



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Communication tips

Suggestions to make
everyday listening easier

This leaflet will provide you with tips to help make everyday communication that bit easier.

Communication tips: if you have a hearing difficulty

- Be open. Tell others that you have difficulty hearing.
- Ask people to get your attention before they start talking to you.
- Keep the speaker's face clearly visible and in the light.
- Use visual clues, e.g. lip patterns, gestures and facial expressions.
- Turn off, or move away from, other sources of noise e.g. the television.
- Replay in your mind what you may have heard and fill in the gaps.
- Ask the speaker to talk more slowly and clearly but not to over exaggerate or shout.
- Consider learning to lip-read better.
- If you mishear, ask the speaker to rephrase rather than repeat.
- Turn your good/better ear towards the speaker.
- If you miss one thing, try and stay calm so as not to miss the rest.
- In theatres, churches and similar, try to sit near to the front or close to a loudspeaker.
- Ask others not to talk or shout from another room and do not expect to hear from another room.
- Ask a partner or a friend to introduce or summarise the topic of conversation, especially when you join a group of people.
- Remember, everyone finds it difficult to hear sometimes.

Communication tips: if you're speaking to someone with a hearing difficulty

- Gain the person's attention before you start speaking.
- Ensure the person can see your face and lips clearly.
- Do not shout. Speak clearly and use normal lip movements.
- Use natural facial expressions and gestures.
- Do not chew or cover your mouth while talking.
- Speak on the side that a person hears better, if they have one.
- If a person does not understand what you have said, try rephrasing.
- Find a suitable place to talk, where possible, with good lighting and away from noise and distractions.
- If you are talking to both a hard of hearing and a hearing person, focus on the two of them and not just the hard of hearing person.
- Be ready to write key words down.
- Move closer to the listener.
- Remember that hearing aids cannot restore normal hearing.
- Ensure the listener knows the topic of conversation.
- Use plain language without waffle.

Above all, be patient and understanding.



Contact details

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Further information

If you would like this leaflet in other languages or formats (e.g. large print, Braille or audio), please contact the Audiology department.

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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