



**incus**

**A standard in  
sensory inclusion  
for care providers**



Incus is a DSN initiative

# Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Welcome to the project	3
The need for incus	4
Supporting older people with sensory impairment in care	
The incus programme	6
Registration	
Self-Assessment	
In-house training	
Environmental audit	
Award	
Award criteria	8
Associated costs for enrolling your home into incus	10
Incus learning resources	11

## Acknowledgements

This scheme was designed and implemented by members of the incus task force, DSN.

Many other individuals and organisations have contributed significantly to bringing the incus vision to life. Thanks go to the following:

- Jane Green, COO Casicare (Former registered manager Thornton Manor)
- Kerry Fisher, registered manager Curzon House

# Welcome to the project

Incus, a DSN initiative, is a research-led accreditation programme that enables commissioners and care providers across various settings to demonstrate, measure and celebrate their commitment to sensory inclusion.

As sensory impairments may cause difficulties with communication, access to information and activities of daily living, DSN is here to provide practical help, advice, and specialist support to foster independence and prevent or reduce loneliness and isolation. Visit our website: [dsnonline.co.uk](https://dsnonline.co.uk)

This guide provides commissioners and providers with a detailed overview to the various aspects of the incus programme. This is not an exhaustive manual but we do highlight the key areas of importance.

**“I found the training very helpful and it will help me to help others in my care”**

LE, Care worker



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# The need for incus – supporting older people with sensory impairment in care

The 2019 Care England report estimated that 418,000 people in England were living in care, a statistic that has and will inevitably continue to rise steeply as longevity increases.

At least 75% of those currently in care will have a hearing impairment, 50% a visual impairment and over 70% will have some form of cognitive impairment. Financial and staffing pressures coupled with an emphasis on the provision of nursing care has led to the needs of this growing sector being underserved and often overlooked.


Sensory impairment exacerbates social isolation and loneliness, damaging mental health and reducing quality of life [1, 2].

Furthermore, it is associated with increased risk of depression, stroke, hypertension, dementia, frailty, falls and early mortality [3-6].

## Barriers to good hearing and vision health in care homes include [7]:

- Poor identification of sensory loss
- Poor management of sensory loss
- Lack of staff awareness and training
- Problems with assistive devices
- Environmental issues

- 
1. Shukla, A., et al., Hearing Loss, Loneliness, and Social Isolation: A Systematic Review. *Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg*, 2020. 162(5): p. 622-633.
  2. Chia, E.M., et al., Association between vision and hearing impairments and their combined effects on quality of life. *Arch Ophthalmol*, 2006. 124(10): p.1465-70.
  3. Kamil, R.J., et al., Association of Hearing Impairment With Incident Frailty and Falls in Older Adults. *J Aging Health*, 2016. 28(4): p. 644-60.
  4. Livingston, G., et al., Dementia prevention, intervention, and care: 2020 report of the Lancet Commission. *Lancet*, 2020.
  5. Gopinath, B., et al., Hearing and vision impairment and the 5-year incidence of falls in older adults. *Age Ageing*, 2016.
  6. Mitoku, K., et al., Vision and hearing impairments, cognitive impairment and mortality among long-term care recipients: a population-based cohort study. *BMC Geriatrics*, 2016. 16(1): p. 112.
  7. Andrusjak, W., A. Barbosa, and G. Mountain, Identifying and Managing Hearing and Vision Loss in Older People in Care Homes: A Scoping Review of the Evidence. *Gerontologist*, 2020. 60(3): p. e155-e168.



