

Key messages of the campaign

The 'It All Adds Up' pack gives GPs lots of information about deafblindness and the support that is available to deafblind older people. Some pieces of information are particularly important. These are the key messages; the things we most want primary healthcare providers to know or to do.

- One in twenty people over 75 are deafblind; they do not see or hear well. They have both a moderate or severe hearing loss and a moderate or severe vision loss.
- The combination of both vision and hearing loss has a serious impact on people's lives and health. Deafblind older people may find it difficult or impossible to exercise, eat healthily, communicate with others and keep their minds active.
- Deafblind older people have higher rates of a range of health conditions. Sense estimates that the cost to the NHS of these additional health conditions is £365 million.
- Support is available to deafblind older people that would help keep them active, independent and healthy. This includes specialist equipment and communicator guide services.
- GPs should identify deafblind patients and refer them to social services for support. This will improve deafblind people's lives and health, as well as saving the NHS money.
- There is a statutory requirement for social services to identify deafblind people in their area and offer them a specialist assessment.

For most activities you only need to know a couple of these points. For some of the more involved activities you will need to know more.

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