

Aphasia Center of West Texas

Group 7

➤ Population Served

- Most clients have LH brain aphasia due to stroke → speech impaired
 - Communication ability (NOT intelligence) affected
- Individuals with hearing impairment, MS, head & neck injuries, and non-English speakers
- No referral requirements
- Must be 18 or older
 - Most patients between ages 30-90; (Avg age = 60)
- Must be independent (no medical care needed)
 - Exception: toilet assistance

➤ Services Provided

- Interview = 1st step
- Make recommendations based on specific needs = 2nd step
- Emphasis on *Life Participation Approach*
- Offer communication groups/programs to join
 - Card/table games; computer/typing skills; gardening; cooking, exercise, music, & shop classes
- Patient education: review doctor reports with clients to help them understand better situation
- Discuss loss of identity/grievance over past self
- Teach skills for moving forward and improving self-efficacy
- Offer provider education/awareness courses: consult with doctors to enhance communication with their patients
- Provide training for significant others → facilitate success at home

➤ Clients' Health Needs

- Common comorbidity = apraxia (loss of ability to map out motor movements)
 - Can affect gestures (say yes but give thumbs down) → discrepancy between intended meaning and actual gesture → devastating consequences

➤ Clients' Health Information Needs

- Stroke awareness
- Topics related to neurological health (chronic pain, seizure activity, sexual issues)
- Mobility issues
- Toileting issues

➤ Advice for Physicians

- Offer multiple forms of communication
 - Sharpie + piece of paper (written) AND gesture or words
- Adopt phrase "I know that you know what you want to say but cannot say it"
- Do not leave patient out!
 - Acknowledge time barrier and get permission to speak with their significant other
- When in doubt, consult with other professions (e.g. speech pathology) for guidance
- Find out if patient has a healthcare surrogate
- Utilize available resources
 - Aphasia Institute of Canada's Aphasia graphics
 - Download a roadmap for hospitals: <https://www.jointcommission.org>

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Aphasia affects a person's expression and understanding of language as well as the ability to **read** and **write**.



Ten top tips for talking with people with aphasia



Group Members:

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