

# ToT.8 Communication skills

## Activity 1: Communication skills

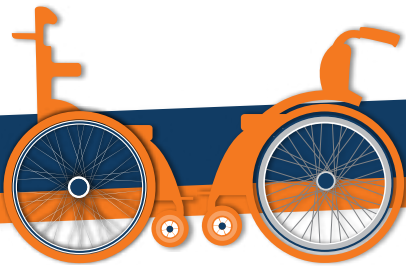
Read the information assigned to your group from the table below. Develop a presentation to ensure other trainees understand the key points.

Work as a group to decide how you will present the information and who will present which parts. Everyone in the group should participate in the presentation. You may use flipcharts, the whiteboard, or other props as desired. Be creative in your presentation.

You have 20 minutes to prepare. You will have five minutes to present to the others.

### Group 1 – Verbal skills

- Be aware of speed, volume and rise and fall (intonation) of the voice when presenting.
- Avoid using socially inappropriate language, including slang and 'non-speak' ('er', 'um', 'like', 'you know').
- Be heard clearly by all participants.
- Be aware of when participants do, and do not, understand what you say.
- Be sure that everyone understands when the training programme is in a second language for participants, or when it is delivered via an interpreter.
- Use terms that will be understood by all the participants (especially when discussing anatomical parts of the body).
- Terms used in the training are simple and non-medical to ensure wheelchair service users and participants without clinical or higher education understand the content.



## Group 2 – Non-verbal communication

- Maintain eye contact.
- Be aware of your body language.
- Use humour when appropriate. Humour is about lightness and not taking oneself and one's opinion too seriously.
- Humour does not mean joking. Jokes are often cultural and may not work the way you intended.
- Use appropriate actions when communicating with wheelchair users, including lowering your body to be at eye level.
- Position yourself and participants in the room:
  - when presenting, stand at the front or side
  - participants should be able to see and hear you
  - in semi-circles so that no one is in the back row and all participants can see each other
  - standing behind participants is appropriate in certain circumstances, for instance when presenting and you need to read the PowerPoint slides
  - depending on the context, it may be appropriate for you to sit at times; this creates a more relaxed, friendly dynamic.

## Group 3 – Asking questions

- Allow time for all participants to think about and respond to the question – don't always take an answer from the first respondent. Some participants may need time to think, especially if the training is not being delivered in their first language.
- Don't jump to answer participants' questions. Help facilitate participants to think of the idea, concept, or answer without telling them the answer when possible. Draw answers from the room.
- Rephrase questions when needed. If the response from participants is silence, confusion, or a wrong answer, the question may need to be rephrased.
- Use open questions to check understanding (for example, 'what are the three causes of pressure sores?').
- Avoid using closed questions (questions where the response is 'yes' or 'no').
- Acknowledge when correct answers are given.
- If an incorrect answer is given, first ask the same question to another participant or to the rest of the group. Only provide the correct answer if no one in the group can do so.
- If questions are repeatedly answered incorrectly, it is a sign that something is wrong. Possible problems include:
  - participants are not learning. You may need to rephrase your explanation or return to an earlier part of the training that now appears to be poorly understood
  - questions are inappropriate for their level of knowledge
  - questions are poorly phrased
  - questions use words participants do not understand.

## Group 4 – Answering questions

- Sometimes participants ask a question without thinking it through for themselves. When this happens, challenge them to work out the answer themselves. (Refer to the last exercise in Session ToT.5: Adult Learning).
- Help participants find the answer by questioning them. For example, 'What do you think?'; 'What factors are important to consider when deciding...?' Draw out the correct ideas from participants, developing their clinical reasoning and problem-solving skills.
- If someone asks a question that you do not know the answer to, first ask if any participants or co-trainers can answer it.
- If no one can answer, add the question to the Car Park and offer to look it up and share it with the group before the end of the training.
- Never make up an answer if you do not know.
- If there is not enough time to answer a question at the time of asking, use the Car Park to make a note of it and address it later in the training programme.
- Avoid spending time on questions that are beyond the aim and objectives of the session. Take the opportunity in a break to discuss the issue with the questioner.
- Questions related to upcoming sessions can be parked in the Car Park. When Car Park questions are covered, check if the participant feels their question has been answered.
- Listen: make sure you listen to the whole question before assuming you know what the question is. This means not interrupting or filling in the sentence.
- Be aware of the difference between 'right/wrong' questions (especially relevant to WSTPb and WSTPi) and those that do not have a right or wrong answer, as is often the case in WSTPm and WSTPs.

