Communication

Learning outcomes

- Understand the importance of effective communication at work
- Understand how to meet the communication and language needs, wishes and preferences of individuals
- Understand how to promote effective communication
- Understand the principles and practices relating to confidentiality
- Use appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication
- Support the use of appropriate communication aids/ technologies

***Standard 6 of the Care Certificate

The importance of communication

Good communication develops your knowledge and understanding about individuals and the part played by other workers. It helps to ensure that each person's views are valued and taken into account

6Cs

Communication
To listen carefully but also be able to speak and act in a way that the person can understand.

Types of communication

Written communication

Written communication is a method of communication that is used to send messages, keep records and provide information that is permanent

Verbal communication

Communication using spoken words. Tone, pitch, volume and the words that you use can affect meaning

Body language

Non-verbal communication where facial expressions, gestures, body positioning and movements can give clues about our attitude and how we feel

Gestures

Hand or arm movements that emphasise what is being said or used as an alternative to speaking.

Types of communication

Eye contact

Good eye contact shows that a person is listening

Sign language

A way of communicating which uses hand shapes and movements to get the message across

Makaton

A form of language that uses signs and symbols to convey meaning

Braille

A code of raised dots read by touch.
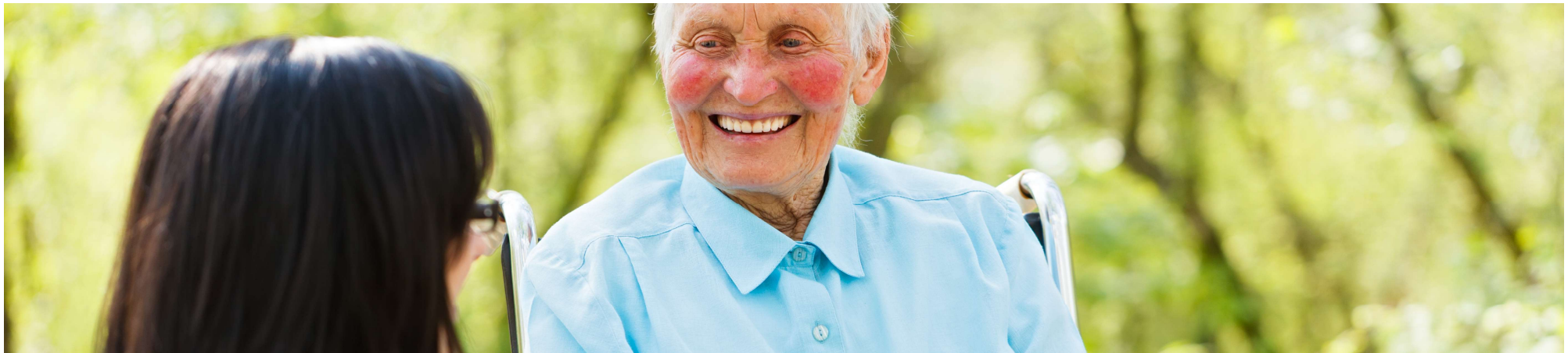
Communication and relationships

Relationships are based on trust and understanding

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Good communication	▪ Understanding individuals' needs ▪ Effective team working ▪ Clarity ▪ Trust
Poor communication	▪ Misunderstanding individuals' needs ▪ Ineffective team working ▪ Confusion ▪ Distrust.

Communication needs and preferences

Individuals' communication needs will be unique. Talking may not be the best method of communication for all individuals. Other methods include:

