



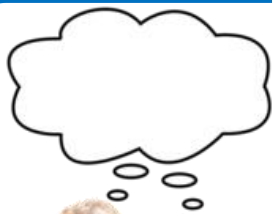
# St Michael's House Total Communication Policy



A policy is a set of rules that staff have to follow



This policy is about Communication



Communication means getting your message across and understanding other people

# People communicate by:



Talking



Lámh



Body language



Facial Expressions



Pictures



Writing



Objects

Technology. Technology means using a machine.

For example:



A phone



Computers



Tablets



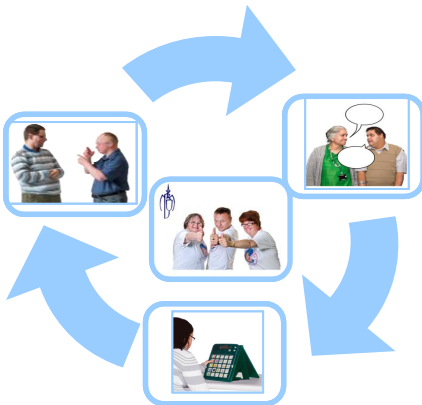
And other technology



People communicate in lots of different ways.



All ways of communicating are used and respected in St Michael's House.



This is called **Total Communication**.



You have the Right to communicate the way you want.



Staff will support you :



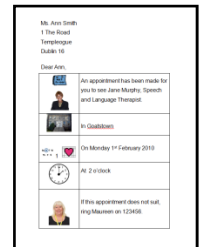
To communicate at all times



To be listened to and heard



To make choices



To have information you understand



To communicate with your family and friends



To say no



To try new ways to help you communicate



Staff will support you to communicate with St Michael's House by:



Meeting with your Keyworker or other staff



Meeting with the Person in Charge



Making a complaint



Going to consultation groups



Going to Individual coordination meetings (ICMs)

These are meetings with the clinical team



Going to House meetings



Going to Service User meetings in day service



Going to My Life meetings



Getting an Advocate



Staff support people to communicate using



Talking



Lámh



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Technology. For example:



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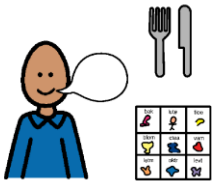


And other technology



Staff will help you communicate the best way you can

speech and language therapy



You can ask for help from a Speech and Language Therapist.



A Speech and Language Therapist helps people with communication.

### Waiting List



You may have to wait to get an appointment with a Speech and Language Therapist.



The Speech and Language Therapist will meet with you and people in your life

You can ask for help using the referral form. This is on the downloads section on the intranet.

# St. Michael's House Total Communication Policy

## Part 2

### Procedures for staff to implement

#### ***What is communication?***

'Communication means getting your message across and understanding other people.'

In St. Michael's House communication is understood as a two-way process. A Total Communication approach is used in St. Michael's House. All forms of communication are equally valued, respected and used.

#### ***Please see SMH Intranet for further resources on Communication & Referral to Speech & Language Therapy***

- ***Communication referral form: Downloads button > Speech and Language***
- ***Communication resources: Have fun have a choice button > SLT resources***



#### ***How to use Total Communication***

##### **Get to know the person:**

- Find out **how** the person gets their message across and **what** they understand.
- Find out how the person **prefers** to communicate. How do they prefer to express themselves i.e. pointing, Lámh etc and how do they prefer other people to communicate with them i.e. photos, pictures, Lámh etc.?
- Find out what best **helps** the person to understand things and get their message across, for example; using objects, pictures, Lámh, giving them more time etc.
- Find out this information by:
  - communicating with the person - try different things, see what works best
  - observing the person
  - reading any Speech and Language Therapy guidelines or reports available
  - speaking with familiar communication partners of the person.

##### ***Please see SLT Resources on intranet for more information on tools to support this information gathering process.***

- Record this information in their All About Me support plans and Communication Passport.

**Use what you know:**

Once you know what helps the person and what they prefer, always use these supports with them (e.g. Lámh, communication passport, communication book, objects of reference, intensive interaction etc.).

**Adapt:**

If you are not being understood, be flexible, adapt your message.

- Change the language, use easier / smaller words.
- Reduce the language, use less words.
- Change the mode of communication – e.g. change from speaking only to speaking and showing a picture or speaking, Lámh and clear facial expressions.
- Give the person other ways to respond – switches, sign, gesture etc.

**The environment:**

It is important to have an environment that helps people to communicate. Make sure it's bright and reduce background noise and distractions.

Make sure the person has physical access to their communication supports e.g. stored within reach and readily available. All staff should be aware of the person's communication supports and where they are stored.

The person's communication supports should be available in different communication environments e.g. appointments, in the community, day and residential settings etc.

**Service engagement:**

Service users should have their communication supports available to support them to engage with the service e.g. making a complaint, ICMs, My Life meetings.

Service users should be provided information in a way they understand i.e. accessible information, easy read information, using their communication supports.

**Don't Forget:**

- Give the person lots of time to process, understand and respond to questions and information.
- Create opportunities for the person to communicate by making sure choices are available, rather than pre-empting a person's decision or preference.
- Be aware of how your tone of voice and facial expressions can impact on the person's understanding of your message.

**Communication Passports**

*For more detailed information, please see SLT resources on Intranet 'Have fun, have a choice' > SLT Resources > Passports*

**Objects of Reference**

*For more detailed information, please see SLT resources on Intranet 'Have fun, have a choice' > SLT Resources > High Support*

**Intensive Interaction**

*For more detailed information, please see SLT resources on Intranet 'Have fun, have a choice' > SLT Resources > High Support*