**“Whilst we cannot officially endorse care providers to obtain incus – we strongly support it and will look highly upon those homes who chose to demonstrate person-centred care through this programme”**

CQC inspector, North West



**Undertaking the incus programme demonstrates that you are committed to person-centred care. We will help you and the care staff to recognise:**

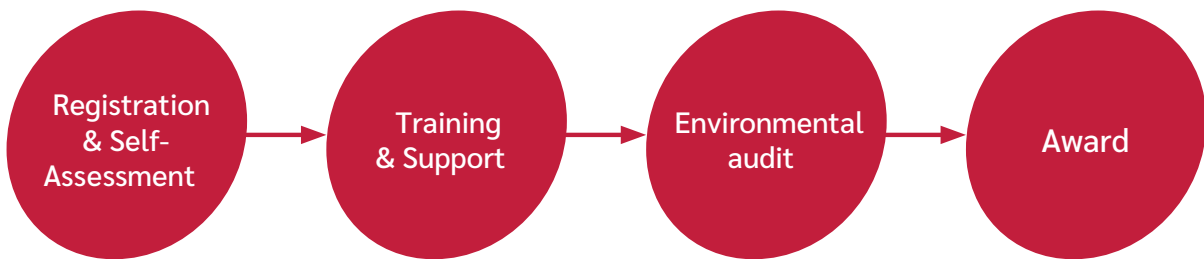
- Are people with sensory impairments **SAFE**?
- Are your services **EFFECTIVE** for people with sensory impairment?
- Do you **CARE** for people with sensory impairment and treat them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect?
- Are your services **RESPONSIVE TO THE NEEDS** of people with sensory impairment?

# The incus programme

Attaining incus enables participating providers to demonstrate and evidence their achievement in enhancing awareness, improving knowledge and building new skills to meet the specific needs of those with sensory impairment.

Cost-effective and convenient, achieving incus is a four stage process.

The incus team will support you through every stage of the process including undertaking tailored training modules and an audit process:



## Registration & Self-Assessment

Registration is a straightforward process that can be undertaken by email, telephone or face-to-face with an incus team member.

An information pack including an easy-to-complete self-assessment will be sent to the nominated person. Once the completed forms have been returned, they will be reviewed by the incus team to identify gaps in skills and technological support and recommend appropriate training and other solutions, and personalised costs will be discussed.

On enrolment, basic information about your care home will be collected, self-assessment forms will be sent out and personalised costs discussed.

## Training & Support

Training is tailored to the needs of the team and the client profile. However, incus module 1 'Sensory awareness in care' is seen as essential and is delivered on completion of the enrolment process.

Other modules are listed on page 11 - 'Incus learning modules'. In addition to our face-to-face training, you will have access to our online training portal to access resources.

## Environmental audit

Approximately 4-8 weeks after the last training session has been delivered, an environmental audit will be booked. The award criteria for inspection is described on pages 8-9. The audit takes approximately 1-2 hours to complete, although this can vary depending on the nature and size of the care home.

Up to five members of the operational team will be chosen at random to complete a 5-minute questionnaire.

## Award

Following the audit and together with information collated by the incus team along the way, an award for the level of incus will be decided upon.

The client will be notified of their awarded standard of accreditation – GOLD, SILVER or BRONZE - within two weeks of the audit and inspection. A framed certificate will be presented, which can be upgraded to a plaque.

The award is valid for two years, where we will offer ongoing support and access to our training portal.

**“I found the entire course most useful. It really increased my knowledge”**

BL, Care worker

# Award criteria

## What you need to do:

To achieve each level of the award you will have to provide evidence to show you have met each of the criteria associated with that level.

For each level, you must meet all the following criteria:

Area	Criteria	Criteria for BRONZE	Criteria for SILVER	Criteria for GOLD
Care skills & services	Have an enhanced awareness and understanding about sensory loss in the care environment	✓	✓	✓
	Actively help residents to maintain corrective devices	✓	✓	✓
	Link with external services (audiology, optometry) for optimising sensory health (including ear-wax removal, low vision assessments)		✓	✓
	All activities should be fully inclusive for people with sensory impairment		✓	✓
	Understanding the links between concurrent sensory and cognitive impairments (dementia)			✓
Policies	Understand how sensory loss can affect safety of residents and ensuring health & safety policies are updated to reflect this	✓	✓	✓
	All residents are asked about sensory needs on admission and annually	✓	✓	✓
	Development of communication support plan for each resident		✓	✓
	All residents receive screening for sensory impairment			✓
	Identify a sensory champion, responsible for ensuring sensory needs of residents are met			✓



