

Handout 7

Making communication easier

- Relax, don't rush and allow extra time
- Talk slowly, clearly and at normal volume
- Treat the person as a competent adult
- Talk directly to the person, not to any carers or friends who may be with them
- Use simple, straightforward language
- Make more use of gestures e.g. thumbs up/down, pointing and miming
- Use pen and paper, write down important words to focus discussion or draw key ideas
- Encourage the person to write, draw or point
- Write choices to help the person pick the right word
- Use the resources that the person may have with them e.g. graphics board and photos
- Recap and summarise regularly
- Check out your understanding of their message
- Try to establish how the person communicates, "yes" or "no" gesture may be more reliable than speech
- Ask questions so that the person can reply "yes" or "no"
- Draw the person into conversation
- Never talk over the person
- Don't pretend to understand if you do not. **Say** you have not understood and go back to a point in conversation where you were clear
- A quieter area may help — ask the person where they would like to meet with you
- Have a rest and come back to it, acknowledge the difficulties.

What a person with Aphasia may have:

- A willingness to communicate
- Words/pictures/photos with them
- Something with their address and phone number on it
- Pen and paper
- Mobile phone.

What you have:

- A willingness to communicate
- Time
- Pen and paper
- Images from the web, pictures, a map
- CHSS Conversation Support Book — laminated pictures and images
- People you can contact for advice, talk it over with your supervisor.