

Because of discrimination, access to basic healthcare is reduced for Deaf people

It is common knowledge within the Deaf community that they experience serious barriers when trying to access healthcare. Some clinics will not accept them as patients and others won't provide interpreter services when asked, even if the patient needs an interpreter to understand basic health information.

Deaf people often receive care with insufficient communication, resulting in mis- and under-diagnosis of health conditions. Their health knowledge may be limited because they can't fully communicate with their provider. And now we know that they are right about the discrimination they say they experience.

Deaf people deserve to be accepted as patients, have full communication, and participate in their healthcare.

In a study of 445 randomly selected primary care and dental clinics throughout Idaho, simulated patients used a script and asked for a new patient appointment. Deaf patients called through the video relay service and asked that an interpreter be provided at their appointment.



Patients who can hear were **almost two times more likely** to secure new patient appointments than Deaf patients (AOR= 1.88 95%CI 1.27-2.78)



Even though all patients had the same insurance, only Deaf patients were sometimes told it wasn't accepted.

Self-advocacy didn't guarantee full access

The **more contact** a Deaf patient had with a clinic after explaining the ADA requirement for effective communication, the more likely it was that their appointment request would be **unsuccessful** due to the request for an interpreter.

Why were appointment requests unsuccessful?

