

NC Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

ENSURING MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE WHO ARE DEAF, HARD OF HEARING, AND DEAFBLIND

Webinar #2 of 3 Communication Equity: Why It Matters?

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May 11, 2022

Pre-Test Poll

1. **There are over 48 million Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind people in the United States and over 1.2 million in North Carolina.**
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. **When scheduling an appointment, it is common for Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind individual to think: The scheduler has no experience working with people with hearing loss; therefore, accessibility has not been considered.**
 - a. True
 - b. False
3. **What does “nothing about us without us” mean when it comes to working with the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind populations?**
 - a. You can make decisions on our behalf as long as you have good intentions.
 - b. Our communication needs are not solved by a one size fits all approach, ask us each about our individual communication needs.
 - c. No policy should be decided by any representative without the full and direct participation of members of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind communities.
 - d. B & C

Training Objectives for Webinar 2

- **Gain awareness of and recognize the importance of communication equity**
- **Understand what “Nothing about us without us” means when working with and serving Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind employees and consumers.**
- **How to be an ally to Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind individuals**
- **Learn about Deaf Culture**
- **What Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind value in services by providers**
- **There is not a “one-size fits all” approach to accommodating hearing loss**
- **What are best practices for working with hearing loss populations**

It Matters Because Hearing Loss is a Hidden Disability

- A hidden disability that is often overlooked or misunderstood
- The Goal: Effective Communication
 - It's a Simple Goal!
 - Achieving it is Complicated!



Everything That We Don't See on the Surface



The Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind Experience

Common assumptions related to attending an appointment, meeting, or event:

- **“The scheduler has no experience working with people with hearing loss; therefore, accessibility has not been considered.”**
- **“The scheduler assumes that it is my responsibility to provide my own accommodations.”**
- **“I will have to wait to show up, to see if accommodations will be provided.”**
- **If last minute appointment such as an emergency intake, “I will have absolutely no way to effectively communicate.”**
- **“I will have to explain and cite federal accessibility laws to convince the scheduler that they are obligated to provide accommodations and then guide them in the process of obtaining accommodations.”**

The Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind Experience

- **Hypervigilance**
- **Advocacy Exhaustion**
- **Distrust of System**
 - Can lead to victim choosing to stay in dangerous and/or abusive situation

It's Not One-Size Fits All

Hearing Loss – not all the same

Deaf

- Primarily uses ASL
- Some may use Certified Deaf Interpreter (specialization)

