

What support is available?

Luckily, quite a bit. Even if the person's underlying sensory loss cannot be treated, there is a range of support available which can compensate for this loss:

- [Equipment such as magnifiers and listening devices](#) can make the most of remaining senses, and items such as vibrating pager doorbells can compensate for sensory loss.
- A support worker, called a communicator guide, can make the difference between being a prisoner in your own home and being able to get outside to do shopping or engage in leisure activities.
- Friends and family can learn [new ways to communicate](#), which could be as simple as writing things down in large letters.

All of this should be available through social services. There is a statutory requirement for social services to identify deafblind people in their area and offer them a specialist assessment. Even people who cannot get free services are entitled to an assessment and advice about where to get the right support.

Most social services have a sensory team, usually with a deafblind specialist worker.

[Identifying the deafblind people in the area](#) is always the challenge. Older people are less likely to come forward asking for help and less likely to know what is available. Too often, they and their families think sensory loss is only to be expected at their age and do nothing to seek support.

If you identify your older deafblind patients and encourage them to seek the right help, you will improve their lives and their health.

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