Module 4

Video 2: Strategies and good practices in disability-inclusive communication in health care
What is disability-inclusive communication?

Health information and communication that:

- Is provided in a range of formats accessible to people with different types of impairment
- Is patient-centred and respectful of diverse needs
- Includes information specific to people with disability
- Uses positive portrayals and images of people with disability
- Is developed WITH people with disability
Different strategies for different needs

Consider the different communication needs of

- People with hearing impairment
- People who are blind or vision impaired
- People with cognitive or intellectual impairments
- People with mobility impairments
- People who have trouble speaking

There are examples of practical strategies in the Disability-Inclusive Health Services Toolkit for communicating with patients with different impairments (see pages 64–67).
Patient-centred care to facilitate inclusive communication

Health workers who provide patient-centred care to people with disability

- Establish rapport with patients
- Focus on the person and the reason for their visit, not their disability
- Acknowledge and listen to their expertise
- Ask how they would like information to be presented
- Check they understand the information being communicated
- Obtain informed consent before conducting procedures
- Communicate what is being done before, during and after physical examinations
Information accessibility audits

Conduct audits of your service to identify communication barriers for people with different types of impairment.

Consider communication barriers faced by people with disability when:

• accessing information about the health service and how to access it
• exchanging information during interactions with staff and health workers
• accessing information provided in health promotion campaigns.
Steps to making communications disability inclusive in your health service

1. Invite people with disability and DPO representatives to complete the audit along with health service staff

2. Use a checklist or “audit tool” like the one in the Disability-Inclusive Health Services Toolkit (see pages 61–63)

3. Note current communication barriers and areas for improvement

4. Identify practical strategies – see pages 64–67 in the Toolkit for suggestions
Step 5: Activity: Disability-inclusive communication in the patient’s health-care journey

Step 6: Activity: Applying disability-inclusive communication strategies in health promotion and education