



- [Home](#)
- [People and Places](#)
- [People](#)
- [People and Places](#)
- [Community insight](#)
- [Autistic People](#)
- [Learning Disabilities](#)
- [Eye Health and Sight Loss](#)
- [Hearing loss](#)
- [Veterans and ex-service personnel](#)
- [Adult Social Care](#)

[Home](#) > [People and Places](#) > [People](#) > [Hearing loss](#)

Hearing loss



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Introduction

Hearing loss can be generally defined as a limitation in hearing capacity in one or both ears. There are different causes, including genetic factors leading to deafness or inherited deafness, age-related hearing loss, sudden hearing loss, noise induced hearing loss, other medical conditions or syndromes, medication (ototoxic drugs), and acoustic neuroma (a rare, slow-growing tumour).

Hearing loss affects **18 million people** in the UK and this can have a significant impact on their daily lives. The estimated **economic cost of hearing loss** in the UK in 2019 was £25.5 billion - this was through lost productivity from unemployment and underemployment.

Facts and figures

The number of people (aged 18 and over) living with hearing loss/impairment in England is anticipated to increase by 29% to 2040, due to the increasing older population.

An estimated 29,700 people aged 18 and over in Blackpool are living with some or severe hearing loss (2021), projected to rise to 33,530 by 2040.

- 7,722 people aged 18-64, and 22,375 aged 65 and over are estimated to have some hearing loss (to 2040)
- 454 people aged 18-64, and 2,979 aged 65 and over are estimated to have severe hearing loss (to 2040)
- The highest increase for those with some hearing loss is in the 85+ age group, with 43.3% increase to 2040

People with hearing loss are at increased risk of falls, dementia, social isolation, depression, and anxiety, as well as reduced physical activity/activities of daily living.

Risks

Being able to contact services only by telephone, poor deaf awareness and a failure to provide communication support may impact on people's ability to access services, including health and wellbeing services.

NHS England estimates that the cost of people with **hearing loss missing appointments** is £14m every year.

It is therefore important when planning for local support and preventative services that the needs of people with hearing loss and those at risk of hearing loss are understood.

Compliance with the **Accessible Information Standard** is a legal requirement for all providers of NHS and adult social care under section 250 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

[↑ Back to top](#)

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