

Useful Communication Supports for Medical Encounters

Many communication boards and other resources and supports for healthcare communication can be downloaded at no cost from the Internet on hard stock or for future lamination. In addition there are several low-cost resources that can be purchased in quantity and distributed to other people who need help in navigating the communication pitfalls in healthcare settings. This section reviews many of these resources and provides links to the web sites from which they can be obtained. You can also find descriptions of similar or parallel resources in other sections of the patient:provider web site at www.patientprovidercommunication.org/

The Central Coast Children's Foundation Medical Encounter Communication

Board



Communication during a medical encounter can often be imperfect and complicated for everybody, but for patients who for various reasons are *communication vulnerable* (speak a foreign language, have pre-existing medical conditions that limit communication

capabilities) this can be an extremely scary situation.

To help support patient:provider communication during these often difficult interactions, the Central Coast Children's Foundation has developed a free downloadable communication sheet designed for regular medical encounters in clinics or doctors' offices, and during emergency room visits. On one side are general phrases and statements one might use in a medical office. On the other side are questions and statements that one might need in conversing directly with a nurse or doctor. You can find it in several languages on the Widgit health web site in the U.K. at <http://widgit-health.com/downloads/medical-encounter-board.htm> or here at:

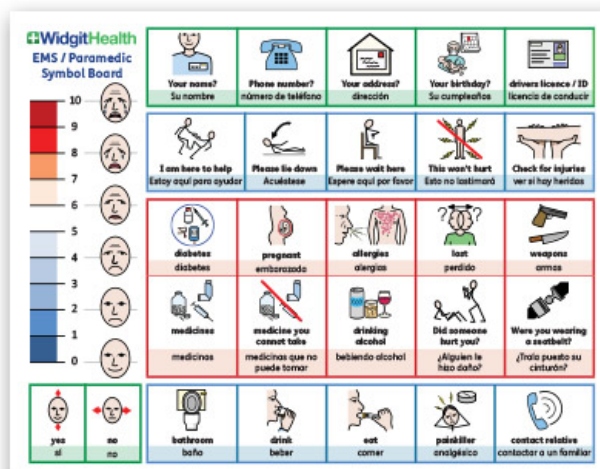
http://www.patientprovidercommunication.org/userfiles/file/1_1MedicalEncounterCommunicationBoard.pdf

The Toby Churchill Basic Communication Board



The Toby Churchill Basic Communication Board contains the letters of the alphabet, common words and emotions. The PDF offers 4 choices of keyboard – QWERTY, qwerty, ABCD or abcd. Just make your choice print it yourself, and you are ready to go, it's totally portable and it is best to keep it handy at all times. You could also laminate it in order to make it sturdier and longer lasting. If you lose or damage it you can just print out another. It is a useful item to keep for first responders, in critical care units, doctor's

surgeries, schools, day centers, hospices, private homes. It can be used by anybody literate who is unable to speak such as people with vocal cord damage, swallowing difficulties, stroke survivors, MS, MND, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Parkinson's disease, dyspraxia and other conditions affecting speech. It is also useful when communicating with people with hearing problems. You can find it available for free download at: http://www.toby-churchill.com/assets/downloads/alphabet_board_toby_churchill.pdf



Paramedic & EMS Symbol Board **(Widgit Health)**

Developed with SPEAK Unlimited Inc. This symbol communication board was created as a tool to assist Paramedics and those in the Emergency Medical Services in interacting with any individual for whom clear speech is difficult or impossible. Available in

