

Communication Access – Tools & Resources

Communication Tools and Resources

The following resources are useful to include in your department's *Communication Access Toolkit*. Having these tools readily available within your site or unit will allow staff to more effectively communicate with patients who have speech, language and hearing difficulties. All staff will need to know how to locate and use these tools. Please ensure infection prevention and control measures are in place when resources are shared or moved from room to room.

See [AHS.ca Communication Access](https://www.alberta.ca/communication-access) for tips on how to use the tools.

Dry Erase board

Multipurpose - For writing and drawing messages, use thin felt tip or thin marker as they glide more easily across a page.

Clip Board

A clip board helps stabilize paper and ensures a stable base for writing. Plain paper and a pencil/pen can be attached to the clip board by string.

Magnets

Magnets are used on whiteboards in patient rooms to attach communication boards and communication needs posters.

Boogie Board E-Writer

This electronic writing pad allows patients to write erasable messages. It works well for non-verbal patients with good hand dexterity. It is available at [Indigo.ca](https://www.indigo.ca) and other distributors.



Communication Board

A communication board helps patients indicate their wants, needs and ideas. A variety of communication boards and instructions are available in the [Communication Kit for Patients, Families and Health Providers](#).



Topic Board

A topic board provides categories to help a patient clarify their message and communicate with others. They are frequently used when speech or language is impaired. Leave extra blank spaces for the patient and family to add topics.

Places	People	Current Events	Emotions
Family	Body	Travel	The Past
Transportation	Entertainment	Community	The Future
Schedule	Health	Food	Question
Mary's Wedding	Kitchen construction		

Explanation Boards

Explanation boards may be useful to explain medical procedures to help patient understand such as going for x-ray, surgery. There is a board with basic medical needs and front/back of body pictures included in the [Communication Kit for Patients, Families and Health Providers](#).



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iPad/Tablet (hearing, understanding, talking)

A tablet offers many communication options such as:

- Text-to-speech – reads words aloud
- Photos/pictures
- Communication apps (consult your speech-language pathologist for recommendations)

Alphabet board (hearing, talking)

The alphabet board contains letters and numbers. A patient communicates through pointing and spelling words. They are not suitable for everyone. Alphabet boards can be changed to meet a person's needs (e.g., larger print). There are alphabet boards located in the [Communication Kit for Patients, Families and Health Providers](#).



Pocket Talker (hearing)

The pocket talker is useful for patients with hearing loss that benefit from amplified sound. It can be used when patients left their hearing aids at home and/or are having trouble hearing in noisy environments. Williams Sound Pocket Talker Available in Canada from agecomfort.com 1-800-520-3259 SKU - AC1083 (Also available through many local hearing equipment vendors)

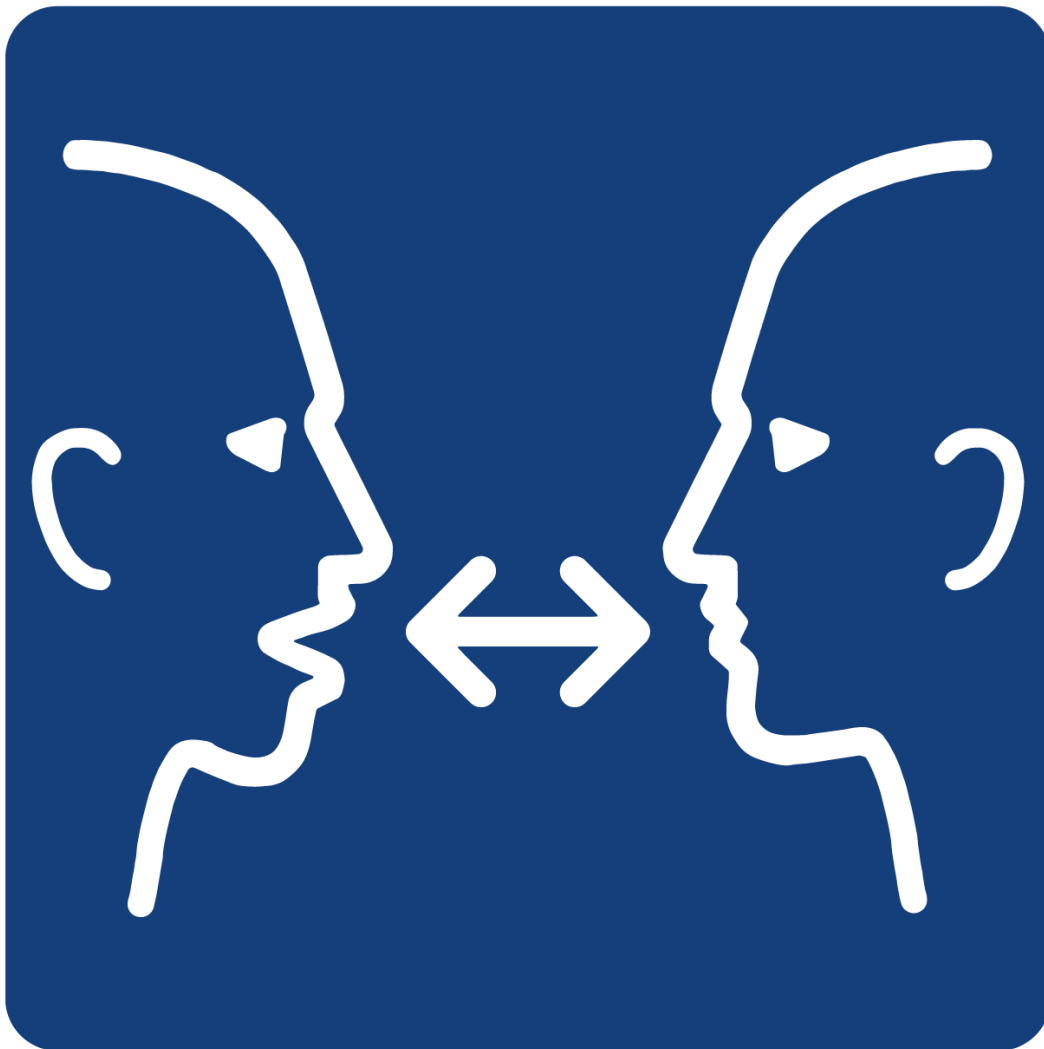


Eye Gaze Board or E-Tran (eye-Transfer) Board (talking)

An e-tran board is a way of communicating via eye-gaze. It's an option for patients with limited speech and motor control. There are letters and numbers arranged on a plexiglass board. The patient "points" by gazing at individual letters to make words. For more information on e-tran boards, contact your local speech-language pathologist.



The Communication Access symbol and Hearing symbol can be used throughout sites, units, medical offices and patient rooms to indicate communication inclusiveness and needs.





For further information, learning and support in using these resources, please contact your local speech-language pathologist, audiologist or practice.consultation@ahs.ca.



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