



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Cognitive communication disorder (CCD)

Information for patients, relatives
and carers

This leaflet explains what CCD is, how it may affect you, and what help and support is available for patients with CCD.

What is cognitive communication disorder?

Cognitive communication disorder (CCD) is a problem with communication that results from impaired cognition, as opposed to a problem affecting language and/or speech.

Cognition is a term used to describe our **'thinking skills'**. Damage to cognition can affect our communication and may reduce our ability to live independently.

Cognitive communication skills include verbal and non-verbal features such as:

- Attention / concentration
- Memory
- Planning and organisational skills
- Insight and awareness

A person with CCD may have difficulties with any or all of the above areas.

Common causes of CCD include stroke and brain injury.

What might CCD look like?

- Inappropriate body language, facial expression and tone of voice.
- Poor social skills – e.g. difficulties taking turns, going off the topic in conversation, making inappropriate comments, talking too much or too little and having reduced facial expression.
- Difficulty listening, concentrating, remembering or understanding.
- Difficulty finding words and / or speaking in organised sentences.
- Reduced insight – reduced ability to recognise your own difficulties.

Friends and family can help by...

- Minimising background noise and distractions.
- Checking that you have understood the person by feeding back what you think has been said.
- Being honest – let the person know if you do not understand.
- Redirect the person if they are going off-topic in conversation, e.g. say 'stop' to get their attention and remind them of the topic of conversation.
- Help the person to monitor their communication so that they can learn to look out for inappropriate behaviours.
- Focus on one activity at a time, e.g. avoid having a conversation while doing something else.

How can speech and language therapists help?

- Assessment of communication and language skills.
- Practical advice for improved communication in everyday, work and social situations.
- Techniques to aid successful communication.
- Reassurance and confidence-building.
- Advice and support for friends and family.
- Setting and measuring goals
- Observation in groups and 1:1 conversation.

Sources of further support:

- **The Stroke Association** www.stroke.org.uk
- **Headway** <https://www.headway.org.uk/>

Contact us

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To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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