

# Successful communication requires the efforts of all people involved in a conversation!

Even when the person with hearing loss uses hearing aids and active listening strategies, others must consistently use good communication strategies.

## Understanding a person who has hearing loss:

- Be aware of possible distortion of sounds for the hearing impaired person. They may hear your voice, but still have difficulty understanding some words.
- Most hearing impaired people have greater difficulty understanding speech when there is background noise. Try to minimise extraneous noise when talking.
- Some people with hearing loss are very sensitive to loud sounds. This reduced tolerance for loud sounds is not uncommon.
- Recognize that the heard-of-hearing ma have a harder time listening and understanding when they are ill or tired.

## Do you answer yes to any of the following?

- Do you find yourself asking people to repeat themselves?
- Do you raise the volume of the tv louder than what others find normal?
- Does it sound like those around you are mumbling?
- Do you have trouble hearing in busy environments, like a restaurant?

If so, it's a great time to get your hearing checked!

Visit us today for a **FREE hearing assessment!**

### Quinte Hearing Centre

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## COMMUNICATING WITH HEARING LOSS



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# What is involved in good communication?

## For the talker:

- Face the hearing impaired person directly
- Do not talk from another room. Seeing body language and being able to read your face is important.
- Speak clearly, distinctly, and slightly slower but keep speech natural. Shouting and exaggerated mouth movements do not help and may distort the sound.
- Get the person's attention by saying their name or touching their shoulder before beginning a conversation.
- Acquaint the listener with the general topic of the conversation. Avoid sudden topic changes. In a group setting, repeat questions or key facts before continuing the discussion.
- Keep your hands away from your face while talking. If you are eating, chewing or smoking it may be more difficult to understand you.
- If the hearing impaired person has requested more

than one repetition, try rephrasing what you are trying to say or find a different way to say it.

- If you are giving important information like numbers to dates, have the hearing impaired individual repeat back the specifics to ensure they understood.
- Whenever possible, provide important information in writing
- Pay attention to the listener: a puzzled look may indicate misunderstanding.

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## For the hearing impaired listener:

- Reduce noise that may interfere with speech. For example, turn off the TV when someone is speaking to you.
- If you are unable to reduce the noise, then put the noise behind you. The brain is more efficient at separating speech and noise if they are in different locations. Put your face towards the person speaking, and your back to the source of noise.

- Ensure that you are close to the speaker and there is good lighting. Seeing someone's face is helpful in supporting your listening needs.
- When dining out, choose restaurants that do not play loud music and try to go at times when the restaurant is less full. Soft fabrics like tablecloths, window coverings and lower ceilings also help reduce noise which make it easier to hear.
- If you've missed something, ask the speaker to repeat themselves by asking a specific question, such as "what time did you say dinner was?" Simply asking "what?" may lead to more conversation breakdown.
- Don't be afraid to tell someone that you are hearing impaired. Ask them to speak a little slower, or to face you more directly. Most people are happy to help!
- Wear your hearing aids all the time. Listening fatigue is real! You can help keep your energy up by wearing appropriate amplification devices and working with your hearing healthcare professional to determine all the ways your hearing health can be supported.