



NORTH CAROLINA Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Handling relay service phone calls with Patients that have Hearing Loss

You may need to place or receive calls to/from Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind patients who use relay service, which is a third-party communication bridge similar to professional language interpretation services. A relay operator will facilitate communication between you and the caller with hearing loss. There may be some time delay in passing messages between the two parties that are communicating. Some callers may prefer to communicate with you by using their voice while others use a relay operator to voice for them.



Tips for Effective Communication:

- Some relay operators will announce that you are receiving a relay call and some will not. A delay of a few seconds in hearing a voice on the phone is normal.
- Be aware that there may be a short delay in order to allow the relay operator to facilitate messages between you and the patient, so please do not hang up thinking the delay is due to a solicitation call.
- Please be patient waiting for a response from the relay operator.
- Relay operators can be of any gender. Do not be suspicious if the voice you hear is opposite from the caller's gender.
- Speak directly to a patient like you would talk to any patient. Do not say "tell her/him"
- Some relay service calls require taking turns throughout the call. The relay operator will say the words "go-ahead" when it's your turn to speak. When you are done speaking, say "go-ahead" back to the relay operator.

