

Communicating well with residents who have hearing loss

Follow these simple tips to improve communication with residents who are deaf or have hearing loss. Remember, even if someone is using hearing aids, it doesn't mean they can hear you perfectly.

- Start by asking the resident if they need to lipread.
- Make sure you have face-to-face contact, so the resident can easily see your lip movements.
- Get the resident's attention before you start speaking, by gently tapping them on the arm.
- Find a place to talk that has good lighting, away from noise and distractions (where possible).
- Speak clearly, not too slowly, and use normal lip movements, facial expressions and gestures.
- Get to the point: use plain language and don't waffle.
- Keep your voice down: it's uncomfortable for a hearing aid user if you shout, and it looks aggressive.
- Make sure what you're saying is being understood.
- If the resident doesn't understand what you've said, don't keep repeating it – try saying it in a different way instead.
- Use assistive equipment – for example, a conversation listener – if available.
- Be patient and take time to communicate properly.
- Writing may help if you are having difficulty communicating – avoid capital letters and use a thick pen if a resident has sight problems.

It's particularly important to use the above tips if a resident has or may have dementia. Hearing loss can make dementia worse, particularly if one or both of the conditions are undiagnosed.

Need more information and support?

Contact the Action on Hearing Loss Information Line:

Call **0808 808 0123** (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm)

Email **information@hearingloss.org.uk**

Visit our website **actiononhearingloss.org.uk**

