

# Communication Access keeps us healthy

Try these six strategies if someone is having difficulty talking, hearing or understanding what you're saying.



## 1. Assume competence

- Trust that they can make decisions
- Speak directly to the person
- Offer help if they need it



## 2. Take time

- Be patient and speak slowly
- Use long pauses



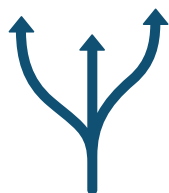
## 3. Find out how they best communicate

- Consider using gestures, pictures or written notes
- Ask if they use other strategies



## 4. Watch and listen

- Check that they have their hearing aids and glasses
- Consider lighting and limit background noise
- Watch for signs of understanding (e.g., a smile or a hand signal)



## 5. Try other ways if you're still having difficulty

- Ask questions with clear choices
- Get creative (e.g., draw a picture, write a key word or use gestures)
- Be patient and keep trying



## 6. Check understanding

- Summarize what you talked about and ensure you got it right
- Ask if there's anything more they want to say



Find more tips, tools and strategies:  
[ahs.ca/CommunicationAccess](https://ahs.ca/CommunicationAccess)