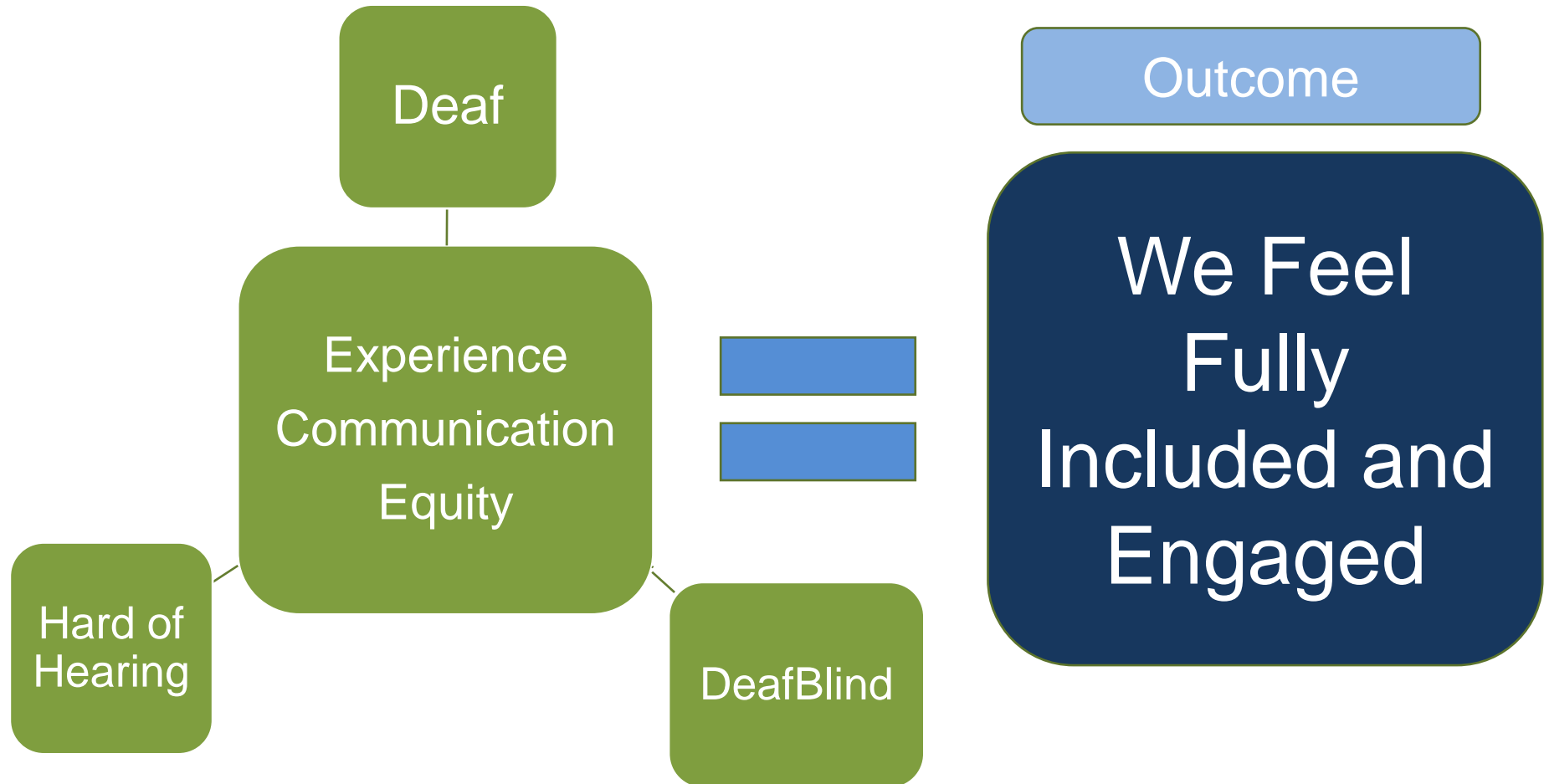
Hard of Hearing

- Most do not understand ASL
- May prefer Communication Access Real-Time Translation Captioning
- May use hearing aids, cochlear implant or assistive listening device

DeafBlind

- May use ASL, Tactile or other Sign Language
- May use hearing aids, cochlear implant or assistive listening device
- May use support service provider

