



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.

PLEASE TURN OVER





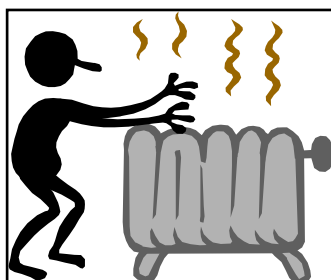
Develop a Communication Chart

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

Feelings.....



I AM IN PAIN

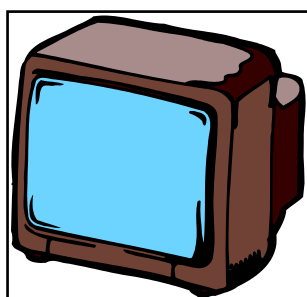


I AM HOT

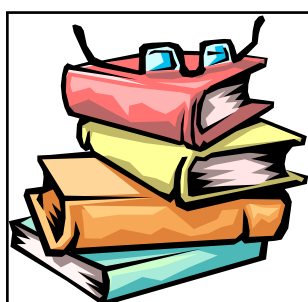


I AM COLD

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

For further assistance and/or to join a speech practice group

Contact Stroke Recovery Association:

Telephone: 1300 650 594