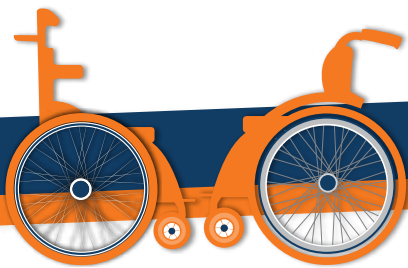
## Demonstrations, videos and interpreters

Below are good practices for giving demonstrations, showing videos, and using both foreign language and sign language interpreters during training.

### Giving demonstrations

When giving demonstrations:

- make sure everyone can see
- prepare props and equipment in advance
- explain clearly, demonstrate and repeat
- know your audience
- allow participants to practise what has been demonstrated
- monitor participants and step in as necessary to give feedback (especially related to safety)
- consider gender during demonstrations in WSTPb and WSTPi, especially when touching is necessary.



## Using videos

The WSTP use videos to demonstrate most practical skills. Before showing the videos:

- familiarize yourself with the content
- check for cultural and gender sensitivity
- explain what it is about before you show it
- mention the approximate length
- link it to the session
- play videos with subtitles to make them easier to follow
- ask questions about issues you want participants to consider, and highlight what they should observe
- repeat key sections, if time allows, or pause at critical points for emphasis.

## Working with foreign language and sign language interpreters

Meet with the interpreter before the training starts to discuss:

- pace of speech
- key terms, including terminology related to people with disabilities
- how to communicate with wheelchair users
- their role during practical activities
- content of the training – provide a copy of the *Trainer's Manual* to interpreters
- instruct interpreters to translate everything, not to summarize or change what is being said
- interpreters should never answer a question on your behalf
- arrange for two interpreters so that they can take rest breaks.

During the training make sure that you:

- speak slowly and clearly
- watch your body language
- keep your hands away from your face for lip-readers
- always engage with the individual or audience directly
- show interest, keep eye contact and remain focused
- plan your time: talking through an interpreter makes conversations twice as long.

## ToT.9 Knowledge of guiding documents

### What is a guiding document?

Guiding documents are publications, policies, conventions or laws that provide frameworks, guidance or rules that are relevant to wheelchair service provision and which guide stakeholders in the provision of wheelchair services.

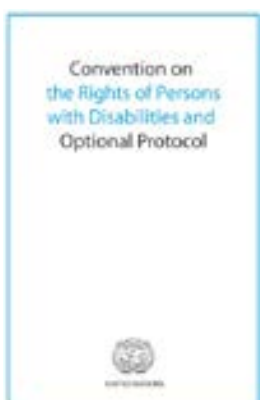
Many governments, international agencies, donors, and other stakeholders plan and fund development work in line with these international frameworks.

Your knowledge of them will put you in a stronger position to educate and advocate for appropriate wheelchair service provision.

National or Regional laws and policies will impact local wheelchair service provision. You need to be familiar with the documents to guide discussion.

The following section gives an overview of a range of guiding documents as they relate to wheelchair service provision. Some of these are included on the WSTP Pen Drive and others can be accessed via the internet.

### ***The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)***



*The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* is commonly known as the *CRPD* or sometimes the *UNCRPD*. The *CRPD* is widely considered to be the most important international treaty relating to people with a disability.

It came into force in 2008 and on its opening day, 82 countries signed the *CRPD* and 44 signed its Optional Protocol.

This was the highest number of signatories to a UN Convention on its opening day in history.

The *CRPD* was designed by representatives of the international community to change the way people with disabilities are viewed and treated in their societies.