

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED OLDER PERSON

- Make sure the room is well lit, with minimal glare
- When speaking, be sure you are not standing between a well lit window and the person
- Please give verbal cues whenever possible
- If the person wears glasses, please ensure they have them on
- Gently touch the persons arm to make certain they know you are there and that you have their attention
- Be aware of how you use your voice. Feelings of anger, happiness and acceptance can be easily detected in the tone of your voice.

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH THE HEARING IMPAIRED OLDER PERSON

- Ensure you have gained the attention of the person before starting conversation. Use visual cues when possible.
- Face the person directly in front of you with the light on your face, not behind you.
- Try and maintain eye contact
- Speak slightly louder and lower than usual, but don't shout.
- Use non-verbal communication (facial expressions, body motions etc.) to reflect your meaning
- Speak at a slightly slower rate and clearly. Don't exaggerate or over emphasize words.
- Use short sentences and phrases. Rephrases thoughts instead of repeating.
- Do not talk while chewing gum, eating, drinking etc.
- Know which ear the person has least difficulty with and speak into that ear.
- If the person looks puzzled, stop any check that you are being understood.
- Allow plenty of time for the person to respond to what you are saying.
- Use tools to your benefit when necessary (pencil/paper, chalk etc.)

TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH THE AGITATED, AGGRESSIVE, CONFUSED OLDER PERSON

Many of our residents living within Greenwoods Eldercare Society suffer with dementia, sadness, fear, frustration and nervousness. The tips below will help to maintain safety and minimise emotional discomfort for our residents and volunteers.

- Be calm and flexible in your approach
- Maintain eye contact
- Try guiding and redirecting the person – not controlling
- Use simple, positive phrases
- Use calm, slow voice pattern.
- Say one thing at a time and wait for a response
- Never argue with the person
- Give direction within the residents attention span
- Your mood is contagious; practice “looking friendly”
- Move slowly around the resident
- Use touch only if you know the resident well
- Avoid overwhelming the resident, physically or verbally.
- Stay in a step-stance so you can move away quickly if necessary