







Make your election campaign inclusive of people with Communication Difficulties

Advice to candidates in the 2019 General Elections

- Up to 20% of the UK's population experience communication difficulty at some point in their lives, and more than 10% of all children have a long-term communication need.
- This includes people with hearing impairment, a third of stroke survivors, people who have had head and neck cancers and people who use communication devices (like that used by Stephen Hawking) including people with muscular sclerosis, motor neurone disease and cerebral palsy.
- A significant number of people with communication difficulties are eligible to vote.
- Speech and Language Therapists are experts in enabling people to communicate effectively with those with communication difficulties.
- This short, basic, general guide aims to support all candidates to communicate in a more inclusive way with the voting public.

What is 'inclusive communication'?

	<p>Making me welcome Being respectful of any communication difficulty, supporting me and not making assumptions.</p>
	<p>Giving me time Being patient, giving time to communicate and not rushing or ignoring me.</p>
	<p>Speaking directly to me Talking to me (rather than to my carer or support worker) with appropriate eye contact.</p>
	<p>Asking what helps Adapting communication as required. Communication is a two-way process!</p>
	<p>Listening to me Listening carefully and asking for repetition if you do not understand. Checking I have understood.</p>
	<p>Providing information in a way I can understand Writing things down when needed and providing accessible information in an appropriate form.</p>

Remember to TALK

T	TIME to communicate <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Consider physical environment, signage and impact of background noise○ Welcome #hellomynameis○ Focussed attention○ Recognise there may be problems with understanding, reading, speech or writing○ Allow time for a person to get their message across○ Check you have understood
A	ASK individuals about their preferred method of communication ADAPT your communication accordingly Provide ACCESSIBLE information <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ask: a person may have a card to explain what helps○ Don't make assumptions○ Ask: check out how the person indicates Yes and No○ Talk to them rather than to their carer○ Use normal tone, volume and eye contact○ May help to use gesture, pointing, pictures, or write down information
L	LISTEN well <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Give full attention and practice 'Active Listening'○ Check you have understood (don't pretend)○ Check they have understood○ A pen and paper can be useful for drawing or writing to support communication
K	KEEP TRYING <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Communication is a two-way process requiring effort on both sides○ Be creative in the way you communicate and don't give up!○ Monitor how you are doing as an individual and organisation and act to improve where required