Philosophy
Our philosophy balances recovery with security. As a team of Deaf and hearing professionals, we provide expertise and resources to enable service users with complex communication needs who may have a mental illness, learning disability or personality disorder to participate safely and as fully as possible in their care and achieve outcomes to support their discharge from hospital.

Model
We use a recovery model and support each service user to achieve realistic goals by accessing meaningful assessment and treatment by:

1. Establishing his or her preferred mode of communication.
2. Understanding how his/her communication style has developed within the context of life experiences and identify the factors which are likely to have impacted upon it.
3. Determining the range and level of language the person can understand and use expressively.
4. Gauging the effectiveness and appropriateness of a person’s communication with a view to better understanding challenging behaviour.
5. Determining what potential a person has to improve communication and identify strategies.
6. Supporting the differential diagnosis of disorders e.g. Autistic Spectrum Conditions.
7. Monitoring the progress of a mental illness as manifested in a person’s communication.

Diagnosis of disorders impacting on communication is often problematic due to the complex and multiple issues affecting some service users. Therapy on an individual or group basis may be indicated to support a service user to develop his/her communication skills further alongside the provision of advice for significant others on how to adapt communication to an optimal form and level. All staff receive Deaf Awareness Training and are supported to access British Sign Language (BSL) classes. The Communication Policy provides the structure for meeting a service user’s identified needs through their care pathway journey from within our Multi Disciplinary Team’s diverse skill mix.
My Shared Pathway

We believe that placement in a secure setting should last only as long as a person needs that level of care and we use the my shared pathway framework to focus interventions towards a service user’s future life outside hospital. This work addresses specific questions relating to capacity, risk and safeguarding, relationships, substance misuse issues and the level of support that may be needed on discharge. We seek to engage service users at all levels of care planning and service provision and where possible, service users participate in or chair clinical meetings. Our service has received national recognition for its pioneering work in making recovery and outcome focussed work meaningful and accessible.

Environment

Alpha Hospital Bury is a modern hospital complex located in Bury, Greater Manchester. The hospital meets the Department of Health guidelines for adult medium and low secure services and continually seeks to evolve in accordance with best clinical practices. Each service user has a bedroom with en suite facilities and a range of communal spaces including a gym, laundry, occupational therapy kitchen, therapy garden and woodland walkways down to the Elton Reservoir.

Alpha Hospitals adult services are participating members of the Quality Network for Forensic Mental Health Services.

Admission Criteria

- Deaf, deafened or hard of hearing (all language preferences are catered for)
- Has complex communication needs which may relate to deafness and/or to mental illness, personality disorder, learning disability or other developmental disorders such as an autistic spectrum condition
- Is at least 18 years of age
- Is detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 as amended 2007 and requires assessment and/or treatment in a medium or low secure setting. We are able to accommodate people who may require intensive care as a result of significant risk of aggression, absconding with associated serious risk, and serious risk of self-harm, suicide or vulnerability.
- Service users may or may not have a forensic history

Referrals are accepted on the authorisation of the responsible funding authority and in accordance with NHS Commissioning Guidelines.

To make a referral please email adultreferralsbury@alphahospitals.co.uk