DEAFNESS AND NON-TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION

PRESENTED BY: ROMY SPITZ
Facts about Aging and Communication

The aging process can include many changes which provide communication challenges. See the handout on Meeting Seniors for a sense of what they experience and how to help.

Some Common Aging Issues:

- Presbycusis or age-related hearing loss affects approximately 50% of people over age 65. That’s 10.6 million seniors in the USA!
- Auditory Processing Disorder: Sometimes the ears hear just fine, but the brain can’t process the auditory signal to make sense of what we hear. Some studies estimate the prevalence of APD in elders to be 60-90%. And no, hearing aids won’t help!
- Tinnitus causes ringing, roaring, whooshing, or clicking noises in the ears of 12 million people in the USA and is more prevalent with age.

What’s Hard to Hear? In most elders, the biggest issues are:

- Rapid speech
-Speech in noise
- Multiple people talking
- High pitched sounds (women’s voices)
- Discomfort with loud sounds (not all sounds are hard to hear)
- Processing speech when anxious

What can you do to help?

- Interview in quiet rooms with one person speaking at a time
- Get their attention before speaking
- Don’t assume that they can “lip-read”, but make cues available:
  - Always make sure you are at an equal eye-level and stay still
  - Face the person, only look at paperwork to times you are not speaking.
  - Don’t cover your mouth, chew gum, or lean your head on your hands
- Speak clearly, slowly, and normally, don’t raise your voice
- Write questions or instructions if necessary
- Ensure that electronic equipment that emit high frequency hum (computers, audio or video recorders, sound maskers) are moved away from the person.
- Tell them that you are happy to repeat or write down any information if that would help.
- Make available equipment such as an FM system that will cut out background noise and make your voice clearer
- If the person uses a FM system keep the microphone close to your mouth.
- Ask about hearing and communication needs at the beginning of the conversation. Knowing that you are communication savvy will make it easier for the person to tell you what works for them.
Augmentative and Alternative Communication

AAC is adaptive technology that provides a way for people who cannot communicate verbally to communicate with other people. AAC can include all kinds of equipment ranging from pictures in a book that the person can point at, to devices that “voice” a message when a picture symbol is pressed, to computers that read typed sentences out loud.

Many people with use AAC as their major form of communication ranging from those who have had strokes, have oral apraxia, or ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease) who have no intellectual disability to those with cognitive disabilities and autism. The tips below will assist you in your advocacy work with victims who use AAC. You don’t need special skills to communicate with an AAC user.

Tips for working with AAC clients:

- Ask the person where they would like you to stand in order to read messages
- Speak directly to the AAC user
- Use everyday language, preferably the language they use
- Ask the person to show you how she communicates “yes” and “no” and “I don’t know”. If there isn’t a button or strategy for saying no, the default is to say yes to everything.
- Do not feel you need to keep talking...it takes time and effort to construct messages. Let them complete one answer before going to the next question.
- Say each word selected out loud so that the User knows you have the correct word.
- Do not interrupt when the AAC user is in the middle of constructing a message.
- If you are not sure whether the message is finished—Ask!
- Say the words in the order the User produced and then clarify what you think he is saying (restate what you think he was trying to say and ask for confirmation).
- Have a paper and pen ready for long messages; write the words before you forget them
- If Needed: Ask the person if a more familiar communicator could assist the communication between you.

AAC is a wonderful tool for everyday communication. But they are limited to a small vocabulary. The concepts or words you need to talk about may not be available on their device.

What do you do if they don’t have the word they need?

- If you suspect...ask. Do you need a word? (yes) Is it in your book or your device? (if no...go to step 2)
Ask the user to give you a clue so you can guess the category. (Is it about a place? About a person?)

If they cannot give you a clue, consider offering something like an Oxford Picture Dictionary that they can leaf through and find an appropriate picture.

If you have to guess, start with general categories and narrow it down to specifics (is it about a person? (yes) Is it a man? (yes). Then start guessing within a smaller grouping (is it John, Bob, Dad)?

When you figure out the word, say it and continue the conversation.
Information about using CART for deafened and hard of hearing people

CART stands for Computer Aided Realtime Translation. The goal of CART is simple, to take what is spoken and put in a visual form that can be read. This is called Speech-to-Text and it is like the captions we see sometimes on television. These captions can be displayed on a large screen or on a computer screen. The people who make this happen are called CART reporters and they have special expertise in hearing what you say and typing it into a special program based on the way the words sound. The program then changes the sounds over to their written English counterpart.

