often, stop talking and appear mute, go pale,

rock side to side, be over emotional (crying, angry)

If you see me starting to fidget this is a sign that I am starting to get anxious

Stop talking

**If I am anxious this is how you can help me to calm down:**

Example: Give me space – I don’t like people standing too close to me

Give me time – I may need more time to process what you are saying to me

If I have a favourite subject ask me to talk about it

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**If I am anxious this is how I can help myself to calm down:**

Example: Get to a quiet space

Box breathing – in for four, hold for four and out for four

Sensory items – fidget toy, comforter, wrist bands to flick

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Communication and Interaction Styles**

**How I will communicate with you –**

Example: I prefer text or email rather than phone call

There could be a gap before I answer a question

It may take me time to reply

I may take notes to help me process it now and so I can read it and process it later

**How you need to communicate with me -**

Example: Give me time to process what you are saying

Don’t talk too fast

Check that I have understood what you have said, “Just to clarify what I said …..”

Saying the same thing but using slightly different words

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence**Problems I could have with communicating ?**

Example: Not being able to talk without being prompted

Talking continually

Easier to talk with people I have seen before

Butting in when people are talking

Needing more time to answer, even with a simple question

Avoid jargon and speak clearly

**Problems I could have with interacting ?**

Example: Approaching people at counters

Rushing me can make it take longer for me to process what I need to do

Sensory differences

Not expecting eye contact

It can be hard knowing when to talk and when to listen

Routines changing

If you turn up late to my appointment – can be distressing

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Description automatically generated with medium confidence **Going to see a professional**

What will help me:

Example: Appointments on time

Queuing – needing to leave the waiting room but not lose place

Telling me what is going to happen

Do not assume I know what will happen without you telling me

Fidget Toys

Be there at the appointed time

Do not change the time unless really necessary, the affect it has can be really distressing

**Seeking work**

What will help me:

The government has designed this leaflet to support a person who is seeking work and who may need reasonable adjustments. It will need filling in to identify areas where help or understanding is needed:

[health-adjustment-passport.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1094407/health-adjustment-passport.pdf)

Easy Read Version:

[DWP health passport form Easy Read (publishing.service.gov.uk)](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1126370/health-adjustment-passport-easy-read-form.pdf)