



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 TV.
- 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

For more information, please contact the Audiology Department:

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

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