



Council for  
Intellectual Disability



# Good Appointments, Better Health

## Tips to improve health outcomes for people with intellectual disability

This sheet was co-designed with people with intellectual disability using funding from the Australian Government Department of Health.



### Communication

Give information in a quiet place.

Make sure you have the person's attention before talking.

Talk to the person, even if they do not talk.

Talk about one thing at a time.

Speak clearly and slowly in plain, everyday language (avoid jargon).



Don't just say it - show it. You can use:

- Easy Read information during appointments and to take home;
- social stories;
- videos;
- demonstrations on yourself or a trusted person &
- the say-less-show-more method.

Allow silent time to process information.

Check that someone understands what you've said (see teach-back method).

Listen and observe carefully.

Check your understanding of what someone communicates.

Give people time to make decisions. It may need a follow-up appointment.

Ask the person if it's okay to talk to supporters and keep them included in the conversation when talking to others.

Use Easy Read information during appointments and to take home.

Write down information in plain words – give instructions in steps.

Ask how they complete forms:

- over the phone;
- with support in your office &
- with a supporter – send well ahead of time.



## Safety

Organise pre-medication before a procedure if needed.

Confirm if it is taken at home or at the clinic to avoid waiting time.

Allow people to have their chosen supports with them.

Encourage people to bring distractions they find helpful e.g. iPad.

Ask for consent and wait for affirmative response before touching someone.

Tell and/or show someone what is going to happen before touching them.

Talk about what you're doing as you're doing it.

Actively check that someone is okay as you touch them or do a procedure.

Stop as soon as someone asks or indicates distress.

Check in about how someone feels after the procedure.



## Scheduling

Offer appointments that minimise waiting time.

Offer to wait in a quieter space, away from others or outside.

Offer longer appointments to:

- build comfort and trust &
- allow time for communication.

Offer multiple short appointments to:

- build comfort and trust &
- allow time for communication.

Offer to send information about appointments to a support person too.



## Referrals

Check the service's eligibility before referring.

Check that any mobility needs can be met before referring.

Send the referral directly to the doctor.

Include information about adjustments that help the person. Use this list - check the ones that you use with the person. Copies are available at: [www.cid.org.au/health/Resources for Health Professionals](http://www.cid.org.au/health/Resources%20for%20Health%20Professionals)

Make the appointment with the person while they are still with you.