

INFORMATION SHEET

Deaf/Hard of Hearing Residents Communication Strategies

www.betterhearingaustralia.org.au



Deaf and Hard of Hearing people come from a variety of backgrounds and have a variety of cultural and communication needs. To prevent barriers to their access of services and enjoyment of your time with them, providers must ensure the communication needs and preferences of these people are met.

Failure to Communicate

- Discriminates
- Isolates people
- Can cause depression

Effective Communication

- Assures conversations are understood
- Ensures enjoyment of their time with you
- Promotes trust in caregivers

Strategies

- Go over to the person rather than calling their name
- Gently tap them on the shoulder to gain their attention
- Wait until the person can see you before speaking
- Always stand in good lighting – many hearing impaired people lip read
- Never speak directly into the person's ear
- Do not shout – it does not help
- Provide them with pen and paper should they feel more comfortable writing their requests
- Avoid idioms and slang
- Ask open-ended questions to confirm conversations are understood
- Encourage use of hearing aids, cochlear implants, glasses, etc
- Suggest an 'I have a hearing loss' badge or sign for their room. These items can be obtained from Better Hearing Australia WA. Visit www.betterhearingaustralia.org.au for your local branch

“Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see” Mark Twain