

Dear Ranjit Singh,

I am writing to express my support for your project and congratulate you on the much needed resource you are aiming to provide to the deaf community.

As a registered nurse with 13 years experience working for the Leeds NHS Hospital Trust, the biggest in Europe, it is with sadness that I have to say I feel that the trust does not provide an equal service for deaf patients. I say this, as although myself I am hearing, I have sign language skills and I am involved in the deaf community which has enabled me to discuss such issues with the deaf. This alongside my own experiences when looking after deaf patients has demonstrated to me that health education for the deaf is not on a par with that of the hearing.

The trust does provide sign language interpreters, who have a valuable role in aiding communication. However, that is their role, to aid communication. They are not qualified health education providers and may not have the required understanding or knowledge to provide such vital information.

The trust also provides written information in the form of health education leaflets etc, but for the majority of deaf people who's first language is British Sign Language, not English, understanding written English can be a struggle, thus providing information in such a format can be of little or of no benefit to the deaf.

The DVDs you have produced using British Sign Language can help to provide this much needed information in a form that is easily accessible and understandable for the deaf community.

I wish you every success and hope that your work will help to bridge the gap that exists in access to health education for the deaf.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Bird', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Samantha Bird