

# 5. MY COMMUNICATION

Communication is an important part of health.



This checklist can be downloaded from [www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk).

It is free to use for personal use and with people you support.

People may need support to make choices about their health and consenting to treatment.

Giving 'consent' means agreeing to have a health treatment done.

The law says that people can consent to treatment unless it is proved that they can't.



People must use things like pictures and video to help you to understand the choice.

# THINGS TO CHECK

1

Do you need more support to make choices about your health?

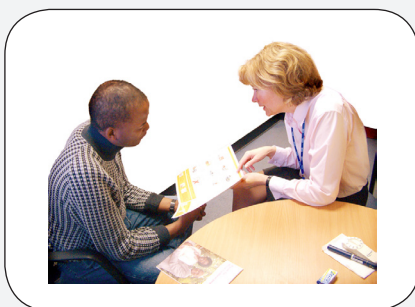


It is important to have consent sorted out before you go for a health treatment.

A health treatment can be cancelled if consent is not sorted out.



People should help you to understand the risks of unhealthy things you choose to do.



People must do everything they can to help you make informed choices.

If you can't make a choice about a health treatment a decision can be made in your best interests.

A health professional, like a doctor, will make the decision after involving other people who now you well like your care staff, advocate and family.



# THINGS TO CHECK

2

Do you need more support or aids to help you communicate?



Support for communication can include:



Electronic aids



Using pictures



Using objects



Using signing

A Speech and Language Therapist can assess your communication needs and give you advice on the right system.

You can make a referral to your local Community Learning Disability Team.



A care passport is a booklet that tells care staff about you. It is a good idea to have one filled in to take to hospital with you.

Download a Care Passport free at [www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk)  
Go to 'Health Services Made Easy' then 'Going to Hospital'.

3

Do your supporters need training to help with your communication?



You may be really good at Makaton signing, but your supporters may need more training to understand your signing.

Go to: [www.makaton.org/training](http://www.makaton.org/training)



Speech and Language Therapists often run training on communication for supporters of people with learning disabilities.



It's important that people who support you can recognise when you are ill or in pain.

See our checklist on Pain management.

Some people may show they are ill or in pain through changes in their behaviour.



Supporters should work closely together to make sure they are consistent in how they support you to communicate.



4

Do you need more support at health appointments?



You may need help to find your way to the appointment.



You may need help to stay relaxed while waiting.



You may need help to explain your health to the doctor or nurse and understand what they tell you.



‘Reasonable adjustments’ can make health appointments easier for you.

Go to [www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk) for information about our Easy Read factsheet ‘Getting ready for my visit to hospital’ which explains about reasonable adjustments.

## Makaton

Makaton uses signs, symbols and speech to help people communicate. Signs are used, with speech, in spoken word order.



[www.makaton.org](http://www.makaton.org)

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## The Clear Communication People Ltd

The Clear Communication People Ltd design picture communication books and Easy Read information.

They have lots of information about health on their website.



[www.communicationpeople.co.uk](http://www.communicationpeople.co.uk)

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## Easy Health

Easyhealth is run by an organisation called Generate Opportunities Ltd.

There are Easy Read leaflets about communication and consent designed by many different organisations.

Look in the 'Health Leaflets' section.



[www.easyhealth.org.uk](http://www.easyhealth.org.uk)

# USING THIS CHECKLIST

This checklist is a part of The Health Action Planning toolkit available from [www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk](http://www.sunderlandactionforhealth.co.uk)

The Health Action Planning toolkit is free to use.

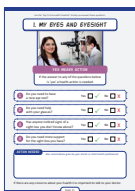


- There are 20 other checklists in the series covering a wide range of health issues.

There is a Health Action Plan template which has two sections.



- In the first section you can record important health information about yourself including your allergies, immunisations, family history, health conditions and medication you take.



- In the second section of the Health Action Plan template you can record your answers to the questions from each of the 21 checklists.



- There are also a series of Easy Read Health Action templates that you can use to record the progress you make on addressing a health action. You can record what the health action is, who will help and what steps need to be taken.

**NHS**  
**Sunderland**  
**Clinical Commissioning Group**

The Health Action Planning Toolkit was originally developed by The Clear Communication People Ltd in partnership with Surrey & Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust health professionals and other health professionals in Surrey.

This checklist has been adapted for the Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Health Action Planning Toolkit is intended as a aid to support people with learning disabilities to access the support and advice of qualified health professionals. The Clear Communication People Ltd take no responsibility for medical diagnosis, advice and treatment given in conjunction with the use of this checklist.

- Easy Pics imagenbank © The Clear Communication People Ltd
- Some photosymbols used - go to [www.photosymbols.com](http://www.photosymbols.com)