The Communication Equity Experience



The Communication Equity Experience

We Feel
Fully
Included and
Engaged

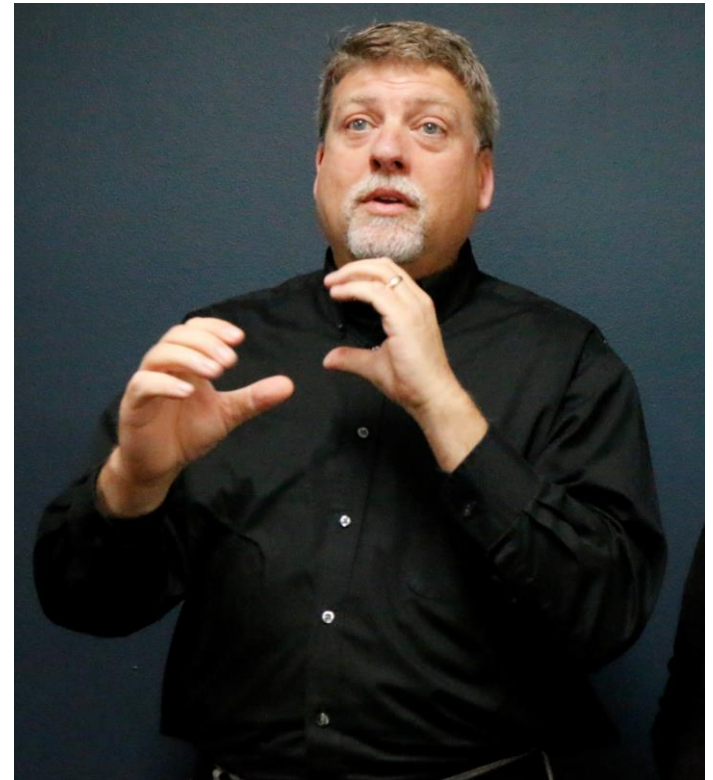


We feel a
sense of
belonging

American Sign Language (ASL) Interpreter

**An interpreter
interprets between
English and ASL.**

**Interpreting is the act
of conveying meaning
between people who
use signed and/or
spoken languages.**



DeafBlind Interpreting

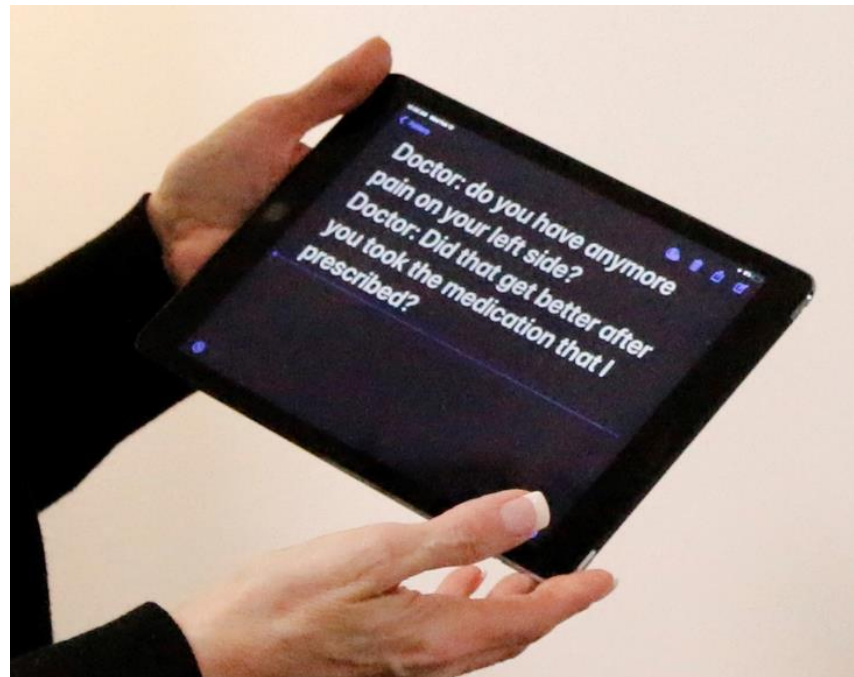
Sign language Varieties

- Close vision signing
- Small signing space
- Tracking
- Tactile
 - One-hand
 - Two-hands
- Fingerspelling



Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART)

- Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART)
 - Can provide equal access to communication for some individuals with hearing loss. CART is a real time, word-for-word transcription of the spoken language created by a live, certified professional also known as a CART provider.



How Could One Foster Inclusion in the Way One Plans an Appointment, Meeting or Event?

