

COMMUNICATION

Communication is crucial to meaningful connection, relationships and sense of belonging.

If required, always make sure the resident has their glasses on, hearing aids and teeth in place so they can see you, hear you and talk to you.



Care of communication aids and tools

Hearing aids

Check they are clean and the batteries are charged every morning

Glasses

Clean them each day





EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The acronym **SOLER** is used to summarise important behaviours, as follows.

S

- **Squarely** face the person
- Facing them in this way makes your posture say "I am ready to listen to you"
- Talk in a place free of distraction

O

- Keep an **open** posture – it shows you are being attentive
- Crossed arms and legs can represent less involvement

L

- **Lean** toward the other person. This shows you are listening
- Look directly, ensure you have their attention

E

- Maintain **eye** contact
- As you listen, use your eyes to show you are looking at the person. This lets them know you are listening to what they are saying
- Note, eye contact is variable across cultures. Not all cultures consider direct contact respectful

R

- **Relax** while attending
- It is entirely possible both to concentrate and be relaxed. In turn, this helps the other person to feel comfortable and relaxed

GOOD COMMUNICATION

- Begins with an introduction and establishing a rapport
- Allows time for the resident to express themselves
- Have a respectful attitude
- Display attentive body language
- Choose the right time and place to talk
- Be aware of the cognitive status of the resident
- Residents with dementia need more time to communicate. Use short sentences, simple questions and reduce distractions
- Listen, be attentive
- Respect cultural differences – including eye contact and making connections with kaumātua, using whanaungatanga
- Use interpreters and communication aids



REPORT

Notify registered nurse of any concerns expressed from family and whānau



BE MINDFUL OF YOUR VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL BODY LANGUAGE

Verbal cues

- Speak slowly, clearly, precisely

Non-verbal cues

- Posture and body language
- Eye contact
- Facial expressions
- Gestures

Communicating with the resident's family, whānau and friends

- Maintain confidentiality and privacy
- Shared decision-making with family and whānau
- Concerns expressed from family and whānau are directed to the registered nurse/manager
- Document conversations with family and whānau



DOCUMENTATION

Writing progress notes

- Clear handwriting
- Designation
- Time, date and signature
- Content, concise, relevant and informative
- Document conversations with family and whānau
- Consider including:
 - appearance
 - comfort
 - nutrition/hydration status
 - mental health status
 - bowels/bladder
 - skin integrity