

## Communication Access – Healthcare Provider Quick Tips

What is *communication*?

**Receiving** the message

- Listening to speech
- Watching body language
- Reading
- Looking at visuals

**Giving** the message

- Speaking
- Body language
- Writing
- Visuals (drawings, diagrams)

**Always VERIFY the message you are sending or receiving**

What is **communication access**? It is the strategies we use to help people understand what we are saying, and to help those affected get their message out.

1. Optimize the environment:
  - a. This is a fundamental component of communication
  - b. Ensure you have time
  - c. Get a pen/marker & paper
2. Be respectful:
  - a. Normal tone and rate of speech
  - b. Say “I know you know what you want to say”

**Face to Face Communication Strategies**

1. Strategies to help your patient understand:
  - a. Say one thing at a time
  - b. Simplify language
  - c. Add on visuals – use blank paper and a black sharpie (ideally)
  - d. Add on simple written information
2. Strategies to assist in understanding your patient:
  - a. Give the patient time to *say, write or show you*
  - b. Ask questions – one at a time, use close ended questions (give choices or yes/no)