

## **Lámh (<https://www.activelink.ie/node/1325>)**

Lámh is the manual sign system used by children and adults with intellectual disability and communication needs in Ireland. Some people use Lámh as their main way of communicating, while others use Lámh signs along with speech and other methods of communication. Lámh is a type of augmentative or alternative communication.

Lámh signs are based on Irish Sign Language and natural gesture. Speech is always used with Lámh signs and only key words in a sentence are signed. There are 500 Lámh signs.

Lámh was developed in the early 1980s in order to have a standardised, Irish-based manual sign system for those with intellectual disabilities and communication needs. It is now used by many people throughout Ireland in their daily home, education and work settings.

Courses in Lámh have been developed for families and staff members. Lámh training not only covers the mechanics of learning to make the signs but the necessary background to implementing a signing programme with children and adults. Lámh Tutors include speech and language therapists, teachers, nurses and other professionals, and training programmes are organised locally in services.

Lámh is grant aided by the Health Service Executive. Lámh is endorsed by the Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists and Down Syndrome Ireland. Lámh Training is recognised by the Department of Education.

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