

Activity 7 – Communicating verbally

This activity considers a claimant's ability to communicate verbally with regard to expressive (conveying) communication and receptive (receiving and understanding) communication in one's native language.

Clarity of the claimant's speech should be considered. In some cases the other participant in the conversation may have to concentrate slightly harder than normal, for example after a certain type of stroke it can be hard to articulate some sounds in speech. The speech sounds different to normal but is understandable. This is to an acceptable standard in the meaning of the descriptor. If the claimant couldn't make themselves understood and had to resort to hand gestures and writing notes this would not be to an acceptable standard.

Notes:

Basic verbal information is information conveyed in a simple sentence. Examples of a simple sentence: "Can I help you?"; "I would like tea please"; "I came home today"; "The time is 3 o'clock."

Complex verbal information is information conveyed in either more than one sentence or one complicated sentence, for example: "I would like tea please, just a splash of milk and no sugar, as I always have sweeteners with me for when I go out."

Verbal information can include information that is interpreted from verbal into non-verbal form or vice-versa – for example, speech interpreted through sign language or into written text.

Communication support means support from another person trained or experienced in communicating with people with specific communication needs (for example, a sign language interpreter); or someone directly experienced in communicating with the claimant themselves (for example, a family member).

Individuals who cannot express or understand verbal information and would need communication support to do so should receive the appropriate descriptor even if they do not have access to this support. For example, a deaf person who cannot communicate verbally and does not use sign language might need another person to support them in another way – such as by writing verbal information down – even if they

do not routinely have such help.

The ability to lip read is not a consideration for this activity.

Note: The ability to remember and retain information is not within the scope of this activity e.g. relevant to those with dementia or learning disabilities.

When considering whether a claimant requires an aid or appliance, HPs should distinguish between:

- an aid or appliance that a claimant must use or could reasonably be expected to use, in order to carry out the activity safely, reliably, repeatedly and in a timely manner; and
- an aid or appliance that a claimant may be using or wish to use because it makes it easier to carry out the activity safely, reliably, repeatedly and in a timely manner.

Descriptor advice in favour of an aid or appliance should only be given in the former case. An aid or appliance is not required in the latter.

Where a claimant chooses not to use an aid or appliance that he or she could reasonably be expected to use and would enable them to carry out the activity without assistance, they should be assessed as needing an aid or appliance rather than a higher level of support.

A	Can express and understand verbal information unaided.	0
<p>Within the assessment criteria, the ability to perform an activity 'unaided' means without either the use of aids or appliances; or help from another person.</p>		
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear.	
<p>For example: may apply to claimants who require a hearing aid or an electro larynx. If the claimant is not using a prescribed hearing aid, ask why. If there is a good medical reason such as chronic ear infection, function without the aid should be assessed. If there is not a good reason, expected function with the aid should be assessed.</p>		2
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	Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information.	
	For example: may apply to claimants who require a sign language interpreter.	
D	Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information.	8
	For example: may apply to claimants who require a sign language interpreter.	
E	Cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support.	12