



## How to assist people with communication difficulties

These are some tips that are important to remember when assisting someone who has communication difficulties.

- Be patient, this can be a very difficult part of their rehabilitation.
- Slow down and talk in short, clear sentences.
- Ensure that people talk to the person only 'one at a time'.
- When starting to speak – give the person time to tune in.
- Touch the person and pause.
- Say their name first.
- Ask direct questions that can be answered with a 'yes' or 'no'.  
Example: *"Would you like a cup of tea?"*
- Use words like who, what, where and when.  
Example: *"Where is your toothbrush?"*
- Don't shout at the person - they are not deaf!
- Place the key word at the end of the sentence.  
Examples:
  - *"Do you want your dinner?"*
  - *"It is time for your bath?"*
  - *"You have a visitor - it is Tony."*
  - *"Shall we go to your car?"*
- Give the person plenty of time to answer.
- Never assume that the person is not trying.
- Never talk about the person in their presence as if they are not there.
- When someone is fatigued, their communication difficulties may be more pronounced.
- Try to ignore outbursts of anger, weeping, laughing or swearing – some people may not be able to control this.
- If the person becomes frustrated, be honest, and try another way to get the message they are trying to give you.
- Set up a simple communication process (if possible) using questions that require a yes or no answer or use gestures – thumbs up, thumbs down.

# Communication Tips



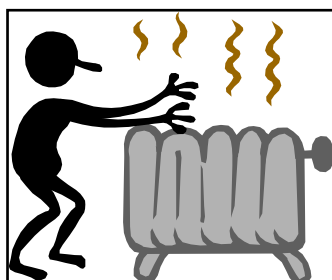
## Develop a Communication Chart

- Use a simple communication chart which you can set up yourself using picture to depict words

## Feelings.....



**I AM IN PAIN**

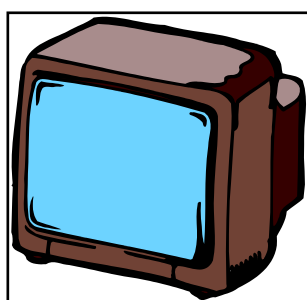


**I AM HOT**

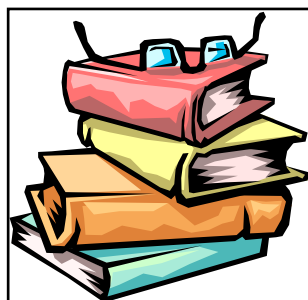


**I AM COLD**

## How you can help me, I want....



**TELEVISION**



**READ**



**GLASSES**

## How do I find a Speech Pathologist?

### Speech Pathology Australia

Speech Pathology Australia is the national peak body for the speech pathology profession in Australia. Speech pathologists are university trained allied health professionals with expertise in the assessment and treatment of communication and/or swallowing difficulties. They can be contacted through their website - [speechpathologyaustralia.org.au](http://speechpathologyaustralia.org.au)

**For Further assistance and/or to join a speech practice Group**

Contact Stroke Recovery Association

Telephone: 1300 650 594

