

NHS Norfolk and Waveney CCG received the following query for governing body.

The answer, provided in a written response, can be found below:

Since DA Languages took the contract for BSL (British Sign Language) Interpreters we can't get to see the doctor. Now in Coronavirus we can't see doctor at all. How we ask for appointment? For 20 years it was Deaf Connexions, they work with us and doctors no problems.

Will the CCG work with local Deaf specialist organisations? Deaf Connexions and the West Norfolk Deaf Association? They work with us, profoundly Deaf people who use a BSL.

During the past few months, DA Languages has continued to provide full access to interpreting and translation services and have also made available virtual online consultations by video to all GP and dental practices in Norfolk and Waveney. These arrangements are in support of the changes made in the way that primary care services are being provided and accessed by patients in relation to the outbreak of Covid-19.

We have written out to all GP and dental practices to remind them of the availability of interpreting services and how important it is for them to use the services that are available for patients who need them. Interpreters entering practice premises will be adhering to all relevant health and safety and Infection Prevention Control guidance, and practices have been asked to inform the interpreters and patients of any specific policies relating to access to their individual surgeries.

Virtual online services are also available "on-demand" for non-English speaking patients and non-speaking patients in the deaf community and we have contacted the Walk-in Centre to remind them to use this service for walk-in patients where appropriate.