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AIDS FOR COMMUNICATION

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'An augmentative alternative communication technique does not result in instant communication any more than providing a piano results in an instant musician'. Beukleman and Garrett, 1988

Communication requires a great deal of effort, cognitive and language skills, attention, motivation and something to communicate about. Assessment for use of any of the below should consider: Posture Comfort Potential to fatigue It is imperative to set your patient up to succeed from the outset. Remember, their preference may change over time and ongoing review is essential.

1. If the person wears glasses, check they are clean.
2. If the person wears a hearing aid, check if is working (see sheet 'Hearing and Hearing Aids' and booklet 'How to use your hearing aid.'
3. Discuss with the doctors if they are able to tolerate cuff deflation for short periods, to allow the expired air to be redirected through the larynx, and/or to try a Passy-Muir speaking valve.
4. If their voice is too weak to be heard, refer to the speech and language therapist (x9123). They may benefit from assessment and use of a voice amplifier, Servox or Cooper-Rand intra-oral aid (gadgets used with people with laryngectomies, 1st one is held pressed on the neck and emits a buzzing noise).

5. If they have sufficient upper limb movement to be able to point, offer them opportunities to use an alphabet chart. See various types attached.

- a. AEIOU down left hand side of chart, numbers down right, with words such as 'yes, no, please, thanks, end of word, end of sentence, correction.
- b. ABCDE in large print (useful for those whose fine motor movement is impaired).
- c. EARDUY etc - this chart has the letters in their most frequently occurring order, some people find this easier to use.

6. Try the Lightwriter typewriter with speech synthesis (a scanning device may be available for those with only very limited movement of the hand). Please refer to speech and language therapist, who can ensure the person gets the most out of the facilities the equipment has and can offer instruction in its use eg type and location of switch.

7. If the person finds this spelling leads to frustration or fatigue, or English is an additional language for them, try one of the picture charts Old fashioned but all on 1 page Stroke Association Word and Picture Chart - 4 pages the pictures may be of most help for some people Simple, modern pictures i. Yes/no ii. People iii. Activities iv. Feelings v. Body parts vi. Places.

8. If the person only has eye movement, an ETRAN eye pointing frame may be appropriate (see sheet attached and refer to speech and language therapist).

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