People who have English as their primary language but can no longer hear the sounds of English can use CART or another service called C-Print at meetings in order to read what is said and participate in the meeting.

Questions we get asked:

1. Am I required to provide CART services if someone asks? In most cases, YES. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that public services be accessible to people with disabilities, including hearing loss. CART would be an appropriate accommodation to ensure equal access at meetings.

2. Who pays for the CART service and how much does it cost? Typically it is the person providing the public service that pays for the accommodation. CART and C-Print costs vary between agencies, but typically $40-$60 per hour.

3. What is the difference between CART and C-Print? CART is a word-for-word translation of what is being said. C-Print is “idea-for-idea” in that the exact wording may be different but the message is equivalent. As someone who uses both, I don’t see much difference; C-Print can be faster, CART can be more accurate but slower.

4. Does the CART reporter have to be in the room? No, reporters can provide CART services from remote locations if there is a speaker phone available for the reporter to hear the conversation.

5. Why doesn’t the client just use an interpreter? Most people who request CART or C-Print do not use sign language and cannot understand an interpreter.

6. If I have a meeting one-on-one with a late deafened or severely hard of hearing person, do I need to provide CART? Not necessarily. The requirement is for effective
communication. If you can accomplish that another way, either typing your words on a computer, using an Ubi Duo, or writing back and forth, and it is effective communication that may be enough. But if the meeting involves a group of people rather than just a few, CART would be more appropriate.

7. Can I use voice recognition software like Dragon Naturally Speaking instead of CART? Yes DNS can accurately transcribe speech up to 93% accuracy if you “train” the computer to recognize your voice. Correct errors immediately. Phrases like "than a nut or" is likely to be transcribed as "then an utter." Homonyms also pose a challenge—did you mean "its" or "it's"? "Whether" or "weather"?

8. Are CART reporters and CART services confidential services? Yes. CART reporters are required to protect a client’s right to privacy and maintain confidentiality.

Tips for Using CART or C-Print

1. Prior to the meeting, send the CART reporter any outlines or agendas so that they can prepare in advance. Provide them with any overheads and if possible a list of names or specialized terms that will be used during the meeting. These words can be entered into the reporter’s dictionary in advance. This will speed translation and reduce errors and misunderstandings.

2. Permit the CART reporter to sit in a location near an electrical socket that makes for optimal hearing of everyone in the meeting. This will ensure a more accurate translation and maintain the electrical supply to the computer.

3. At the beginning of the meeting, introduce the CART reporter and remind all present to speak clearly and normally. The captionist will let people know when they were not heard clearly.

4. Ensure that the deaf or hard of hearing client has a good sight line to the screen where the words are being projected. Some people prefer to be able to watch the screen and the speaker at the same time so that they can speechread the speaker and see their facial and body expression.

5. Since the translation and text display are usually one to four seconds behind the speaker, it may take someone who is deaf or hard of hearing a few seconds longer to respond. You might want to work out a signal that the person can use to indicate to the person running the meeting that they have something to say. The leader can then hold the conversation until the full translation has been read.

6. Restate or summarize participant’s comments if they are hard to hear, or somewhat disorganized. A rambling statement of an issue may not be as well captured by reading as it is by hearing and a crisp restatement will allow all participants to understand and respond.
Information about INTERPRETERS in Maine and New Hampshire

An interpreter is a neutral third party with the requisite bilingual skills, training in the process of interpreting and knowledge of the content area in order to effectively facilitate communication between two or more parties who do not share a common language.

Types of Interpreters:
Sign Language Interpreters (for people using American Sign Language)
Deaf-Hearing Interpreters (for people using a more gestural form of sign language)
Spoken or Foreign Language Interpreters (for people speaking other languages)

How to Find & How to Use SIGN LANGUAGE Interpreters:

Please Note: All sign language interpreters in Maine and New Hampshire must, by law, be licensed by the state. Write the name and license number of the interpreter in the client record in case the information is needed later or you would like to use that interpreter again. Report complaints to the State Licensure Board.

