



*Appendix 4.5*

*Effective  
Communication  
Accommodations  
Examples*

The following is a list of examples of effective communication accommodations a healthcare system, hospital, or clinic could provide. The list is categorized by “auxiliary aids” and “services”. See Appendix 0.8: *Disability Accommodations Examples* in the General Resources chapter for additional disability accommodations.

Auxiliary aids and services on this list that are similar or serve the same communication needs (i.e., visual, auditory, expressive communication, cognitive support, sensory support) are not necessarily substitutes for one another. Patients with disabilities request certain auxiliary aids and services based on their specific needs and preferred communication methods. Patients with disabilities may also need multiple aids and services to effectively accommodate their communication needs. Healthcare organizations should therefore have more than one accommodation available for any given communication need.

**REMINDER:** Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, patients with disabilities and their companions or caregivers with disabilities cannot be required to provide or cover the cost of the disability accommodations (auxiliary aids and services) they need. It is your organization’s responsibility to provide reasonable accommodations to ensure equal access to care and offered services.

### Auxiliary Aids

- **Sound signalers:** Flashes a light when there is a loud noise or a knock on the door.
- **Auditory or adaptive pill bottles:** A technology that reads prescription labels aloud.
- **Signature guides:** A tool that helps someone with a visual or fine motor impairment accurately sign documents. It is typically a sturdy piece of plastic or metal with one or more openings through which a person can trace or place their signature.
- **Communication boards:** A sheet or board with pictures, words, and symbols that the user can point to to communicate.
- **White board and dry-erase marker**
- **Text-to-speech apps and Speech-to-text apps**
- **Communication toolkits:** A prepared box or bag with common communication aids, including communication boards, dry-erase boards, sound amplifiers, and sensory fidgets. They are typically located in central locations such as nurses’ stations.
- **Picture schedules and social stories:** Pictures that illustrate a medical test, procedure, or next steps in care.
- **Sound amplification device:** A device that amplifies sound for the listener.
- **Voice amplifier:** A device that amplifies a speaker’s voice.
- **Portable hearing loops:** A device that wirelessly transmits sound directly into hearing aids or cochlear implants. It consists of a microphone, an amplifier, and a loop of wire that emits a magnetic field picked up by the telecoil in compatible devices, enabling clearer hearing in noisy environments.

- **Clear masks**
- **Video phone**
- **Print or written materials in alternative formats**, such as:
  - Pictures
  - Plain language
  - Audio recordings
  - Large print
  - Braille
- **Magnifiers**, including full page magnifiers
- **Screen readers**: software that allows blind or visually impaired users to read and use a computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.
- **Audio description of video informational materials**
- **Audio treatment summary and instructions**
- **Noise cancelling headphones**
- **Sensory fidgets**
- **Sunglasses**
- **Accessible telehealth platforms with captioning and chat functions**

### Services

- **American Sign Language or other sign language interpretation**
- **Communication Access Real Time Translation (CART)**: Instant translation of spoken language through a transcriptionist who types on a notebook computer and uses real-time software.
- **Certified deaf interpreter**: Deaf or hard-of-hearing individual who is a native sign language user. They interpret sign language and incorporate gestures, miming, props, and other tools to provide detailed Deaf communication.
- **Cued speech interpreter**: Individuals who are trained to use a system of visual cues (hand shapes and positions) to make spoken language more accessible to individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.
- **Speech to speech interpreter**: person trained to recognize unclear speech and repeat it clearly
- **Qualified note takers**: An individual knowledgeable on medical vocabulary and terminology who takes accurate notes
- **Document reader**: Someone available to read documents aloud.
- **Relay telephone calls**
- **Qualified reader**: An individual knowledgeable on medical vocabulary and terminology who can read written material verbally
- **Written or electronic appointment reminders and communication**