

5th National Elder Abuse Conference: Together making change

COMMUNICATION IMPAIRMENT: THE EFFECTS ON ACCESS, WELLBEING AND PARTICIPATION

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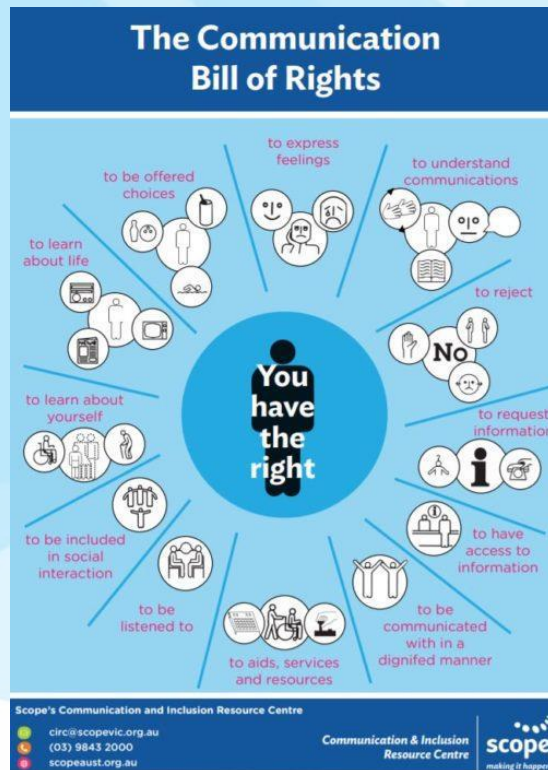
**on behalf of the Speech Pathology Australia Aged Care
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Communication is a basic human right



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Communication mediates a persons **participation** in daily life

Communication impacts **psychosocial wellbeing** and **quality of life**

Communication affects a persons ability to **access** and use **basic human services** including healthcare

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOqfp4eqA10>

Communication impairment

There are many older people who experience communication impairment



Communication impairment **limits** a persons ability to:

- Make choices and achieve goals
- Say 'yes' or 'no' – give consent
- Tell others what is wrong
- Ask for assistance
- Make and maintain relationships

Communication impairment and vulnerability

- Among our most **vulnerable** elders
- Cannot voice their **needs** and **wishes**
- At **high risk of abuse** from family members, friends, and formal and informal carers
- **Depression and anxiety**, loss of independence, and a decline in functional skills across ADL's

Communication Support

Benefits of appropriate support for communication:

- Choice and control
- Decisions
- Consent
- Participation
- Independence
- Meaningful relationships
- Consumer directed care
- Equity of access and outcomes

Communication strategies

- Multimodal



- Environment



- Reduce complexity



- Time



- Check back



How Speech Pathology can help

- **Assess** and **assist** in managing communication impairment across the lifespan by providing
 - Tailored, evidence based **training** and **support**
 - Individual and group **interventions**
- Directly assist in determining **decision making capacity**
- Work closely with other health professionals to support communication

Take home messages

- Communication is a **basic human right**
- Effective communication is always required for **choice and control**
- Older people with communication impairment are **vulnerable to abuse**
- All people have the right to be supported to make **choices**
- Older people with communication impairment may benefit from tailored **communication supports**
- Speech pathologists provide tailored, evidence based training and support, through individual and group interventions

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