WHO DO I CALL TO FIND AN INTERPRETER?
New Hampshire:
Northeast Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services: Interpreter Referrals
57 Regional Dr., Concord, NH 03301  603.224.1850  TTY 603.224.0691
http://www.ndhhs.org//referrals/interpreters.html
or see
www.ed.state.nh.us/education/doe/organization/adultlearning/VR/InterpreterDirectory.htm

Maine: Maine does not coordinate interpreters through one agency. Individual agencies include:

ASL Interpreting Services, Etc. Inc. (Greater Bangor Area)
862-5700 (V/TTY)  E-mail: aslis@roadrunner.com

Bangor Interpreting Agency (Greater Bangor Area)
862-4063 (TTY)  862-2947 (V/VP)  862-4027 (FAX)
E-mail: bangorinterpreting@tds.net  Web site: www.bangorinterpreting.com

Certified Interpreting - The Sign Language Network (Statewide)
798-7995 (V/TTY)  729-0875 (FAX)
E-mail: Ruth@certifiedinterpreting.com  Web site: www.CertifiedInterpreting.com

Kewl ASL (Midcoast, Greater Augusta Area)
549-4733 (V/TTY)  240-3177 (Cell/Text)  1-866-755-5206 (VP)
E-mail: kewlasl@gmail.com

Pine Tree Society - Interpreting Services (Statewide)
885-0536 (V/TTY)  885-0076 (FAX)
E-mail: interpreting@pinetreesociety.org  Web site: www.pinetreesociety.org

Professional Interpreting, Inc. (Greater Portland area)
774-3068 (V/TTY)  774-8701 (FAX)  E-Mail: kris120@juno.com

How to Find & How to Use SPOKEN or FOREIGN language Interpreters:

This symbol is used by some countries to indicate Foreign or Spoken Language Interpretation. To assist state workers to identify the language needed to be interpreted, Maine offers the sign at the end of this supplement. Download it at www.maine.gov/dhhs/oma/DHHSInterpreter_Sign.doc

Please Note: Unlike Sign Language Interpreters, Maine and New Hampshire do not license Foreign Language Interpreters. Providers hiring interpreting services should inquire regarding qualifications and certifications in order to gauge interpreter quality.

New Hampshire:

Lutheran Social Services of Northern New England: Language Bank 602-224-8111
or see http://articles.directorym.com/Interpreting_Services_New_Hampshire-r855379-New_Hampshire.html

Maine:

Centralized Statewide Interpreter Database, Language Access for New Americans (LANA)
Phone: (207) 874-1000, x311  Fax: (207) 874-1007
E-mail: dhersom@unitedwaygp.org  web site: http://www.lanamaine.org/

Individual Agencies:

Bangor Interpreting Agency (Greater Bangor Area)
phone: 862-2947  Fax: (207) 862-4027  E-mail: bangorinterpreting@tds.net
**Hiddo Services Center (Greater Lewiston Area)**
Phone: (207) 783-6666, (207) 344-5885  Fax: (207) 795-1111

**The Language Exchange, Inc (Statewide)**
Phone: (207) 772-0405, Toll free: 1-888-772-0405  Fax: (207) 221-1207
Email: language@maine.rr.com  Web site: www.immersionprograms.com

**Maine State Interpreters (Statewide)**
Phone Number: 207.450.6035
E-mail: mainestateinterpreters@hotmail.com  Website:
www.mainestateinterpreters.com

**New England Interpreter Services (Statewide)**
Phone Number: 207.409.5514  E-mail: newengis@yahoo.com

**RISinterpret (Statewide)**
Phone: (207) 523-2700  E-mail: risinterpret@ccmaine.org

**Smart Interpreters (Lewiston)**
Phone: (207) 783-4744  Cell: (207) 740-5598  Fax: (207) 783-4644
E-mail: abdulle_abdullahi@yahoo.com

**NATIONAL TELEPHONE INTERPRETING & TRANSLATING COMPANIES**
(please note - this is only a partial list of companies out there)

**Certified Languages International**
Phone: 1-800-CALL-CLI (1-800-225-5254)  Fax: 1-800-362-2941
E-mail: sales@certifiedlanguages.com  Website: http://www.certifiedlanguages.com/

