



FACTSHEET

APHASIA

What is Aphasia?

Imagine going to sleep tonight and waking up in a foreign country.

It's hard to:

- Speak the language, ask for bread in a shop, ask for directions, join in conversations or use the telephone.
- Understand what is being spoken to you - conversations, jokes, TV films.
- Understand what you are reading - books, magazines, street signs.
- Write - sign your name, fill in forms.
- Get your thoughts out - know what you want to say, but can't find the right words.
- Communication fails or is limited to facial expressions and gestures.
- Use numbers - work out change, use the ATM.

This is what Aphasia is...

Imagine how frustrating it must be when a person with aphasia knows what they want to say, but can't make themselves understood.

Aphasia affects a person's ability to communicate. It affects each person differently - it may be hardly noticeable or very severe.

A person with aphasia may not have a physical disability, or look any different to someone who doesn't have aphasia.

It is a loss or disruption of language. It is not a loss of intelligence, hearing or vision.



Gisborne
STROKE
Support

This is what Aphasia is... (continued)

Communication difficulties may vary from day to day and are likely to be worse when it is noisy, or if the person is tired, unwell or under pressure.

Don't ignore the person because you don't know how to communicate with them.

- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Give them time to respond
- Avoid background noise, allow only one person to speak at a time
- Use short clear sentences, simple language
- Use gestures to support what you are saying
- Have pen and paper handy to write or draw pictures
- Ask yes or no questions
- Offer choices
- Be flexible, use any way to communicate