**“As a result of the incus training, our staff have been trained to approach sensory loss issues with specialist techniques. We have installed new equipment and ensure that all our residents have regular hearing tests so we can identify those who need more support. We’re already seeing some good results. We have improved people’s listening experience and helped with their overall communication. We’ve noticed that people are joining in with more activities and interacting better with their relatives.”**

Catherine Moore, Chapel House care

Area	Criteria	Criteria for BRONZE	Criteria for SILVER	Criteria for GOLD
Communication	Understand and practice the “Do’s and Don’ts” for good communication	✓	✓	✓
	Support and enhance communication between residents and staff to promote social inclusion		✓	✓
	Understand the cultural and communication needs of the Deaf community			✓
Environmental Adaptations	Provide residents with options for enhancement by assistive devices	✓	✓	✓
	Understand how simple environmental changes can promote inclusion	✓	✓	✓
	Undertake comprehensive & thorough environmental adaptations to reduce distress and promote inclusion in all areas		✓	✓
	Provide assistive technology (loop systems & low vision aids) to promote inclusion in all areas, including communal lounges and office spaces			✓

# Associated costs for enrolling your home into incus

The costs are tailored to your care home according to the size and the number of staff working with you. For up to date prices, please see our website ([www.dsnincus.co.uk](http://www.dsnincus.co.uk)) or contact us at [incus@dsnonline.co.uk](mailto:incus@dsnonline.co.uk)

The basic enrolment fee includes:

- Full briefing of incus programme
- Self-assessment form sent out, and once returned a tailored programme for incus for your home
- Sensory awareness in care (x4 sessions) with personalised certification for staff\*
- Any other required training & support
- Environmental audit
- Certification for the overall award
- Ongoing support for the duration of your award (2 years)

Further training and support can also be purchased, for the full list please see incus 'learning resource-modules' on page 11. The associated costs for additional modules will be discussed with the individual care home.

We would be happy to discuss additional discounts for homes that chose to purchase two or more different modules.



\*Depending on the size of your home and number of staff, you may require additional sensory awareness in care training sessions in which case, enrolment fees may be slightly higher.

# Incus learning resources

To help you to achieve the desired award level, we have devised some additional training and resources that can be purchased for homes enrolled on the incus scheme. These are as follows:

Title	Module type	Description
Sensory awareness in care	In-house training and access to training portal	This training session covers everything from understanding the most common causes of sensory loss, what it is like to live with sensory loss and how we can help support residents in the care environment.
Equipment & the environment	In-house training with short appraisal of premises and access to training portal	This hands-on hybrid session covers equipment from hearing aids to loop systems – why you need them, how to maintain them and support residents to use them, as well as simple environmental aspects to support safety, good communication and wellbeing.
Introduction to the Deaf community & British Sign Language – in care	In-house training and access to training portal	This training will introduce Deaf culture, so staff are able to best support Deaf individuals who use British Sign Language (BSL) as their preferred means of communication.
Basic sign language in care	In-house training (3 x 2-hour sessions)	This 3-week course designed for homes supporting resident(s) who use BSL. We will work with you and the resident to get staff up to date on basic signs needed to communicate. Full BSL training is also available through DSN.
Sighted guide	In-house training	This practical course covers how to support individuals who are blind or visually impaired to help them to travel safely throughout the environment.
Developing a comprehensive care & communication plan	One-to-one (1.5 hours admin / 1.5 hours working together)	A member of the incus team will work with management to ensure a comprehensive care and communication plan to suit your home and your residents' needs.
Sensory loss & dementia	In-house training and access to training portal	This training session will highlight innovative research on the links between sensory loss and dementia, and how to best support residents living with dual or triple conditions.

Note: One training session is a half day and covers a maximum of 15 people. Two sessions can be booked on one day to accommodate more staff and reduce travel costs. Travel will be charged at £0.45 per mile.



**incus**



**Please get in touch with us to discuss  
enrolling your home onto incus**

**0333 220 5050**

**[incus@dsnonline.co.uk](mailto:incus@dsnonline.co.uk)**

**[www.dsnincus.co.uk](http://www.dsnincus.co.uk)**

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