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**Accessibility in patient and carer involvement**

Accessibility in patient and carer involvement is about giving everybody the same chance to participate in discussions and decisions.

Before you start working with someone, ask about how you can make things more accessible for them. You should keep the conversation going throughout the involvement, to account for any barriers that come up as you go.

Some general good practices to follow are:

1. **Language and sentences**

In the UK, 7.1 million adults read at, or below, the level of an average 9-year-old (NIHR Evidence, 2022). In addition to this, comprehension can be affected by stroke or neurological conditions.

We want to hear ALL voices. Make sure your information isn’t creating a barrier by being too complicated.

* Keep sentences short and simple.
* Don’t over complicate your word choices.
* Images and putting key words in bold can help to make messages clearer.
1. **Formatting (visual problems)**
* Use a plain font such as Arial, with a standard font size of 14pt if being printed.
* Make sure there is a strong colour contrast between the text and the background.
* Keep plenty of space between text lines and paragraphs.
1. **Contact options**

Not everyone is online, has the confidence to use a phone, or the mobility to get to a post box.

* Give multiple options for how people can reach you.
* Have a single point of contact for the patient/ carer. This keeps the involvement process simple and gives somebody accountability for the accessibility adjustments you have agreed on.
1. **Meetings**
* Share information, slides and questions in advance.
* Offer to send a reminder close to the meeting date.
* Reduce background noise.
* Offer breaks, especially if the meeting will be over an hour.
* If meeting online, check the patient / carer is confident with this. Some people may need practice or support to use a new platform.
* During online meetings consider recording the meeting and/or using live captioning.
* During face-to-face meetings consider providing refreshments to keep energy levels up and offer multiple transport options.
1. **Further information**

For more advice about meetings and events, visit [Making events and meetings accessible - SCIE.](https://www.scie.org.uk/co-production/supporting/making-events-accessible/)

For detailed advice, refer to the NHS accessible information guidance: [NHS England » Accessible Information Standard](https://www.england.nhs.uk/about/equality/equality-hub/patient-equalities-programme/equality-frameworks-and-information-standards/accessibleinfo/)

NIHR Evidence: [Health information: are you getting your message across?; June 2022; doi: 10.3310/nihrevidence\_51109](https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/collection/health-information-are-you-getting-your-message-across/)