

Preparing students in healthcare education programs to support Deaf and hard of hearing patients' unique needs is of utmost importance.

Here are **five** reasons your program should maximize these types of learning opportunities for your students.



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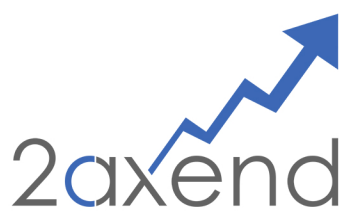
There are an estimated 48 million Deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the United States.¹



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As the Deaf and hard of hearing community is significantly diverse, trainings can equip future healthcare professionals with tools and strategies to meet community members' individual linguistic, cultural and social needs.



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Compared to the hearing population, Deaf and hard of hearing individuals have higher levels of health disparities and knowledge gaps in preventative health.^{2, 3, 4}



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Trainings can help students understand how communication and language barriers, mistrust of healthcare providers and social marginalization can impact Deaf and hard of hearing patients' clinical experiences and outcomes.



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Deaf and hard of hearing individuals often consider themselves as a part of a linguistic and cultural minority, not as disabled individuals.⁵



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Separate from trainings on the etymology of the ears, Deaf cultural competency trainings may improve provider-patient communication and collaboration, increase patient satisfaction and enhance patient adherence.



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Recent studies showed students in healthcare education programs reported having little to no previous exposure to Deaf and hard of hearing individuals.^{6, 7, 8}



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As students may have unconscious or hidden biases that result from stereotypes and unfair assumptions, trainings can positively impact students' attitudes towards Deaf and hard of hearing individuals and, ultimately, increase their capacity to care for these individuals.



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A number of lawsuits filed by Deaf and hard of hearing individuals against healthcare systems indicate healthcare providers are not familiar with their legal obligations to ensure effective communication takes place in clinical settings.⁹



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Trainings on the breadth of legal requirements can increase students' sensitivity to the variety of issues that Deaf and hard of hearing individuals face in clinical settings, as well as their understanding of potential legal implications for providers.



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The need for trainings
designed to prepare
your students to support
Deaf and hard of
hearing patients' needs
is undeniable.



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When comprehensive learning opportunities are integrated within your curriculum, everyone within your program – from students to faculty and staff – will be best positioned to deliver patient-centric care to Deaf and hard of hearing individuals.



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