

AREAS OF RISK FOR COMMUNICATION BREAKDOWN

Introductions

- My name is...
- I have aphasia.
- I use a computer to help me communicate.
- How are you?
- What is your name?
- My wife's name is...

Phone Conversations

- Hello, this is _____.
- I'm using a computer to talk, so please be patient while I type or select what I want to say.
- May I ask who is calling?
- What is the nature of your call?
- Please take me off your calling list.
- Can you call back and leave a message? I have difficulty writing.
- Please ask me yes/no questions if you can.
- I'm not interested.
- Thank you for calling.
- He/she is not available now; can you call later?
- Have a great day.
- Thank you.
- Good bye.

Personal Needs

- I need to go to the bathroom.
- I want to eat.
- I want a drink.
- I want ice chips.
- Please brush my teeth.
- I am really thirsty!
- Put on my glasses.
- Clean my glasses.
- Wipe my nose.
- I am hot.
- I am cold.

Social

- Thank you.
- I am sorry.
- I appreciate it.
- You are nice.
- What is your name?
- I love you.
- I'm glad you came to see me.
- How is _____?
- Please talk to me.
- God bless you.

Control

- Leave me alone.
- I need some privacy.
- Give me a break.
- I don't want that.
- No!
- Let me say when.
- I'm ready now.
- Turn the lights on.
- Turn the TV on/off.
- Let's do this later.

Clarification

- What did you say?
- Really?
- I don't understand.
- Huh?
- Tell me more.
- Explain that.
I don't understand.

Positioning

- Move the bed up/down.
- I am uncomfortable.
- I need readjusted.
- I want to turn over.
- I'd like to sit in the chair.
- I want to go to bed.
- Put a pillow under my legs.
- Move my arm.

Directives

- I want to see a doctor.
- Tell me what is happening.
- Don't move me.
- Be careful!
- Don't touch that!
- Turn the lights on/off.

Comfort

- Just stay with me.
- Hold my hand.
- Tell me about when we...
- Read me my greeting cards.
- Just talk to me awhile.
- Tell me I'm going to be fine.
- Rub my back.
- Make me laugh.

Information gathering

- How am I doing?
- Am I making progress?
- Who are you?
- When are we
- Where's my wife/husband?
- What is the plan for me?
- Explain why we are doing this.
- Will this hurt?
- How long do I have to go?

Medical Information

- This is my medical history:
_____.
- My medications are...
- I have pain.
- It happens every now and then/all the time/when I move.
- The pain is sharp/ dull/throbbing.
- Nothing helps.
- Gets better with Tylenol.
- Something doesn't feel right.
- My heart feels weird.
- My breathing isn't right.
- My stomach is upset.

Emotions/Feelings

- I am so frustrated.
- I am afraid.
- I have anxiety about the future.
- I'm fine.
- This sucks.
- I love you.
- I hate you right now.
- I am tired.
- What if I don't get better?
- I feel like you don't care.
- I'm not stupid
- I can hear you fine; I just cannot speak. (Quit yelling)

Leisure/Entertainment

- Turn on the TV.
- Will you change the channel?
- I want to listen to music.
- Let's watch a movie.
- I'd like my photo album.
- Let's play a game.
- Turn up the volume.
- I'd like to go out to eat.
- Invite the neighbors over.

Finances

- How much money do I have?
- How much is this costing?
- Can I buy something?
- Let me pay for that.
- How much is in my checking?
- Who is paying for this?
- I need to write a check.
- When is the rent due?
- Who is taking care of my money?
- I want to pay for this.
- Give me my wallet.
- I want cash.

Spiritual

- Say a prayer for me.
- How can I pray for you?
- Read a devotional to me.
- Will you call my pastor?
- When can I go back to church/synagogue?
- Hand me my Bible.
- I feel like God isn't listening.
- I need a miracle.
- You have been a blessing to me.
- Let's sing some hymns.
- My favorite verse is _____.

Home Health

- Remind me of your name.
- What was my blood pressure?
- Do I have a fever?
- How many times per week do you come?
- How long will you see me?
- Am I improving?
- What shall I do while you are gone?
- Where is your contact information?
- When do I see the doctor next?
- How many weeks/months will you come?
- What do I do when you leave?
- I wish you would come more often.
- Put my folder next to the phone.
- You can just walk in when you get here.
- When can I stay alone?
- Why can't I continue?
- Show me my schedule.

Skilled Nursing Facility

- When will I get discharged?
- Can I go home?
- How long will I have therapy?
- What is my therapy schedule?
- The food is terrible.
- Will you help me choose food/drinks?
- It is loud at night.
- I cannot sleep.
- What is your name?
- When will my wife/husband be here?
- When does the doctor come?
- This medicine makes me feel sick.
- I have pain.
- I want to go to bed.
- Will you change my clothes?

Therapy

- I'm tired. Can I take a break?
- I'm ready to start.
- This is a hard exercise!
- Am I getting better?
- I'm frustrated.
- Let me choose what to do next.
- I want to walk.
- I want to work on....
- I need to say something.
- Give me a little more time.
- Tell me about my therapy plan.
- How long will I be in therapy?
- Remind me of your name.

Doctor Appointment

- Here are my symptoms (list pain, aching, burning, nausea, headache, depression, etc.)
- How long will it take for me to improve?
- Why did this happen?
- When can I drive?
- When is my next appointment?
- My medical history is...
- My medications are...
- Will you write that down for me?