

# A3: BARRIERS TO ACCESSING SERVICES

**A barrier is an aspect of a health and social care service that prevents an individual from seeking care or engaging with the service. For example, restrictive opening times or an absence of adaptations.**

**Decisions about how to overcome barriers can be based on practical, ethical, psychological, availability and financial reasons, as well as considering a service user's wishes, needs and situation.**

Barrier	Who it may affect	Ways of overcoming the barriers
<b>Physical Barriers</b> e.g. steps, heavy doors, narrow corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with mobility issues</li> <li>• Parents with prams and pushchairs</li> <li>• Mobility aid users</li> <li>• Patients with reduced stamina or strength</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ramps</li> <li>• Wide doorways</li> <li>• Automatic doors</li> <li>• Accessible toilets</li> <li>• Lifts and stairlifts</li> <li>• Hoists</li> <li>• Over-chair tables</li> </ul>
<b>Sensory Barriers</b> e.g. loud environments, dark rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with hearing impairments</li> <li>• Individuals with visual impairments</li> <li>• Individuals who have sensory issues e.g. autism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearing loops</li> <li>• British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters,</li> <li>• Large print and braille signs, leaflets, posters and letters</li> <li>• Communication passports</li> <li>• Staff collecting vulnerable service users from waiting areas</li> <li>• Makaton</li> <li>• Quiet clinics</li> </ul>
<b>Social and Cultural Barriers</b> e.g. all male staff, discriminatory language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with different cultural beliefs and traditions</li> <li>• Individuals who have experienced stigma and discrimination</li> <li>• Service users who fear losing their independence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health education campaigns</li> <li>• Inclusive posters and leaflets</li> <li>• Choice of male or female service provider</li> <li>• Women and men only services</li> <li>• Collaboration with community and faith groups</li> <li>• Diversity and inclusion training for staff</li> </ul>
<b>Language Barriers</b> e.g. requiring appointments to be made or discussed on the telephone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with English as an additional language</li> <li>• Individuals with speech and language impairments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature in other languages</li> <li>• Interpreters</li> <li>• Longer appointments</li> <li>• Use of advocates</li> <li>• Staff training and awareness of common speech and language difficulties</li> </ul>

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**Barriers**

**Decisions about how to overcome barriers can be based on practical, ethical, psychological, availability and financial reasons, as well as considering a service user's wishes, needs and situation.**

Give examples of each type of barrier, then list who it may affect and ways of overcoming the barriers

Barrier	Who it may affect	Ways of overcoming the barriers
<b>Physical Barriers</b>		
<b>Sensory Barriers</b>		
<b>Social and Cultural Barriers</b>		
<b>Language Barriers</b>		

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Barrier	Who it may affect	Ways of overcoming the barriers
<b>Geographical Barriers</b> e.g. no local service, lack of public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals who live in rural areas or far from the service provider</li> <li>• Individuals requiring complex/specialised care from tertiary providers</li> <li>• Service users living in areas with poor transport links</li> <li>• Individuals with mobility problems</li> <li>• Individuals with limited money</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community transport schemes</li> <li>• Home visits</li> <li>• Mobile clinics</li> <li>• Community clinics</li> <li>• Online services and telephone services</li> </ul>
<b>Cognitive barriers</b> e.g. complex instructions (written & verbal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with learning disabilities</li> <li>• Individuals who cannot read</li> <li>• Individuals with low educational levels</li> <li>• Individuals with English as an additional language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Passports</li> <li>• Advocates</li> <li>• Learning Disability Nurses (LDNs) and support workers</li> <li>• ‘Quiet Clinics’ and waiting areas</li> <li>• Longer appointment times</li> <li>• Communication cards and Makaton</li> <li>• Low text ‘easy read’ leaflets</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Barriers</b> e.g. payments for services or resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service users with long term health conditions preventing them from working</li> <li>• Older adults in receipt of pension</li> <li>• Individuals in receipt of benefits</li> <li>• Service users who require regular prescriptions</li> <li>• Service users regularly travelling to appointments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS exemption certificates</li> <li>• NHS Low Income Scheme</li> <li>• NHS vouchers for eye tests, glasses and lenses</li> <li>• NHS Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme</li> <li>• Community transport schemes</li> </ul>

**Duncan is 20 years old and lives in supported accommodation. He has a learning disability and he struggles when there is a lot of noise around him. Duncan needs treatment for ongoing problems with rheumatoid arthritis and has been given an appointment to attend a specialist clinic at a hospital in the next town.**

**Apply it:**

**What sensory and geographical barriers could Duncan face?**

As Duncan struggles with noise, he could face challenges in travelling to the specialist clinic, especially if he needs to take public transport or walk through busy areas with traffic or construction noise. Additionally, if the clinic itself is noisy, this could cause anxiety and discomfort for Duncan during his appointment.

As the hospital is in the next town, Duncan may face challenges in accessing transportation to get there, especially if he does not have a car or access to one. He may also face challenges finding his way to the hospital if he is unfamiliar with the area or if there are physical barriers such as hills, stairs, or uneven pavements that make it difficult for him to walk.

**Apply it:**

**How can these barriers be overcome?**

Duncan could wear noise-cancelling headphones or earplugs during his travel to the clinic and whilst waiting for his appointment. The clinic could also provide a quiet and calm waiting area for patients who have sensory issues.

Duncan could use a community transport service that caters for individuals with disabilities or sensory issues. Alternatively, he could be accompanied by a support worker who could assist him in finding his way to the clinic and provide emotional support during the appointment.

The clinic could also provide clear and detailed instructions on how to get to the hospital and provide accessible entrances or parking spots that would be suitable for individuals with mobility issues.

**Apply it:**

**Justify how you have chosen to overcome one of Duncan’s barriers**

Using noise-cancelling headphones or earplugs is a good way of overcoming sensory barriers for Duncan as he has control over when he chooses to use these. Not only is it a low-cost solution but it will empower Duncan as he has control and flexibility to use them as and when he chooses to do so.

Having a quiet area in the hospital creates inclusivity. It ensures equality of opportunity for people who may otherwise struggle to attend appointments, demonstrating anti-discriminatory practice. It is also cost-effective as it will reduce the number of missed appointments. By creating an inclusive environment, care providers can reduce the stigma and isolation that individuals with disabilities or sensory issues may feel, promoting better health outcomes overall.

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Give examples of each type of barrier, then list who it may affect and ways of overcoming the barriers

Barrier	Who it may affect	Ways of overcoming the barriers
<b>Geographical Barriers</b>		
<b>Cognitive Barriers</b>		
<b>Financial Barriers</b>		

**Duncan is 20 years old and lives in supported accommodation. He has a learning disability and he struggles when there is a lot of noise around him. Duncan needs treatment for ongoing problems with rheumatoid arthritis and has been given an appointment to attend a specialist clinic at a hospital in the next town.**

**Apply it:**

Write a paragraph on: **What sensory and geographical barriers could Duncan face?**

**Apply it:**

Write a paragraph on: **How can these barriers be overcome?**

**Apply it:**

Write a paragraph on: **Justify how you have chosen to overcome one of Duncan's barriers**