What is communication?

Communication is the act of transferring information from one person to another:

- The sending and receiving of messages
- It is a means of establishing contact
- Influences others
- Building relationships with others

It can be **verbal** for example, speech:

- Facial expressions
- Body language
- Eye contact
- Gesture
- Behaviour

Or **non verbal** for e.g. facial expressions, body language, eye contact, gesture, behaviour.
Verbal vs Non Verbal

How much communication is spoken words?

- Body language: 38%
- Voice tone: 7%
- Spoken words: 55%
“Communication and sociability are the human abilities which make the greatest contribution to emotional well being and they are also the basic tools by which all else is achieved”.
Nind and Hewett, 2005

• To convey a message
• To chat
• To share experiences
• To express our feelings
• To convey likes/dislikes
• To refuse
How Do We Communicate?

Total Communication
Using a number of different means to communicate

Behaviour

What examples of total communication do we use in day to day life and at work?
How Communication Develops

Pre-intentional Communication
(0-3 months)

Intentional Communication
(3-8 months)
Learning Disabilities

All people with a disability of any extent or severity have a basic right to affect, through communication, the conditions of their existence

*BILD: Learning to Communicate Better*

80% of people with severe learning disabilities do not acquire effective speech

60% of people with a learning disability have skills in symbolic communication such as signs or picture symbols
Means, reasons and opportunities

**Means**
*How we communicate*
Eg
Speech
Body Language
Gesture
Tone of Voice
Behaviour
Eye Contact
Signs and Symbols
Writing etc

**Reasons**
*Why we communicate*
Eg
Attention
Greetings
Wants/needs
Request information
Give information
Protest/deny
Feelings
Choices

**Opportunities**
*Where when and with Whom we communicate*
Partners
Time
Places
Shared language
Shared communication system
Shared interest

Without **Means** you cannot express yourself.

Without **Reasons** there is no point in communicating.

Without **Opportunities** communication fails.

Effective communication only happens when **Means**, **Reasons** and **Opportunities** are in place.
Challenging Behaviour

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation state:

“Communication is one of the most important ways in which we control our environment and influence other people. If a person’s communication skills limit this control, they may become frustrated and challenging behaviour could follow. If this behaviour gets the person what they want or need, it may be more likely to occur in the future.”
Communication Intervention – “Skill Teaching”

In order to help an individual communicate effectively there are a number of approaches that can be used

**Generic Strategies:**

- Use clear, short sentences
- Use easy words ‘tablet’ vs ‘medication’
- Be clear with your facial expressions and body language
- Use visual supports as much as possible-show objects that you are talking about
- Reduce distractions/modify environment

**Specific Strategies:**

- These approaches are based around means, reasons and opportunities
- Supports development of functional behaviour
What helps our understanding?

- Experience - what we know
- Context - the things around us
- A routine - doing similar things at the same time of day
- Clear instructions
# Levels of understanding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of Understanding</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situational Understanding</strong></td>
<td>People do not have to understand a verbal instruction as they are using the familiarity of their routine, their own experiences, context, environmental cues and any visual cues given by their communication partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cause and Effect</strong></td>
<td>Individual that understands “if I do something it will have an effect on the people and the environment around me”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Words</strong></td>
<td>The “important pieces” of information in a sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The amount of choices a person has to make in order to carry out the instruction (1, 2, 3, 4 ... key words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People who already understand cause and effect and are beyond situational understanding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Key Word Level Assessments

- Communication Assessment Profile (CASP)

- Test of Reception of Grammar (TROG)

- Assessment of Comprehension and Expression (ACE)

- Informal activities/tasks and observations
Point to the sheep
The sheep is running
The horse sees the cup and the book
Put your coat on
What to do next

• Throughout the day we need to give a lot of spoken information

  “Get your bag and put your shoes and coat on after putting your plate in the sink.”

  “Refusal”
  Don’t follow the whole instruction
  “Frustration”

  Challenging Behaviour
What to do next

Chunking information:

1) Put your plate in the sink
2) Get your bag
3) Put your shoes and coat on

SUCCESS

Reduce likelihood of challenging behaviour
Specific Approaches

- Intensive Interaction
- Objects of Reference
- Sensory stories
- Visual supports- timetables, cue cards, sequencing cards
- AAC
- Makaton/Signing
- Social stories
- Talking Mats
- Individual work vs Group work
Objects of Reference

You can use objects to help people communicate who have very limited understanding.

The Objects can be:

- **Shared**: All the service users in one residential/day service use the same.

- **Individual**: Each service user has their own object.
Communication books or boards can help people to get their message across more clearly.
Visual Supports

- Shared Context and Language
  - Key Ring
  - Board
  - Book

- Model language – key words/sentence starters

- Communication System
  - Category based
  - Task based

- Photos
- Symbols
- Words
- Alphabet
Visual Timetables

• If people are having trouble understanding or following routines we may suggest that they use visual supports

  - Now/Next board
  - Morning, Afternoon, Evening
  - Whole Day
  - Week

Photos

Symbols

Generic

Step by step
Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC)
## Makaton

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Toilet</th>
<th>Bed</th>
<th>Home</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Toilet Sign" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Bed Sign" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Home Sign" /></td>
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<th>Drink</th>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Dinner/Food Sign" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Drink Sign" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Toilet Sign**: ![Toilet Sign](image)
- **Bed Sign**: ![Bed Sign](image) with note: *Eyes open*
- **Home Sign**: ![Home Sign](image)
- **Dinner/Food Sign**: ![Dinner/Food Sign](image)
- **Drink Sign**: ![Drink Sign](image) with note: *Small movement*
Sensory Stories

• Some individuals who have sensory impairments and severe LD can benefit from sensory stories
Social Stories

• Originally used and developed by Carol Gray for use with children with Autism.

• Brief descriptive story that provides information about a social situation, skills or concept.

• Identifies the expectations within that social situation.

• Supports clients with behaviour that we find challenging, to act more appropriately.
Talking Mats

- Open ended questions
- Positive focus
- Service user is empowered
- There’s no right or wrong
- Outcome focused
- Accessibility
- Thinker and listener
- Research based
For More Information about HPFT

Please visit:  http://www.hpft.nhs.uk

To make a referral, please contact the Single Point of Access:

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Email: hpft.spa@nhs.net