

**Professional
Communication
in Home Care**

**Satellite Conference and Live Webcast
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Faculty

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Communication

- **Communication is defined as the activity of conveying information**
- **Communication derived from the Latin word "*communis*", meaning to share**

Communication

- **The simplest form of communication is the verbal exchange of information between two people**
 - **People also communicate through their facial expressions, gestures, tone of voice, and mannerisms**

Communication

- **What you say, the way you say it, and the things you do not say but do, create an impression on patients and families that may affect how they respond to you**
- **Your relationship with your patient depends to a large extent on effective communication, that is, understanding each other**

Observing

- **You are the eyes and ears of the care team - you are in the home longer and build a relationship with the patient and family**
- **Being aware of what you see, hear, and do can make a big difference to the patient and family**

Observing, Reporting, and Documenting

- You are responsible for observing, reporting, and documenting:
 - Change in patient condition
 - e.g., pain, mood, skin conditions, ambulation, etc.

Observing, Reporting, and Documenting

- Environmental changes
 - e.g., loose carpet, refrigerator that stopped working, no heat, no cooling, etc.

Observing, Reporting, and Documenting

- Relationships with family members and friends who provide support and assistance
 - e.g., talk to the patient, care for the patient, etc.

Reporting

- Reporting requires your judgment
 - You must decide when a situation should be reported, either because of its seriousness or how it may change the care or health of the patient or the status of the family
- If in doubt about what to report, report everything

Documentation

- Rules for documenting:
 - Document what you saw, heard, and what you did
- Do NOT document what you thought something meant or what you thought you heard
 - Remember, the chart is a legal document

Documentation

- Documentation is necessary:
 - Needed by the care team to evaluate and plan services
 - Provides a permanent record
 - Protects you and the patient by having a written record of events

Documentation

- **Document immediately because it is difficult to remember everything as time passes**

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- **About one out of ten people in the United States has some hearing loss**
 - **Half of the people with hearing loss are older adults**
- **Do not assume that when a hard of hearing patient nods their head in acknowledgment, that they have heard or understood you**

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- **Hard of hearing individuals do not hear as well when they are tired or ill**
- **Make sure that you have your patient's attention before speaking**
 - **You may need to tap your patient on the shoulder**

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- **Sit close to your patient**
 - **This will improve their ability to see you if they rely on lip reading**
 - **This will also help with voice levels and minimize the effects of distant sounds**
- **Speak clearly and use your regular voice volume and lip movement**

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- **Maintain eye contact when you speak**
 - **If you turn your head, you could block their view of your face**

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- **When speaking to your patient don't have things such as gum or mints in your mouth**
- **Taking notes or writing while talking can block their view of your face**

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- Get on the same level as your patient so you are face-to-face
- Reduce background noise when possible (turn off the TV, radio, etc.)
- Even though patients who are hard of hearing may be able to hear you, your speech may sound distorted

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- Speak in a normal fashion but at a slightly slower pace
 - This will make your speech clearer
 - Do not shout or string your words together too rapidly

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- Never use complex and long sentences
 - You should also always pause between sentences and phrases to allow time to process what you have said and ask for clarification if necessary

Communicating with Hard of Hearing Patients

- Do not suddenly change the topic of the conversation, but if you must, make sure you specifically tell them that you have

What Is a Cardiovascular Accident?

- CVA, sometimes referred to as a stroke, occurs when the blood and oxygen flowing to the brain is stopped or interrupted
 - When the blood supply can't flow to your brain, your brain cells start to die and brain damage begins to occur

What Is a Cardiovascular Accident?

- A CVA may be mild or severe, brief or long-lasting
 - This depends on the area of your brain affected by the stroke and how extensive the damage is

What Is a Cardiovascular Accident?

- **When brain cells die during a stroke, abilities controlled by that area of the brain are lost**
 - **These abilities include speech, movement and memory**
 - **How a stroke patient is affected depends on where the stroke occurs in the brain and how much of the brain is damaged**

What Is a Cardiovascular Accident?

- **How do you communicate with a patient who has difficulty speaking and understanding?**
 - **Do not shout or talk louder**
 - **Your patient hears you but may not understand the meaning of the words**

What Is a Cardiovascular Accident?

- **Speak slowly and pause often**
- **Speak in short, simple sentences**
- **Speak in an adult manner**
- **Do not bombard the patient with too many questions**
- **Stress the important words in sentences**

What Is a Cardiovascular Accident?

- **May help to use visual aids when you speak**
 - **e.g., pictures, objects, or charts**
- **Watch for signs your patient understands what you are saying**

What Is a Cardiovascular Accident?

- **If necessary write down your request**
 - **This way the patient can read what you are asking**

Listening to the CVA Patient

- **Be patient**
- **Do not interrupt**
- **Do not fill in the word your patient is trying to find**

Listening to the CVA Patient

- **Let your patient know when you do not understand**
- **Do not correct errors**
 - **Restate what you think they said, this will help to see if you understand what was said**

References

- ***A Handbook for The Home Care Aide***
- **University of Washington Medical Center**
- **National Stroke Association**
- **Allian Health**