**Choice Translating and Interpreting (CTI)**
Phone/TTY: (704) 717-0043, toll-free: 1.888.721.2077  Fax: (704) 717-0046
Website: www.choicetranslating.com

**Cyracom International, Inc.**
Phone: 1-800-713-4950  E-mail: info@cyracom.com  Website:
http://www.cyracom.com/

**Language Line Services**
Phone: 1-877-886-3885  E-mail: info@languageline.com  Website:
www.languageline.com

**Pacific Interpreters**
Phone: General Inquiries- 1-800-311-1232  Sales Department 1-877-472-2434
E-mail: sales@pacificinterpreters.com  Website: http://www.pacificinterpreters.com/

**Passport To Languages**
Phone: (503) 297-2707  Toll Free: (800) 297-2707
24-Hour Assistance: (503) 294-1340  Fax: (503) 297-1703
Email: info@passporttolanguages.com  Website: www.passporttolanguages.com
TIPS on Working with Interpreters

Conceptual Tips:

1. Both the speaking people and the signing people are considered consumers of the interpreting service. The interpreter is not there for the deaf person, they are there for both parties to understand each other.

2. The positioning of the interpreter is important. Often if it is a one-on-one situation, the interpreter will sit next to you as the “speaker” so that the signing person can see both your facial and body expression as well as see the interpreter. In a group situation, interpreter position is often negotiated depending on the consumers. It is not unusual to have to rearrange seating so that all can see and hear.

3. There are different models of interpreting. In some cases, the interpreter will be interpreting at the same time you are talking (simultaneous interpretation) while in other cases, the interpreter will wait for you to finish a thought and then interpret it (consecutive interpretation). When interpreting is done consecutively, keep comments more brief, when interpreting is done simultaneously, pause more often.

4. Interpreters strive to be an “invisible” communication conduit. They are in the room but they are not in the conversation.

Practical Tips:

1. Look at the person you are speaking to, not the interpreter who may be voicing what the person said in English.
2. Interpreters use “first person” language, meaning when they say “I”, they mean the person they are signing/voicing for, not themselves.
3. Don’t say “tell him....” You are speaking directly to the person, not the interpreter.
4. Do not use third person language such as saying “she said” when referring to the person signing, you are speaking directly to the person. Say “you said”.
5. Speak slightly slower than usual and pause more often. The interpreter needs time to take what you said, change it into the other language, and then express that message. If the interpreter needs to, he or she will ask you to pause so that the complete message can be rendered.
6. If you are using an unusual or difficult name or word, say it then spell it out so that the interpreter can correctly fingerspell it to express it to the individuals in the room.
7. If you are asking a question through the interpreter, give the other party time to process the question and respond. Interpreted exchanges take longer.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Point to your language. An interpreter will be provided at no cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Sign Language</td>
<td>American Sign Language interpretation is available at no cost.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khmer</td>
<td>ក្រោយពីប្រការការពិភពលោក ១ ក្រោយពីប្រការការពិភពលោក ១</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>Chúng tôi yêu cầu bạn chú ý đến việc phòng ngừa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>أشير إلى لغتك، فسوف يتم تأمين مترجم فوري لك مجاناً</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>یادآوری می‌کنیم، مترجم گفتگوی شما با رایگان است</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>Показите на ваш язык. Prevoditel'ce vam biti besplatno obezbyden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali</td>
<td>Muuja laqadaada. Turjubaan ayey heii doonaa adiga oo aan wakhsa bixiin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Indique cuál es su idioma. Le proporcionaremos el servicio de un intérprete sin costo alguno para usted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swahili</td>
<td>Onyesha lugha yako. Utaratwa mtasirishaji hila malipo yoyote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Indiquez la langue de votre choix. Vous obtiendrez les services d'un interprète gratuitement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>Itruo po ang inyong wika. Isang tagasalin ang ipagkakaloob nang libre sa inyo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Bitte zeigen Sie auf Ihre Muttersprache. Ein Dolmetscher wird Ihnen kostenlos zur Verfügung gestellt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>ชั้นเรียนภาษาไทย คุณสามารถร่วมกิจกรรมใดก็ตามที่คุณต้องการได้ฟรี</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>Qvia yam lus koj hais. Vigyullal igy reeg ughals lus rau koj yam tsis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>Hãy nhl vao ngon ngu cua quy vi. Chuyu to tlc cung cph mnh thng duong vnh mnh phi.</td>
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Victim Advocacy & Communication Barriers

