

# Better Health Starts With Effective Communication

Research shows that lack of effective communication access for adults with communication disabilities contributes to poorer health and health care outcomes—and costs U.S. health care \$29 billion annually from preventable adverse events.

**Effective communication** benefits everyone's health and well-being. It is especially critical for people with **hearing, speech, language, voice,** and/or **cognitive difficulties**, who often experience barriers to care.

Start with **ACCESS** for more effective communication and better health outcomes.

Being flexible with your communication style and your time based on each person's needs can optimize patient safety, quality of care, costs, and treatment outcomes for people with hearing, speech, language, voice, and/or cognitive difficulties.

- A** **Ask** about communication preferences, strategies, and accommodations **before** start of care.
- C** **Communicate** directly with the person (unless they indicate otherwise).
- C** **Check** for understanding of information given and received.
- E** **Ensure** environmental distractions are limited, and give your full attention.
- S** **Slow down** to allow time to process information and respond.
- S** **Support** interactions using different communication methods (gestures, writing, drawing, pictures, communication boards, videos, assistive technology).

SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO **TAKE THE ACCESS PLEDGE** TODAY.  
For more information, visit [www.asha.org/communication-access](http://www.asha.org/communication-access)

