

## Work Book 3

### Assisting Communication

#### **Module 3: Enhancing Communicative Success following Stroke: a multimedia problem based learning package**

##### **Learning issues - Forewarning**

This week is likely to raise many questions. As we go, make sure you identify learning areas to follow up on and do so over the week. Next week's session will include revision of these areas.

##### **Communicative Ramps**

Discuss with the group

*How important is it to use "communication ramps" with our clients? Do you feel you know exactly how to implement these ramps in conversation?*

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No?

So we need to review ...

*When do we use communication ramps? Are there certain communication ramps that work only for environment, improving our understanding or improving people's expression?*

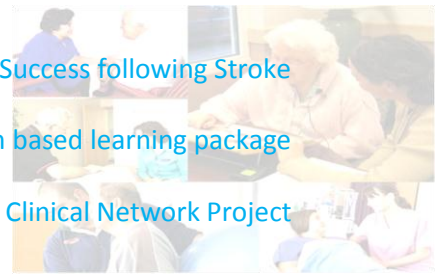
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### **Overall Principles of Communication Ramps**

*Treat the person as an adult*

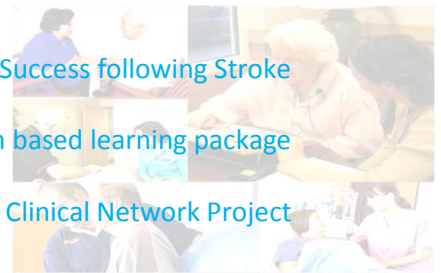
*Getting the message across is more important than speaking perfectly*

*Accept emotion*

*Really listen & provide undivided attention*

*Communication should be relaxed and natural.*





Back to Mr V...

## Initial contact file entry by SP

Mr V is a 62 year old man who has been referred for management following a left temporoparietal infarct. He presented with a right hemiplegia and aphasia.

### **Communication:**

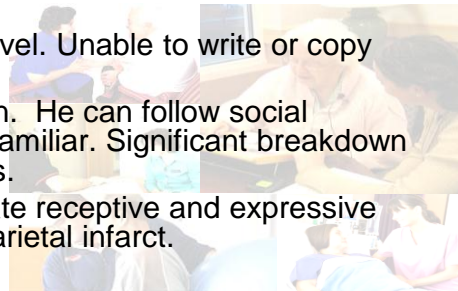
*Receptive:* Yes / No – reliable verbal response for personal information. Unreliable for more complex information. Able to identify body parts, some difficulty with left & right. Followed 1 stage commands and was inconsistent with 2 stage complex commands.

*Expressive:* Word finding difficulties noted in conversation– responded to phonemic cues. Used circumlocutions. Phonemic & semantic paraphasia's evident, use of non specific vocabulary +++.  
Non fluent verbal output.

Reading was intact at a single word level. Unable to write or copy single words.

Pt uses gesture to facilitate expression. He can follow social conversation that was in context and familiar. Significant breakdown noted in unfamiliar conversation topics.

*Impression:* Pt presented with moderate receptive and expressive aphasia consistent with left temporoparietal infarct.



### **Time to brainstorm**

Mr V wants to make an appointment with the Physiotherapist.

*How well do you think he will go?*

What did Mr V do well? What strategies did he use?

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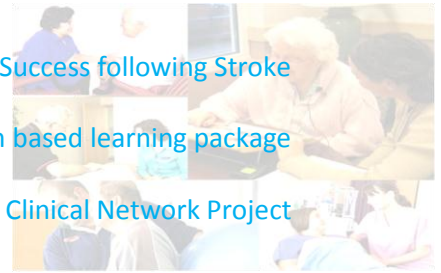
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What did the receptionist do that made it hard for Mr V?

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How would you have managed this differently? Discuss as a group

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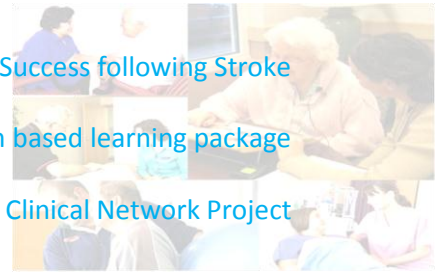
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You need to run an education session with Mr. V





Brainstorm some suggestions both to facilitate the person being able to understand you and also assist them in communicating.

List 3 strategies in each of the following categories to assist communication in this task.

Environmental strategies

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Expression strategies

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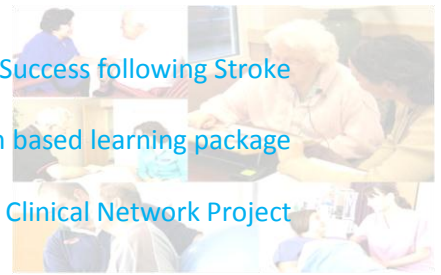
Understanding strategies

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### Enhancing the person's expression

- Give the person enough time.
- Clarify information using yes/no questions.
- Questioning to help with word finding difficulties e.g “Is the pain in your arm? Do you need me to help or give you more time?”
- Never pretend to understand if you don't.
- Use an alphabet board/picture board to assist in clarification of their message if the person uses one.

### Enhancing the persons understanding

- Look directly at the patient – this facilitates listening
- Speak naturally but slowly
  - “Staaand uuuppp and waaalk tooo the chaair” (UNATURAL) vs. “Stand up.....walk to the chair” (GOOD)
- Add non verbal cues to supplement your speech.
  - Facial expressions, vocal inflection, drawing, writing, & gesture
- Involve your listener by checking in on how well you are getting through.
- Keep your messages focused.
- Repeat your topic in different ways – be redundant in the conversation. e.g. Mr. V, lets go for a walk. On our walk I want you to.... The walk is going well so far... “ It sounds silly, but being specific and repeating yourself helps the person with aphasia understand.

### Enhancing your understanding

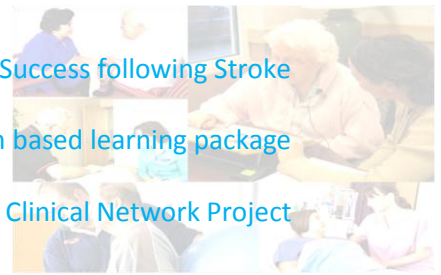
- Check the topic on what you think is being said frequently
- Watch for turn taking signals e.g. pauses, looking at you, changes in inflection indicating a question
- Provide undivided attention
- Choose the time & place for the communication
- Manage communication breakdown with confidence – be upfront if you are not sure



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## Opportunities to practise

This week

Have a conversation someone who has some form of communication impairment.

Use these strategies you have learnt today

We can discuss the difficulties you had and any problems you faced next week

