



Appendix 4.12

*Effective
Communication
Barriers and
Strategies*

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Below is a list of potential barriers that might be encountered when implementing effective communication. The far-right column lists implementation strategies to address the barriers. You could use one or a combination of the implementation strategies listed for each barrier.

Refer to the [Expert Recommendations for Implementing Change \(ERIC\) Discrete Implementation Strategies Table](#) for descriptions of each strategy.

Category of Barrier	Barriers to Effective Communication	Possible Implementation Strategies
Leadership, staff, and provider attitudes, knowledge and comfort.	Not seen as priority Not viewed as required Not viewed as valuable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prepare champions who advocate for providing effective communication accommodations within their teams Promote adaptability: Identify ways the process of providing communication accommodations can be tailored to meet individual clinic or unit needs Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins via Disability Coordinator, legal team, or other champions Educate/train on legal requirements, implications for patient satisfaction, patient and workforce safety, etc. Use reminders (electronic health record alerts, tents, signs) Audit and provide feedback Kudos to high performing staff/clinicians/sites
	Insufficient buy-in or being “voluntold”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prepare champions Promote adaptability Educate/train on legal requirements, implications for patient satisfaction, patient and workforce safety, etc. Use reminders (electronic health record alerts, tents, signs) Audit and provide feedback Kudos to high performing staff/clinicians/sites
	Discomfort with providing accommodations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prepare champions Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins Provide training on use of communication accommodations Provide staff and providers with tools (scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides) Use reminders (electronic health record alerts, tents, signs) Collect data (via patient experience surveys) related to provision of effective communication accommodations and relay to responsible individuals/roles Kudos to high performing staff/clinicians/sites Identify and celebrate early adopters
	Lack of knowledge about disability competency, language, preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and prepare champions Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins Provide training Provide staff and providers with tools (scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides)

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Staff and provider knowledge and comfort: Workflow and logistics	<p>Hesitance to ask because do not know how to provide</p> <p>Or</p> <p>System/clinic might not have the needed accommodation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess staff readiness for providing communication accommodations and identify local barriers/factors contributing to hesitancy • Workflow mapping • Identify and prepare champions • Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins • Establish centralized technical assistance (i.e., how to use an accommodation) • Educate staff on available communication accommodations and processes for requesting one in their unit • Provide staff and providers with tools (e.g., scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides) • Use reminders (electronic health record alerts, tents, signs) • Audit and provide feedback • Kudos to high performing staff/clinicians/sites • Patient-facing educational materials listing which communication accommodations are available • Identify early adopters
	<p>Lack of awareness that patients need accommodations or that the team is required to provide accommodations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and prepare champions • Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins • Provide training on use of communication accommodations • Educate staff on legal requirements, implications for patient satisfaction, patient and workforce safety, etc. • Use reminders (EHR alerts, tents, signs)
	<p>Lack of knowledge about how to use the accommodation, including how to keep staff and clinicians up to date with knowledge about accommodations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish centralized technical assistance • Provide training on use of communication accommodation • Use train-the-trainer strategies • Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins • Identify and prepare champions • Identify early adopters • Audit and provide feedback • Provide staff and providers with tools (scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides) • Use reminders (EHR alerts, tents, signs)
	<p>Challenges coordinating across departments and roles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change record systems/EHR • Designate a formal implementation team • Conduct a needs assessment that assesses readiness and identifies local barriers to providing communication accommodations • Develop a formal implementation blueprint • Workflow mapping • Identify and prepare champions • Promote adaptability • Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins • Establish centralized technical assistance • Provide training • Relay clinical data (i.e., what percentage of patients who received a communication accommodation were able to access care) to responsible individuals/roles • Review staff performance data (i.e., how often a requested accommodation was provided) to inform changes

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote network weaving by strengthening relationships and collaboration within and outside of the organization, departments, or units
Workflow and logistics	Limited time, budget and resources available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a needs assessment Workflow mapping Identify and prepare champions Promote adaptability Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins Establish centralized technical assistance Provide staff and providers with tools (scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides) Audit and provide feedback Reexamine the implementation plan Identify early adopters Reallocate resources or advocate to reallocate resources with leadership Access new funding (e.g., identify internal and external grant opportunities for larger items) Use data to document need (see Chapter 2: Documenting Disability Status and Accommodation Needs)
	Competing demands and can put additional burden on the organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a local needs assessment Workflow mapping Identify and prepare champions Promote adaptability Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins Establish centralized technical assistance Provide staff and providers with tools (scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides) Use reminders (electronic health record alerts, tents, signs) Relay clinical data to responsible individuals/roles Review performance data to inform changes Audit and provide feedback Kudos to high performing staff/clinicians/sites Identify early adopters
	Not assigned responsibility for tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change record systems/EHR Designate a formal implementation team Conduct a needs assessment Develop a formal implementation blueprint Workflow mapping Identify and prepare champions Promote adaptability Provide ongoing consultation and check-ins Establish centralized technical assistance Relay clinical data to responsible individuals/roles Review performance data to inform changes Audit and provide feedback

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Patient-level challenges	Patients are unaware that they have the right to accommodations	<p>Implementation strategies directed at clinicians and clinics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use reminders (EHR alerts, tents, signs) • Establish centralized technical assistance • Provide training to staff on patients' rights to accommodations, accommodations available in the organization, and how to share with patients • Provide staff and providers with tools (scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides) addressing patients' rights • Create and distribute patient-facing educational materials • Prepare patients/consumers to be active participants • Obtain and use patients/consumers and family feedback
	Patients are unsure of what communication accommodations are available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide centralized technical assistance on available accommodations. • Create and distribute patient-facing educational materials
	Patients are unsure of what communication accommodations they would benefit from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide staff and providers with tools (e.g., scripts, cheat sheets, quick guides) to educate patients • Create and distribute patient-facing educational materials