

Help your clients stay connected

Do you have clients or patients who find it hard to use the phone because they are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment?

You might be providing them with support services or with information about a range of issues. Or you might be referring them to another organisation.

Some people – especially if their speech or hearing has become impaired later in life – lose contact with the outside world.

They are isolated and have trouble doing ordinary things, like phoning a friend, contacting the bank, booking a taxi, ringing the doctor or organising a plumber.

They can sometimes be reluctant to admit to their hearing loss or the severity of their speech difficulties and feel embarrassed about asking friends or family to make calls for them.

It may even be hard for you to contact them because they feel unable to take or make phone calls.

The National Relay Service helps your clients stay connected

The relay service helps your clients to:

- retain their social and business networks
- make new contacts
- maintain their independence and self-confidence
- contact agencies and employers.

The National Relay Service also makes it easier for family, friends, you, other services, businesses and government departments to keep in touch with your clients.

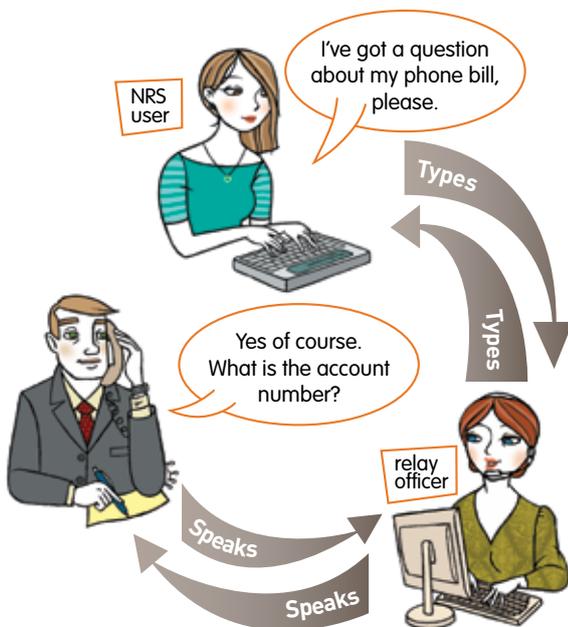
Making a call is easy

The National Relay Service:

- is straightforward to use – thousands of people use the service every week
- usually costs no more than a local phone call
- is staffed by professional relay officers who are obliged by law to observe the strictest levels of confidentiality.

How it works

When your client make a call through the National Relay Service (NRS) there will be a person in the middle of the call known as a 'relay officer'. Relay officers are the central link in the phone call. They relay exactly what is said by both parties. They are there to help a call go smoothly, but do not change or interfere with what is being said.



Above, the NRS user types their side of the conversation and reads the responses on their TTY or computer. There are variations in call options, depending on the hearing or speech abilities of the NRS user.

The idea of relaying a conversation through a third party can seem a bit daunting at first. But it's surprising how quickly people who use the service find that relay officers become 'invisible'. Your client simply contacts an NRS number to start the call. They can ring anyone, anywhere, 24 hours a day.

And of course a person whose speech and hearing are fine, who wants to ring someone with an impairment, can do so simply by calling the relay service on an ordinary phone or mobile.

Some basic equipment

NRS users, depending on their needs, will use one of eight different call options provided by the NRS.

Three of these options require a computer, tablet or smartphone with an internet connection. SMS relay only requires a mobile phone, and Speak and Listen, only an ordinary phone.

Three other call options require a TTY which is a phone with a small keyboard and screen that allows the user to type a message and read what is being said in reply. It is straightforward to use and in most cases can be rented for the same cost as an ordinary phone.

Not just for deaf people

Your client might have had a stroke or have a disability such as cerebral palsy which means they have difficulty speaking on the phone.

The relay officer, who is experienced in listening to people with speech impairments or synthetic speech programs, can re-speak all or part of what your client says to the other person as needed. The presence of the relay officer on the line helps remove the tension for your client when they make the call.

In an emergency

The NRS includes a dedicated text-based emergency phone relay service for TTY users with direct access to the police, fire brigade and ambulance. The relay officer helps your client call the appropriate service and stays on the line during the call.

Other NRS users who don't use a TTY can call the Triple Zero (000) emergency service through the NRS.

Connecting your client to the National Relay Service

Discuss the NRS with your client.

Contact us by:

- phone: **1800 555 660**
(Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm Eastern Standard Time)
- email: **helpdesk@relayservice.com.au**
- SMS: **0416 001 350**
- mail: Level 2, 10 Mallett Street, Camperdown NSW 2050

See our website www.relayservice.gov.au for a wide range of information about relay calls.

We can:

- give you more information about the service and equipment that might be needed
- tell you about our **free** information and training sessions
- send brochures and other information to anyone you feel could benefit from the service
- deal directly with your client if you prefer that.

The National Relay Service is an Australian Government initiative funded by a levy on eligible telecommunications carriers.



An Australian Government Initiative



A phone solution for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment
www.relayservice.gov.au