

# APHASIA: Communication hints for carers

## 1. Problems Understanding Speech



Can they hear? (Hearing aid on?)  
Even if they hear well, words may sound strange to them.

- Reduce distractions** (turn off TV, go somewhere quiet)
- Slow down** and speak clearly (don't shout)
- Use **simple sentences**
- Check people can see **your face** for clues
- Use **gesture** and **pictures** to support your message
- Write down the **key words** you want to say
- Double check** they have understood
- Avoid relying on the phone – provide **written back-up**

## 2. Problems Understanding via Reading



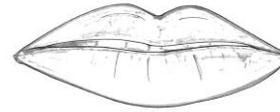
Can they see? (Glasses on?) Even if they can see, words or numbers may look strange. Reading aloud is different from understanding.

- Try **single words** or numbers
- Read **aloud** slowly with them
- Point to each word in case they **ignore part of the page** (e.g. hemianopia, a visual field problem)
- Cover up** extra lines

Advice provided for .....

- **Aphasia is language impairment e.g. after stroke**
- **Speech & Language Therapy offers more advice & support**

## 3. Problems Speaking



Have they already got alternative ways to communicate? (Pen & paper? Communication book/aid?)

- Give extra time**
- Encourage people to use **writing gesture drawing** or **pointing to pictures**
- Work out if they can say or gesture **Yes** and **No**
- Use questions with Yes/No answers to **check** you have understood

## 4. Problems Writing



Can they hold the pen in the other hand? Can they try a computer keyboard instead?

- Help them get started by **copying** out a word
- Seeing the **alphabet** may help narrow down spelling
- They may be able to **point to letters** on a chart
- Try **drawing** to give extra clues
- Write and say the words again to **check** the message