Hard-of-Hearing Situations in Hospitals

• HLAA – LC Health Care Access Committee Report:
  • Identify needs
  • Evaluate safety and consequences
  • Establish contact points for improvement

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Hearing Loss Association of America
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The Health Care Access Committee of the Hearing Loss Association of Lane County has been working for some time with our local hospital to address the needs of people with hearing loss.

Our primary purpose is give you the awareness and tools that will ensure that your hospital experience is as safe and positive as possible.
HEALTH CARE ACCESS COMMITTEE GOALS

• Evaluate situations where a person with hearing loss would have problems - and find solutions.

• Work with medical staff to educate them regarding the needs of patients and support people with hearing loss in different medical situations.

• Ensure that patients with hearing loss receive equal and effective communication access.

• Encourage patients and support persons with hearing loss to be aware of, ask for and use communication tools.

• Provide information to the public about communication assistance available for patients and support persons with hearing loss.

• **Educate** people with hearing loss about the importance of **safety and informed consent** - which may require the use of accommodations.
What does this mean for you?

Why should you care?
What CAN happen?

You may be ... 

- in frightening situations because you do not understand (“hear”) what is going on around you.
- trying to answer questions when you do not understand (“hear”) them.
- asked to give “consent” to something but you really don’t know WHAT is happening!
- left out as a family member because you are having problems understanding (“hearing”) information.
What can we do ?!

Unfortunately, most things don’t just happen by magic, SO…

It’s up to you!
What can be available for patients/ support persons in medical settings?

**Hospital kit for Hearing loss**

**Identifiers and Signs**

**Staff training and awareness**

**Assistive Devices**
- Amplified Phones
- TTY Phones
- Pocketalkers, FM systems or other personal amplifiers

**Accommodations Brochure**

**Captioning on TVs and Educational videos**
Most hospitals have some type of Guide to Services

This guide has sections specifically helpful to people with hearing loss such as:

Rights and Responsibilities of Patients .............................................. 4
   pg 5 lists both local and state contact information

Non-Discrimination Policy ................................................................. 6
   Pg. 7 lists hospital information

Communication Barriers ................................................................. 10
Hard of Hearing Assistive Devices are available for patients, family and friends (support persons*). Please contact your nurse for a “pocket talker” and a Hard of Hearing Hospital Kit. (*My note)

Telephone ........................................................................................ 11
Hearing Impaired
Most patient telephones have a built-in amplifying dial, allowing you to turn up the sound on your telephone. If you need a telephone amplifier or TTY machine, or if you are unable to use your hands and need a speakerphone, talk to your nurse.

Television ......................................................................................... 12
For the Hearing Impaired: All televisions can access closed captions. To activate this feature, press the “CC” button on the Patient Pillow Speaker Control (select CC1).

Read the Guide before you are admitted!
PeaceHealth recognizes that effective communication between all members of a Patient’s Care Team, including the Patient and their Support Person, is essential providing quality care and patient safety.

Special Accommodations include Patients and Immediate Support Persons who are:

- Hearing Impaired
- Visually Impaired
- Blind
- Deaf
- Limited English Proficient

PeaceHealth Mission Statement
We carry on the healing mission of Jesus Christ by promoting personal and community health, relieving pain and suffering, and treating each person in a loving and caring way.

Complaints or Grievances
We encourage our patients to provide information to us whenever they may have a complaint or concern, knowing that there will not be any reprisal. We are happy to provide information in writing if requested (including a copy of our Grievance Policy), and encourage their loved ones to contact the Risk Management Department for assistance.

PeaceHealth Risk Management
360/729-1081

Patients may also contact:
Alaska State Department of Health
907/334-2483

Oregon Health Division
971/673-0540

Washington State Department of Health
800/633-6828

The Joint Commission
800/994-6610

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
800/MEDICARE or 800/633-4227

Non-Discrimination Policy
As a recipient of Federal financial assistance our health care entities do not exclude, deny benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, or on the basis of disability, or age in admission to, participation in, or receipt of the services and benefits under any of its programs and activities, whether carried out by PeaceHealth or through any other entity with whom we arrange to carry out its programs and activities.
Special Accommodations Services

The following services are available **FREE of CHARGE** at PeaceHealth for patients and their support person. Please ask a Caregiver for more information.

- **Hearing Impaired Patients and Support Person (Non-Signing)**
  - **General Public Areas**
    - TTY phones
  - **Assistive Listening Devices and Tools**
    - Amplified Hearing Device
    - Amplified phone with visual phone ring
    - Hearing Impaired Kit
    - Real time captioning
    - TTY Phones
    - Communication Board

- **Limited English Proficient Patients and Support Person**
  - **Spoken Language Interpretation**
    - Interpreter services are available 24 hours a day.