- Touch
- Technological aids
- Word or symbol boards
- Speech synthesisers.
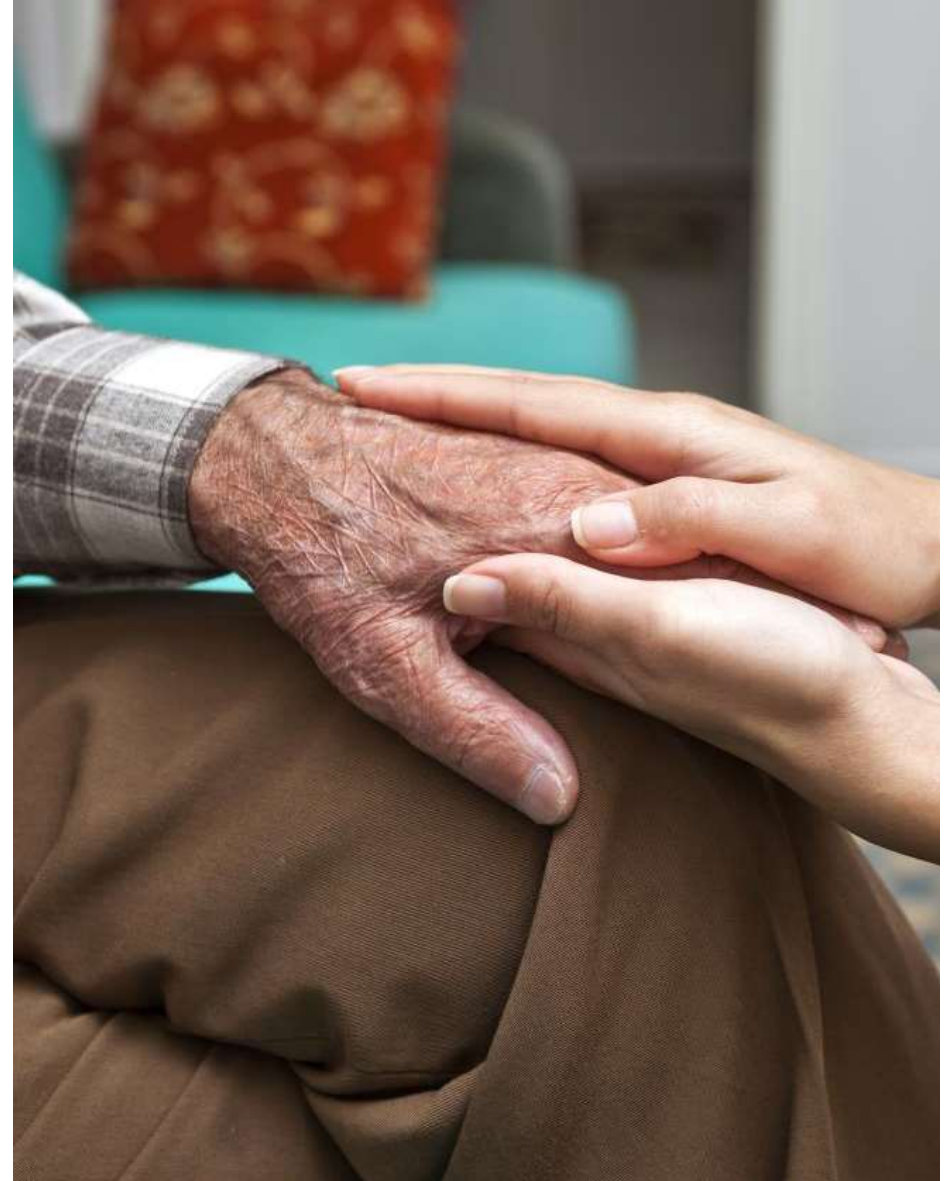
Barriers to communication

A barrier is anything that can get in the way of communication

Attitude	Poor or negative body language

Limited use of technology	Lack of privacy	Culture

Body positioning	Stereotyping	Environmental factors

Emotions	Sensory impairments	Language

Physical	Not enough time	Substance misuse

Checking understanding

- **You can check that you have understood what you have been told by summarising the conversation**

- **You can check that the individual has understood what you have said by asking questions.**

Summarise

This means to think about the main points of the conversation or communication and shorten or simplify them in order to repeat them back to the individual. This will help to check your and their understanding.

Information and support

Sources of information include:

- **Specialist charities and associations**
- **Websites and online forums**
- **Local services or groups**
- **Your manager or supervisor**

Sources of support include:

- **Befrienders, advocates and mentors**
- **Speech and language therapists**
- **Interpreters and translators**
- **Clinical psychologists**
- **Counsellors.**

Confidentiality

Personal and sensitive information must be treated confidentially

Sharing relevant information with other workers who 'need to know'

Storing information securely

Information should not usually be disclosed without the person's informed consent

Information should not be discussed where others can overhear

REMEMBER

In some circumstances information MUST be shared without consent.

Communication in practice

Communication can be:

- **Face-to-face**
- **By telephone or text**
- **By email, internet or social networks**
- **By written reports or letters**

You should always try to match your method of communication to the individual's needs and be aware of confidentiality.