Romy Spitz
DHHS Consultant,
Deafness & Non-Traditional Communication

Communication Barrier Menu

Language Related
- ASL Signing Deaf
- Limited English Proficient

Hearing Related
- Hearing loss
- Presbycusis (Age)

Speech Related
- Auditory Processing
- Stroke
- Oral Apraxia

Cognition Related
- Autism
- Intellectual Disability
- Brain Injury
Communication Barriers

Whatever the reason for the barrier
It impacts both sides of the partnership

➡️ Your ability to provide information & resources
➡️ Other person’s ability to ask questions & get answers

➡️ Be the person with the information to
 overcome barriers both in your work
 and the work of others.

Overcoming OUR
Communication Barrier Today

Have a Q? Or Comment
Ubi Duo!

▷ Type your question or
comment so I can read it.

Sidekick!
▷ Email romv@tmail.com
or text 207-409-9682

Language Barriers

Deaf  LEP
Interpreters
Deaf 101

Culturally Deaf People = Deaf Community = Deaf World

Consider themselves as a cultural and linguistic minority not as disabled

“Born and hope to die” deaf

Part of a unique culture built around a common language, American Sign Language, and a common set of community experiences, expectations, rituals, rules, and routines.

American Sign Language (ASL)

- A true, natural language developed spontaneously by deaf people
- Is not related to English
- Has its own grammar, syntax, vocabulary
- Is as full and rich as spoken languages
- Is not universal, a Deaf person from another country, would have a different sign language!

Some Myths

- Most Deaf cannot speak (are mute)
  - Most cannot hear themselves and choose not to use speech
- Most Deaf people can “read lips”
  - Less than half the info needed is on the lips & tongue
  - I love you → vacuum
  - Olive juice → f (can’t say it here)
- Most Deaf read more to get missed information
  - English is a second language & reading is phonological
  - Most went to a Deaf school
  - Linguistic vs. Educational Tradeoff
  - Literacy challenges
Many cannot read English at a level needed to understand written questions
- Often a 2nd- to 4th-grade reading level
- Beware of the smile and nod

Rarely in contact with victim advocates...
- Many feel that naive supports in the Deaf Community trump supports that know stuff but don’t know Deaf.
- Many have experienced abuse, were ignored when they reported it, and don’t think you will listen to them

Features of Deaf Culture that Impact Service Delivery

Deaf Culture
- Start with the point and then add background then restate the point
- Direct, blunt style
- Flat network
- If ain’t over til we all agree
- Eye contact and body language are part of language

Hearing Culture
- Start with background and lead to point
- Indirect, careful of other’s feelings
- Hierarchical network
- It’s over when I say so
- Avoidance of eye contact when emotions are high, total ignorance of body language

How to Talk to a Deaf Person!
What to Do?

Don’t Panic!

Be calm, culturally competent, and ask if they need an interpreter or other accommodation.

Interpreter contact information is in your CD as is the symbol for interpreter
How do I ask if they need an Interpreter?

Call using Video Relay to ask about needs
- Most deaf have videophones so that they can communicate in their primary language
- Direct VP #’s automatically call a relay agent
- Hearing/Speaking persons can contact Deaf/Signing persons through a TTY relay at 711 and VP relay 1-866-327-8877
  Ask for backup TTY number in case VP breaks

General Rules About Sign Language Interpreters

- Licensed Professional
  - Quality varies so ask
- Neutral
  - Should not be friends or family
  - Cannot be in dual roles
- Paid by agency for service
- Required for certain circumstances
  - Medical, Legal
- Respects confidentiality
- Interprets Everything!

LEP Limited English Proficiency

Speakers of other languages may have good conversational skills but still can struggle
- Understanding written information
- Understanding specialized vocabulary
- Understanding the culture which pervades your services

If LEP is affecting services, get an interpreter (in person or on the telephone)

See contacts for spoken/foreign language interpreters in your packet.
Guidelines for Working With Interpreters

- Speak to the person—not the interpreter—"I" means the person not the interpreter!
- Do not use third person
- Allow time for the person to respond
- Let the interpreter decide where to sit.
- Keep the message clear and direct
- Speak slower, not louder
- Clarifications are the mark of a good interpreter not a bad one
- Check for understanding by asking to show, explain or describe what you said!