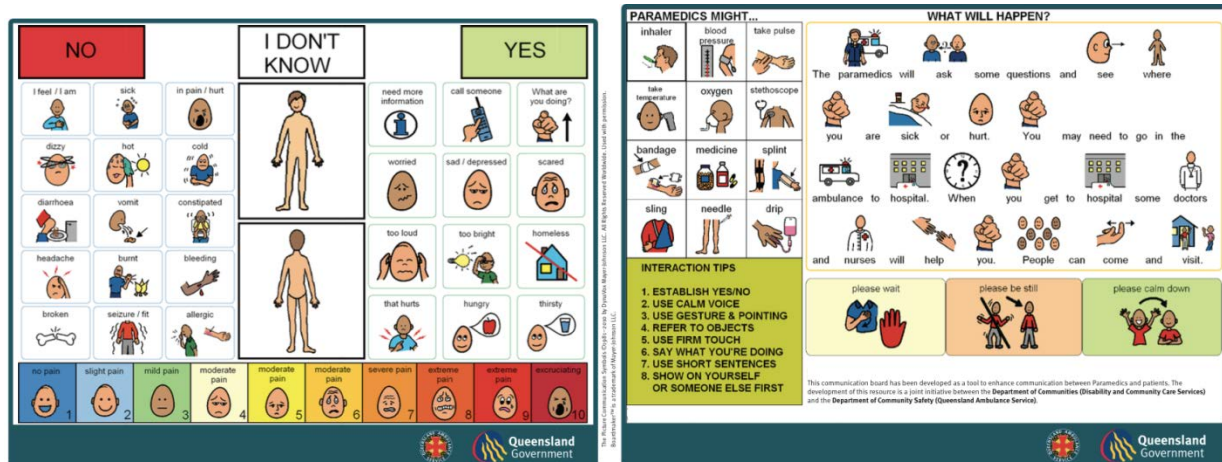
British English and dual-language American / Spanish.

<http://widgit-health.com/downloads/paramedic-board.htm>

Emergency Medical Situation Communication Board

This double-sided board contains vocabulary to help the patient and first responder to express and understand messages relating to the medical situation. It was developed as a tool to enhance communication between Paramedics and patients with communication vulnerabilities at the first point of contact in an emergency medical situation in Queensland, Australia.

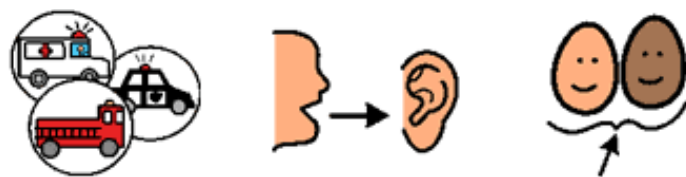
It includes a visual pain scale, body outlines to help locate sources of pain, tips for interacting with injured individuals, illustrate equipment/materials first responders might use, uses symbols to help explain what might happen next.



This tool is free, and can be downloaded on a single, double-sided 8.5x11" sheet.

You can download it at: <https://www.qld.gov.au/disability/documents/community/medical-signing-board.pdf>

Communication 4 All in English, Spanish and Haitian (Creole) Freely downloadable Temple University communication boards



Communication during times of emergency is critical. However, many individuals may not communicate effectively due to their disability, injury, or shock. For others, spoken English may not be effective as well.

Since communication is so important, Temple University has developed free downloadable communication aids in English and Spanish. These aids can be used during times of emergency when spoken English or Spanish may not be effective. (1) English version:

<http://disabilities.temple.edu/aacvocabulary/e4all/EprepPictureAid.pdf>, (2) Spanish version:
<http://disabilities.temple.edu/aacvocabulary/e4all/EprepPictureAidES.pdf>

My Health Passport

Knowing patients' preferences and how to interact with them is important for a successful medical visit. When patients have complex communication needs, it may not be easy for them to communicate all of this information. Therefore, the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities has created a freely downloadable health passport for patients to carry with them, available in both English and Spanish. It contains information such as patient's name, a brief medical history, things that calm a patient, allergies, food preferences and preferred activities to pass the time.

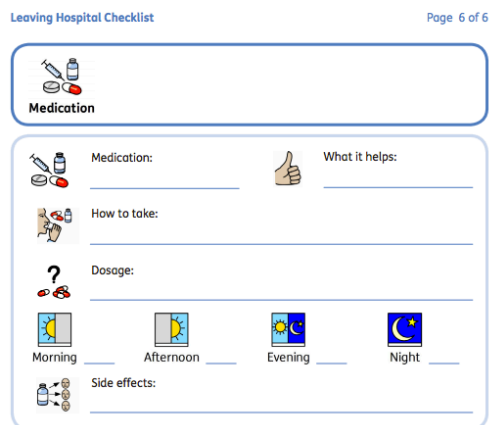
http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/docs/FCIC_Health_Passport_Form_Typeable_English.pdf