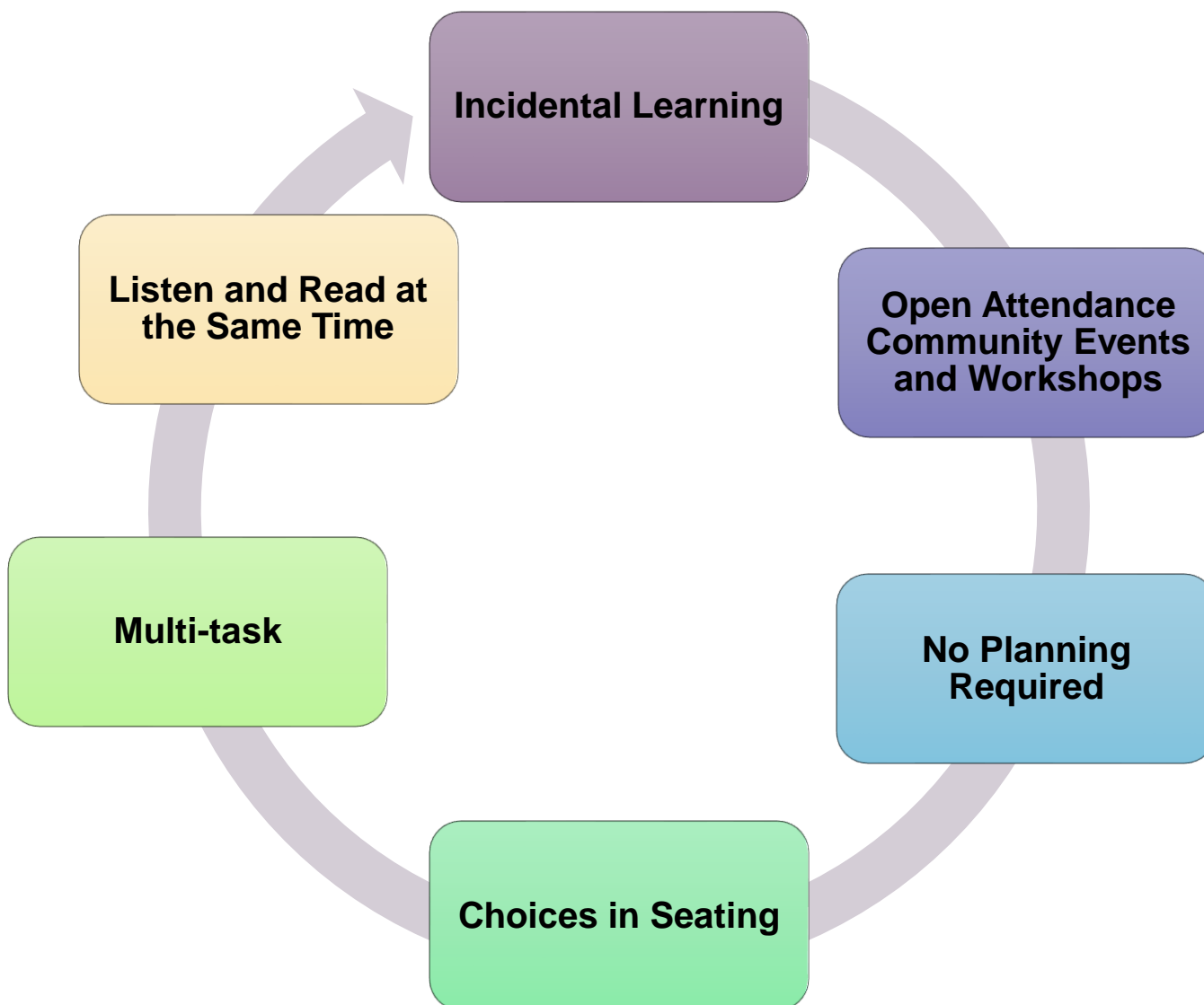
- Make the change
 - Add communication access to your procedures
 - Even last-minute meetings require accommodations
 - Have a list of ASL interpreters and CART agencies that can be utilized
 - Train your staff how to schedule communication access
 - Understand your obligation under accessibility laws to provide accommodations
 - Budget for communication access
 - Advertise well in advance that your event will have ASL interpreters and CART if requested



Do Deaf people really have a culture?

- **Has identification, social protocols, art, entertainment, recreation, attitude, traditions and values. All of these define culture**
 - **Values:**
 - Community and culture built on the shared language of ASL
 - Collective culture that values sharing information, resources and supporting one-another
 - Deaf history and Deaf heritage is passed down through storytelling, folklore and shared experiences
 - Visual communication through sign language, visual and tactile alerts
- **Hard of Hearing**
 - Typically searching for a place to fit

Hearing Privilege



What Can You Do?

Be patient

- Identify yourself
- Allow time to read documents
- Wait for the microphone
- No eye rolls

Be empathetic

- Be sensitive to advocacy exhaustion
- Include your Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind consumers in conversations
- Get to know your Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind consumers, establish a rapport

Respect your consumers

- Plan communication access – have a plan to include all
- If not sure, ask what will work best – they know what works best
- Know they can be independent – contact the right people regardless of hearing status

NC Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH)



We are NOT a stand-alone agency that duplicates the services of other agencies and organizations



Technical assistance such as training and consultation on policy, cases, and best practices for staff, including decision-makers and front-line workers, to build their capacity to serve D/HH/DB people effectively



No charge for our services

Putting It All Together

Put learning into action

- What are you going to do with your new knowledge
 - What gaps do you recognize in the current system?
 - If you attended Webinar #1 and had a glimpse of what it is like for a survivor with hearing loss?
 - What do you recognize as the biggest barriers
 - If you could change anything now (instantly), what would it be?

Contact Us

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Or call us at (800) 851-6099



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Please Join Us for Webinar #3 of 3

Communication Equity: How to make it happen

Wednesday, May 18, 2022
12 – 1 p.m.



Questions?