For both LEP and Deaf Clients

Consider sensitive issues beforehand....

- The nature of the crime or victimization
- Age and gender of the interpreter
- Consider shared history between interpreter and client
  - Small worlds & Client concerns: info leaking out
  - Ask client for interpreter preference
- Consider cultural viewpoints: who else will be or needs to be present

Be aware of Cultural Influences

Norms of "Deaf School" or minority culture valued
- Victimization and abuse may become normalized (quiet endurance, the way things are)
- Excuses abuse as cultural, not victimization
- Reporting abuse or seeking help may result in community consequences for the person (isolation, devaluation)

Family interdependence & Community valued
- Maintaining family/community’s honor
- Hearing or American people don’t understand us
- Authorities shouldn’t interfere with “family matters”
Deaf isn’t deaf

“D’ear
 › Language barrier
 › Cultural barrier
 › Interpreters

“ears, schmears”

“d’ear
 › Hearing barrier
 › Language is same
 › Culture is same
 › Technology or bust…

“I’d really like my ears back please”

Hearing Barriers

› Aging ears, eyes, & brains
 › Tinnitus
 › Lifelong hearing loss
 › Deafened

Aging Brains & Communication

Auditory Processing & Mild Presbycusis

Problem Areas:
 › Rapid speech
 › Speech in noise
 › High pitched sounds

Listen to the demo at http://facstaff.uww.edu/bradleys/radio/hlsimulation/

› Often, seniors don’t know there is a problem.
 › Most won’t know what to do about it.
 › Use strategies for hard of hearing people but gently!
 › Sometimes it’s the eyes, not the ears

Don’t ask if they need accommodation, just do it
**Tinnitus**

5 Million people in the US live with tinnitus!

- Ringing, hissing, or clicking in the ears caused by exposure to loud noise or certain medications
- Can be “all the time” or come and go
- Will seem louder under stress or in quiet

Person may have a “masker” or benefit from an FM system or be better 2 hours post meds—So ASK!

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**Strategies for these groups**

- Provide services in a quiet room
- One speaker at a time
- Speak clearly, slowly, don’t raise your voice
  - louder isn’t better, it’s just louder and incomprehensible
- Write questions down if it helps
- Tape recorders, computers, and sound maskers emit high frequency hum, move them away from the person.
- Ask if they want to use “something” to make your voice clearer (FM or PockeTalker)

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**If Moderate–Severe Hearing loss**

- Quiet room with good lighting
  - Bodies should be at equal eye level
  - Watch your “beak”
  - Face the person, not your notes
- If hearing aids, do a sound check (volume setting for your voice, different programs)
- Offer an FM system or “loop” your room to remove background noise
- Speak clearly and SLIGHTLY louder
- If person doesn’t understand, repeat it, rephrase it, or write it down
- You don’t understand? ask for repeat, rephrase
- Watch your body—it speaks very clearly
**Late Deafened**

Person grew up hearing, then lost hearing. *they still speak. BUT they don’t hear*

- Often linked with isolation & depression
- Often linked to crime & abuse; easy victim; very frustrated caretakers and family; deafened blame the hearing person
- Often unaware of interventions, strategies for helping themselves

- They rarely sign, so don’t call for interpreters!
- Use previous strategies plus writing or speech-to-text: CART or UbiDuo

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**CART or C–Print**

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**When working as Advocate**

- Ask the person what works for them.
- Don’t walk up behind them
- Get their attention before speaking
- Use their speech bubble (3–5ft)
- Have an awareness of fatigue, frustration, and take breaks
- Don’t assume functional or cognitive skills based on hearing, speech or "neediness".
I've never heard of Non Traditional Communication…
Who are we talking about here?

- We're talking about Non Traditional Communicators or Visual Gestural Communicators.
  - Deaf plus other disabilities (ID, CP)
  - ID plus Hearing Loss (HOH or Deafened)
  - Hearing but speech impairment
  - Hearing but low verbal (non-speakers)

Ask about primary communication modes
- verbal or non-verbal
  - (he can hear… but does he talk?)
- signer or gesturer
- picture-based communicator

Know what you’re likely to need before you meet the person
- Keep a stash of pictures available, just in case.

