



# Total Communication Standards



Sussex Partnership  
NHS Foundation Trust



## Forward



Total Communication is the term used to describe the use of pictures, objects, signs, gestures and spoken word to enable people to express themselves and understand what is being said.

It is in addition to easy read/accessible communication, which only targets people with a mild/moderate Learning Disability. The majority of people with a learning disability in Brighton and Hove require additional communication supports in the form of Total Communication approaches.



This list of standards was developed in line with Valuing People Now 2009 and is designed to be interactive to help break through communication barriers.

# Introduction

## What is Total Communication?



Total Communication is about communicating in different ways.

We communicate with:

- Gestures and signs
- Pictures and symbols
- Objects
- Touch
- Body movements
- Eye contact
- Sounds

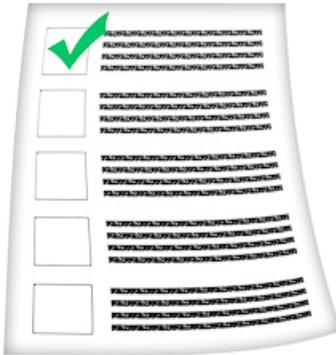
And lots more...



**Total Communication says we should be able to communicate in our own way.**

## What are Communication Standards?

Communication Standards are a list of things service providers and other people should be doing about communication.



### How can the standards help us to know if a service is good at communication?

A service is good at communication if it is doing all the things on the checklist

### Who are the Communication Standards for?

People who use services, staff, carers and families. Anyone can use or see the standards.



### What are the Standards for?

Standards show how good a service is at communication.

Services can use the standards to see how they can get better at communication too.

## The 10 Communication Standards



1. **Services know about the Communication Bill of Rights**
2. **Everyone communicates in different ways**
3. **People are supported to communicate in their own way**
4. **Information about someone's communication is available to anyone they communicate with**
5. **Different ways of communicating are used all the time by everyone**
6. **Services know what Total Communication is**
7. **Services have a way of checking how good they are at communication**
8. **All staff are aware of and supported in Total Communication**
9. **Total Communication is central to the service**
10. **Services know when communication is not working well**



# Brighton & Hove Total Communication Standards

## Standard 1

### What we want:

Services know about the Communication Bill of Rights. These are rights about communication. Services agree with what the Bill of Rights says.

### How Standard 1 can be checked (what to look for)



Provide example and action what needs to be done



Staff know about the Communication Bill of Rights (see appendix)

Services have a **Communication Policy**. This is important paperwork. It says how staff should be working.



### The Communication policy says:

- Staff are supported to make communication better.
- Staff are given special time to work on communication.

# Standard 2

## What we want:

Everyone communicates in a different way. Staff need to know how best to communicate with the people they support.

## How Standard 2 can be checked (what to look for)



Provide example and action what needs to be done



In each person's Person Centered Plan it should say how they like to communicate best.



### The Person centred Plan says:

- How I express myself and what helps.
- How I understand and what helps.

This description should be put together by the person it is about and their 'circle' (family, friends).

## Standard 3

### What we want:

People are supported to communicate in their own way.

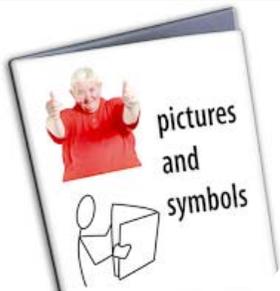
### How Standard 3 can be checked (what to look for)



Provide example and action what needs to be done



Service users and staff say that people are supported to communicate in their own way.



Good communication can be seen around the service

## Standard 4

### What we want:

Information about someone's communication is available to anyone they communicate with.

### How Standard 4 can be checked (what to look for)



Provide example and action what needs to be done



Service users and staff make their communication plans together to share



Information and tools are kept where people can use them. People know where they are.

They are easy to find.

They can be used anytime.

## Standard 5

**What we want:**

Different ways of communicating and different tools for communicating are used all the time by everyone.

**How Standard 5 can be checked** (what to look for)

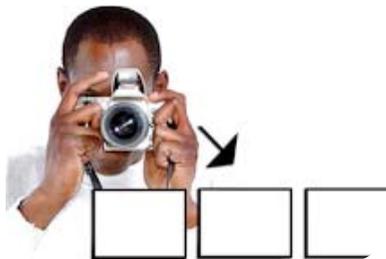


**Provide example and action what needs to be done**



Staff and people who use services know different ways of communicating.

They know about different tools that make communicating easier (like objects and pictures).



They use them all the time.

It is easy for people to find different ways of communicating. People can try new things.

Staff and service users are always thinking of new ideas to make communication better.

## Standard 6

**What we want:**

Services know what Total Communication is. They say that it is good.

**How Standard 6 can be checked** (what to look for)



Provide example and action what needs to be done



Policy says staff must use the right communication. Service users, families and carers all know about it.

Staff and service users say that staff are told when they use the right communication.



Managers talk to staff about communication in meetings. They say what they are doing well.

People who review the service say good communication is used. This could include friends, family members and carers.

## Standard 7

### What we want:

Services have a way of checking how good they are at communication.

### How Standard 7 can be checked (what to look for)



Provide example and action what needs to be done



The service has notes about their communication in the past. You can see how communication has changed over time.



The service has a plan. Its goal is to make communication better. Staff know what they need to do by using an audit/toolkit.

People who review the service say that the service is good at checking how well it is doing.

## Standard 8

### What we want:

All staff are aware of and supported in Total Communication.

### How Standard 8 can be checked (what to look for)



Provide example and/or action what needs to be done



Staff say they have access to information and training

The service is good at training people.



**The service has a plan.**

It says what training is happening.

It says what training will happen in the future.

**What we want:**

**Standard 9**

Total Communication is central to the service. It is central to everything the service does such as:

- Person Centred Planning
- Getting new staff
- All meetings
- Policies
- Signage
- Training
- Reviews
- Procedures

**How Standard 9 can be checked** (what to look for)



Provide example and/or action what needs to be done



Staff say Total Communication is used all the time. It is important to everyone that uses the service and what happens in the service.

When staff leave a service, they say that Total Communication was always used in the service.



New staff are given support and training in Total Communication. This is written in a plan for them when they start.

People are communicating in lots of different ways in the service

## Standard 10

**What we want:**

Services know when communication is not working well.

They speak up about it when it happens.

**How Standard 10 can be checked** (what to look for)



**Provide example and action what needs to be done**



Policy says staff must use good communication. Service users, families and carers know it is a right.

Staff and service users say staff are told when they don't use good communication.



Managers talk to staff about communication in meetings. They talk about how to make it better.

People can complain (say they are not happy). People know how to complain.