

The person with aphasia

Many people with aphasia retain their prior social and cognitive (memory, problem solving, thinking) skills, therefore it is important to acknowledge that the person with aphasia is a competent, knowledgeable person who can make decisions, and that they usually know what they want to say, but cannot say it.

If you have any questions please contact the Speech and Language Therapy Department.

Tel: 01 414 2776/2778

Your Speech and Language Therapist is:

Name: _____

Bleep: _____

Phone: _____

MPSLT008-02

Tallaght University Hospital | Ospidéal Ollscoile Thamhlachta

An Academic Partner of Trinity College Dublin

PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Supporting Conversation In Aphasia



Aphasia

Aphasia is a communication difficulty that is caused by an acquired brain injury e.g. stroke, head injury, tumour. Aphasia affects a person's **ability to understand and use language.** It affects people in different ways and to different severities. It can cause difficulties with:

•Understanding

•Speaking

•Reading

•Writing



Impact of aphasia

Having aphasia can be incredibly frustrating. Due to its effects on communication, it can impact on a person's ability to form and maintain relationships with others, express their needs, feelings and wants and return to previous social activities and employment.

Supported conversation

First off…

- Get the person's **attention** first
- Try to be at eye-level
- **Reduce noise** in the background e.g. turn off tv/radio

To help the person with aphasia understand

- Slow down your rate of speech
- Stress the key words
- Tell the person what you have understood before you say more
- Use pointing and gesture as you speak
- Use objects, pictures, drawing and writing to support what you say e.g. write down key words, point to pictures

To help the person with aphasia to get their message across

- Give written or verbal **options** for the person to choose from
- Encourage **any way of responding** e.g. pointing, gesture, drawing, writing
- Give the person time to respond
- Ask questions that need a **yes/no answer**
- If conversation becomes too frustrating, suggest that you will take a break and come back to it later