Module 4

Video 1: Understanding communication barriers
Why is disability-inclusive communication important in health care?

People with disability have less access to information about health, health services, and their right to health than people without disability.

**Communication barriers** can reduce demand for health care.

**Removing communication barriers** is key to improving access to health and health outcomes.

Enables people with disability to **increase control** over, and improve, their health.
Communication in the patient’s health-care journey
Why do communication barriers occur?

**Negative attitudes** and lack of awareness by health workers – e.g. making assumptions about what people with disability need to know

People with disabilities that affect their hearing, seeing, speaking, reading, writing, memory, or understanding may use **different ways to communicate** – these are often not accommodated
Why do communication barriers occur?

People with disability may have had **less access to education** – many health promotion activities occur in schools

**Low health literacy** among family members or carers – impacts the information shared with people with disability
Common communication barriers at health facilities

- **Inadequate explanations** of health conditions or procedures
- Written information not provided in accessible formats
- Verbal information not provided in accessible formats
Common communication barriers at health facilities

- **Being talked down to** or patronized by staff and health workers
- **Being ignored** or spoken to indirectly through a family member or support person
- **Not enough time provided** to use alternative communication methods
Communication barriers in health promotion

Information provided in one or **limited formats**

Use of messages that are **complex or difficult to understand**

Messaging that **does not include information** specifically relevant to people with disability

Not including people with **disability** in messaging and images

Failing to **specifically target people with disability** to ensure they receive health promotion information
Step 3: Activity: The impact of communication barriers on equal access to health care