Most communicate via a system of unique signs, gestures, maybe some spoken words.

They can use special Deaf–Hearing Interpreting teams based on gestural communication

Most cannot tell you their “story” even with an interpreter or communication mediator without supports such as pictures.

The less language they have, the more important pictures become!
Pictures! Pictures! Pictures!
Domestic Violence Interview Pictorial Booklet

Iowa made something similar for Sexual Assault!


What to Do?
Find pictures that represent major topics you need to discuss with the client

› Person can use pictures as a way to “tell you their story”
› Try to get affirmation or denial of the action or event in the picture
› Write down the words they said on the picture

Log behavior as communication
› Log which picture it is and what the response was.

Pictures

› Realistic drawings or photos
› Avoid line drawings, BoardMaker, and black & white.
› Consider showing wholes, not parts for easy recognition
› In a pinch, consider clip art or web-based pictures
**Pictures? No Need, He Communicates through AAC**

- AAC augmentative and alternative communication
- Often a picture-based electronic device
  - PECS (pictures only)
  - DynaVox (pictures/words with voice output)
- Vocabulary relates to everyday needs
- Probably won’t have the pics or words you need
- May or may not have a yes & no output. Almost never has a “I don’t know or I think so…”
- Almost never includes “time” or frequency words
- Don’t attempt to do “on the spot” reprogramming of the device.

**Tips on Communicating via AAC**

- You don’t need special skills & Not all AAC users have a cognitive disability
- Ask where to stand and make eye contact
- Speak directly to the AAC user
- Use everyday language
- Ask the person to show you how she communicates yes and no and I don’t know.
- Do not feel you need to keep talking…it takes time to construct messages and if you keep asking questions.…

**Tips on Using Displays**

- Say each word selected out loud so that the User knows you have the correct word.
- Do not interrupt when they are constructing a message.
- Say the words in the order the User produced and then clarify what you think he is saying.
- Write the words…you may forget on long messages
- If Needed: Ask if a more familiar communicator could assist the communication between you.
- If you suspect, they don’t have the words they need…offer help (see tips in CD)
**She Communicates through “Behavior”**

Behavior includes:
- Emotional responses
- Taking you to an object or place
- Pointing to objects or people
- Reacting (pushing picture away, throwing, whining)
- Activity (SIB, self-stim, escape or withdrawal)

**These ARE Communication** — responding appropriately is advocacy even though it may not lead you to the info you need!

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**Interviewing Tips:**
**Speaking or via Terp**

- Use common, everyday words, not the words of “the business”
- If possible... ask them to tell you what happened, be patient, use expansions (recast, and then what happened...)
- If they can’t initiate, you need to ask the questions
- Breakdown questions to their most simple form
- Wait! Give plenty of processing time
- Be aware of your body language

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**Asking Questions:**
**Clients with Limited Cognition**

- Yes/No questions are fine but... be aware of wanting to please
  do a “no” check
  ask the same info in different ways
- Who and Where are easier than What, Why, and How
- Where touch? Picture may be better than doll
- Who touch? Know namesigns or have pictures of relevant people
- Accept pointing as a communication tool and make sure the person has something to point to (places and pictures)
- Ask, Restate Message, Ask expansion (lather, rinse, repeat)
Above All.

- Know thy partner—asking about communication up front saves time and provides a neutral accepting environment & shows respect.

- Be communication savvy and willing to take extra steps.
  - Conduct very focused interviews using short questions to get answers to specific questions.
  - Use visuals and memory aids as needed.
  - Know how to use FM system or get an interpreter.

- Listen carefully, ask for clarification or rephrase often to ensure both of you are understanding each other.

- Ask the person what helps, but be ready to think creatively.

Contact Info

- Division on Deafness (General Info)
  John Shattuck, Director  623-7958

- Office of Multicultural Affairs (Language Access)
  Noel Bonam, Director  287-4272

- Maine Center on Deafness (Civil Rights & Equipment)
  Elissa Moran, Director  800-639-3884

- Romy Spitz (Deafness/Communication)
  call 711 (relay) have them call 866-241-8684 (my TTY) or email romy.spitz@maine.gov