



How to work with a deaf patient

Working with a deaf patient requires clear communication, sensitivity to their needs, and an understanding of their preferred mode of communication.

Here are some important steps to consider:

- 1. Preferred Interpreter:** Schedule the patient's preferred interpreter for the appointment through Choice Access Interpreting. Established trust with the interpreter leads to open communication and stronger patient/provider rapport.
- 2. Clear Visual Environment:** Ensure good lighting and minimal visual obstructions. Face the patient directly and maintain eye contact.
- 3. Make eye contact:** Eye contact makes communication direct. Even if an interpreter is present, talk directly to the deaf patient
- 4. Use of Visual Aids:** Utilize visual aids such as diagrams, pictures, and written instructions to help explain medical procedures or conditions.
- 5. Speak slowly and clearly:** No need to raise your voice or exaggerate enunciation.
- 6. Patient Involvement:** Encourage the patient to be involved in their care by asking for their input and checking for understanding frequently.
- 7. Training and Awareness:** If you work in a healthcare setting, promote and participate in training on deaf culture and disability awareness to improve the services provided to deaf patients.
- 8. Follow-up Communication:** Ensure that all follow-up appointments, instructions, and prescriptions are provided in a format that the patient can understand and access easily.

These steps help create a supportive and effective communication environment, respecting the patient's autonomy and ensuring they receive the best possible care.