

# Analyse communication methods and assess their effectiveness in a care setting

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



Effective communication is the foundation for any healthcare setting. Communication is essential in these environments as it helps classify issues, provides emotional support and also establishes relationships. It is important for employees in health care settings to be equipped with social skills in order to identify a wide range of emotional needs. Wilbur Schramm's theory is 'to understand human communication process, one must understand how people relate to each other'. For example, a care worker needs to be able to adapt their social skills to be able to communicate with different patients and identify their client's needs.

Communication is verbal or non-verbal. Verbal is spoken (oral) which can be accomplished face-to-face. This type of communication is central to establish relationships between people. For example, a professional in a hospital will use verbal communication to inform a patient of any procedure or care task that is given. This builds a sense of trust because communicating face-to-face establishes that the professional has time to care for the patient, which makes the patient feel looked after. Verbal communication also allows any questions to be raised and gives opportunity to answer.

This is effective as any misunderstanding issues would be raised. Non-verbal communication (written) is also used in a health care environment. Such as hospitals. They use written communication to record medical history, staff rota's and formal policies and procedures. This is the most effective way in recording patients' medical history as it is more accurate and factual. Another example of this form used in hospitals is during 'handover

meetings'. This happens before staff rotation, the staff on shift update the staff about to come on shift with any events or incidents that occurred.

These meetings can be informal and rushed, the lack of communication found here can cause problems in hospital productivity as the new staff on shift might not get all the information they need to know. Written communication is also used by social workers. They use printed forms to use when meeting a client to ensure they have asked all the correct questions needed for a review. Communication is either formal or informal. Formal communication is often used in hospitals such as in policies and documents. This language register is used in hospitals as it gives it a professional image.

This perception will give of a serious and respected environment and the patients will feel like they are in good hands. Formal lexis that is used in hospitals can make it difficult for patients to understand. For example a professional may mention 'hypertension' to the patient, this jargon is mainly understood by professionals, therefore would need to explain to the patient that it is high blood pressure. Informal communication is also used in health care. Social workers may communicate informally to their clients. Especially during first interaction as informal communication makes the client feel relaxed and less nervous.

Communication can be difficult as it can be affected by someone with a physical condition. Such as a hearing impairment. Individuals with this condition struggle to understand verbal communication. They can overcome this in many ways. Firstly, by using a hearing aid which increases the volume. It not only increases the volume of what needs to be heard but also

the background noise too. This can still make it difficult to hear what is being said. A second method is using speech to text. This is where a translator types word for word and it is then viewed on a screen instantly.

The person is unable to interpret tone of voice which makes it more difficult to understand the meaning of the message. Therefore it is important for correct kinesics techniques to be used such as body language to help the individual understand the implication of the message. For example eyes down and crossed arms indicates sadness or boredom. A third alternative form of communication for the hearing impaired is sign language. In the UK British sign language is the most preferred language for the Deaf. It involves the movement of hands, face and body. This method can only be understood from those who have learned BSL.

Another physical condition which affects communication is someone with a visual impairment. These individuals will find it challenging to understand the meaning of the conversation as they are unable to interpret body language. Therefore they rely on what they hear to interpret emotions. This is achieved by analyzing paralinguistic techniques such as tone of voice, speed and pitch. A system called Braille is used to help Blind communicate. Braille is a system of raised dots which is read by individuals by using their fingertips. It enables language to be translated into written form.

This is not that effective in health care settings as not everyone can understand it. Braille is also not commonly found on written forms. Such as information leaflets found in hospitals. Technology is increasingly advancing, therefore computerized communication is becoming more common in health

care settings. An example of this type of communication is e-mail. E-mail is used in most work places for colleagues to communicate to each other. This is used as it is a quick and an intermediate way to communicate. Another example is a small hand held device called a Blackberry.

In a hospital an individual may use this if they are on call as it is always accessible, for that reason they will be able to react immediately. Effective communication is very important in any health care setting. As it results in good patient care and increases productivity. There are many barriers in communication, one of these being time. If a professional in a hospital does not have the adequate time to complete a review on a patient this results in bad patient care. Another example of this is if the hospital is busy and they do not have enough beds this can result to informal rushed interactions with patients and quick discharges.