



SENIOR POLICE TEAM SUPPORT DEAF CHARITY'S WORK

Three senior police officers have been working with SignHealth, the healthcare charity for deaf people in an innovative partnership scheme.

As part of their Strategic Command Course, officers are required to work with an external organisation on a specific research project. They spend a week with the company or charity and report back in detail, providing observations and recommendations for future actions.

SignHealth is developing a new service, Deaf Hope, to support deaf victims of domestic abuse. We asked the police team to look at how such cases are responded to and what practical measures could be implemented to support the development of Deaf Hope. As part of their research they visited a women's refuge and interviewed people managing cases of abuse.

The team presented a detailed summary of their findings. They found that whilst there were a number of agencies supporting the deaf community who provided information in BSL, there were no direct links to the issues of domestic abuse or the agencies that provided support to victims. They recommended that immediate inroads are made to enable deaf people to access existing services which could be done with a few simple adjustments to communication.

Steve Powell, SignHealth's CEO said "The work that this group has done will help us enormously. Domestic abuse has a huge cost to society. For deaf women, the risk of abuse is double that of hearing women, so this is a good reason for SignHealth to be involved. The Police team has come up with some really good suggestions which will inform how we move forward".

The full report and further details about the Deaf Hope project can be accessed on www.signhealth.org.uk

Notes to Editors

1. **SignHealth** is the only UK charity focussed on improving the mental and physical health of Deaf people. SignHealth has a track record of delivering change in care and treatment and in providing supported living, advocacy, outreach, counselling and health promotion, all within a BSL supported environment. Projects are located in London, Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham. SignHealth also works with service providers to improve health services for Deaf people and with other health and Deaf charities to provide health information and education. Pending an application to the Big Lottery, SignHealth in partnership with Deaf organisations across the UK, will launch the largest survey of the health of Deaf people in the UK later this year.
2. For more information on SignHealth, contact us on 01494 687600 or visit www.signhealth.org.uk.
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SignHealth is the Healthcare Charity for Deaf People. We are committed to bringing better healthcare and equality of service provision to deaf people through campaigning, working in partnership with other organisations and the provision of specialist services for deaf people. These include Health Promotion, counselling, advocacy, outreach and supported living.