- **Visually Impaired Patients and Support Person**
  - **In-Room Assistive Devices**
    - Magnifying Glasses
    - Braille phone/Amplified Phone
    - Talking Clock

- **Deaf Patients/Support Person (Signing Proficient)**
  - **General Public Areas**
    - TTY phones
  - **Sign Language Interpretation**
    - Interpreter services are available 24 hours a day.

- **Blind Patients and Support Person**
  - Readers
  - Braille phone/Amplified Phone
  - Talking Clock
  - Communication Board

To arrange for these services please ask a caregiver to assist you.
Hospital Kit
Provided by the hospital
Includes: Personal Identifiers

- Badge
- Hearing aid / Cochlear Implant Information card.*

*Does anyone else know how to turn on your hearing aid or Cochlear implant?

Without my hearing aid / cochlear implant I can’t hear you!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left ear:</th>
<th>Right ear:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type: ______________</td>
<td>Type: ______________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Settings: ______________</td>
<td>Settings: ______________</td>
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<td>To turn on: ______________</td>
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<td>To turn off: ______________</td>
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In addition to wearing my listening devices I also need: ________________________________

To wake me: ________________________________

- Hard of Hearing International Symbol Sticker – To be placed on wristband. Available only in personal kits or you can make your own. Check with the hospital before use!
Hospital Kit
Provided by the hospital
(continued)

**Identification Signs**

- Lamp - Look at me please
Hospital Kit
Provided by the hospital
(continued)

**ID Signs**

- International Symbol-
  - With needs list

[Image: Hospital room with ID signs]
Patients with hearing loss will be identified using:

- Patient information on the computer chart - accessible only by staff

- White board information

- Signs in the room
Assistive Listening Devices

Available and provided by the hospital free of charge.

Hospital staff are trained how to demonstrate their use.

Includes: FM systems, Pocket Talkers and Sonic Super Ear
Amplified Phones & TTYs

Available for anyone in different public areas such as Main Lobby, Emergency Department (ED) Lobby.

Look for the Blue grommet to indicate amplification.

Look for volume controls.

Lobby area TTY

Available for patients or visitors in patient rooms on request.

Amplified Ringer alert Phone
CLOSED CAPTIONING

All television sets at public waiting areas should have captioning turned on.

If it happens to be off, ask to have it turned back on.

Most videos that are used to provide patient education should be captioned.

Scripts should be available for older media upon request.
More help available

**Real time captioning** - Available on request. Words are transcribed onto a laptop and the transcript can also be printed out.

**Oral interpreter** - A person who can “relay” verbal information to you orally when it is difficult for you to understand the speaker.
Our Hospital has developing a process to notify hospital staff of a patient’s communication needs in various situations. This is confidential patient information.

Staff are required to receive training on understanding:

◆ the impact of hearing loss on patient care.
◆ the diversity of hearing loss.
◆ how to identify people with hearing loss.
◆ how to work effectively with individuals who have hearing loss.

This was done as a cooperative effort between our HLAA Chapter and the local medical community.
Patient Awareness -
What you need to know

◆ It is up to you to request available services.

◆ It is up to you to provide feedback to the staff. They have no way of knowing what is needed unless they are told.

◆ Some people who have a cochlear implant should not have an MRI. It is your responsibility to inform medical personnel. Talk to your doctor if you have questions.

◆ The word “disability” is the legal terminology that applies to any “life function” - like hearing loss - that is different from the general population and entitles a person to accommodations for equal access.

It is not a personal reflection of who a person is or what she / he is capable of doing.
What does hearing loss look like?
No, that was not a mistake!

Hearing loss is invisible!
What do YOU need to do?
Look around to see what is available.

Just push the button and ask for help. Tell them you can not hear them. Help will come.

Sometimes low-tech is good. Use whatever you need to communicate.
Make your hospital experience safe and positive:

**KNOW**
help is available.

**IDENTIFY YOURSELF**
as a person with hearing loss.

**SPEAK UP & ASK**
for accommodations.

**ASK FOR A CHARGE NURSE**
or supervisor. If necessary call the hospital’s “Risk Management” office.
YOU need to remember that hearing loss is invisible!

YOU need to be part of your medical team and advocate or have someone with you to advocate for you.

YOU need to request the accessibility services you require and provide feedback to the hospital staff.

YOU cannot give “informed consent” for medical care if you have not been able to hear and understand the treatment options that have been explained to you.
Even though you might want to “blend in”…….

Sometimes you need to reach out for what you need!
QUESTIONS ?