The image shows a template for a 'My Health Passport'. It has a red header with 'My Health Passport' in white text, flanked by large blue 'H' letters. Below the header is a yellow box with a red exclamation mark icon and the text: 'If you are a health care professional who will be helping me, **PLEASE READ THIS** before you try to help me with my care or treatment.' Below this is a white box with a red border containing a form with the following fields: 'My full name is: _____', 'I like to be called: _____', 'Date of birth: ____/____/____', 'My primary care physician: _____', and 'Physician's phone number: _____'. To the right of the form is a grey circle with the text 'Attach your picture here!'. At the bottom, there is a small note: 'This passport has important information so you can better support me when I visit/stay in your hospital or clinic. Please keep this with my other notes, and where it may be easily referenced.'

Leaving Hospital Checklist

Many communication breakdowns occur as a patient is leaving the hospital. This is the most critical communication period for not returning back to the hospital preemptively. During discharge, doctors turn care over to the patients and hold them responsible for taking



The image shows a 'Leaving Hospital Checklist' form. It has a blue header with the title 'Leaving Hospital Checklist' and 'Page 6 of 6'. Below the header is a blue box with a white border containing the following sections: 'Medication' with a pill icon, 'What it helps:' with a thumbs up icon, 'How to take:' with a hand icon, 'Dosage:' with a question mark icon, and 'Side effects:' with a pill icon. The 'Dosage:' section has four sub-sections: 'Morning' with a sun icon, 'Afternoon' with a sun icon, 'Evening' with a moon icon, and 'Night' with a moon icon. Each sub-section has a line for writing.

medications, going to follow-up appointments and obeying any other rules the doctor gives. To aid in this communication process and in remembering all the instructions given by the doctor, Widget Health has created a freely downloadable Leaving Hospital Checklist for the doctor and patient to fill out together and then the patient to take home. <http://widget-health.com/easy-read-sheets/pdfs/Leaving%20Hospital%20-%20checklist.pdf>

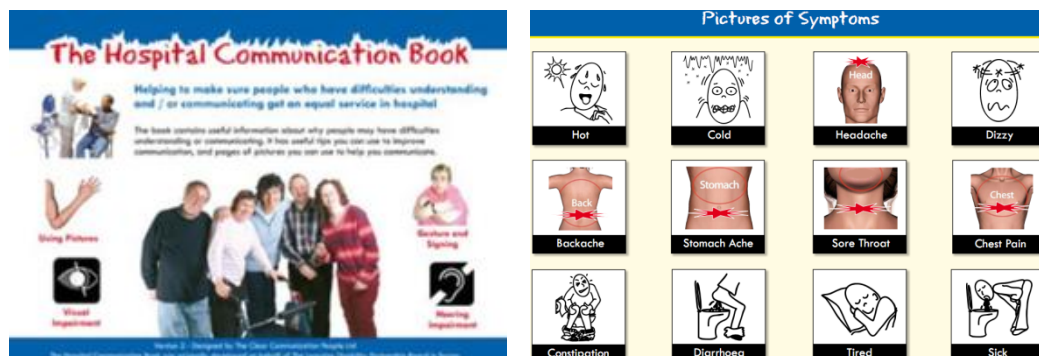
Emergency Information Form for Children with Special Needs

In order to ensure timely and correct treatment without unnecessary errors, emergency physicians need to know medical needs of their patients. Because children with special needs often have unique medical histories and complex medical needs, the American Academy of Pediatrics has created an Emergency Information Form for Children with Special Needs to compile the information emergency doctors will need in one convenient place: <https://www.acep.org/clinical---practice-management/emergency-information-form-for-children-with-special-health-care-needs/>.

Emergency Information Form for Children With Special Needs		
American College of Emergency Physicians		American Academy of Pediatrics
Date form completed by whom:	Revised	Initials
Name:	Birth date:	Nickname:
Home Address:	Home/Work Phone:	
Parent/Guardian:	Emergency Contact Names & Relationship:	
Signature/Consent*:		
Primary Language:	Phone Number(s):	
Physicians:		
Primary care physician:	Emergency Phone:	
	Fax:	
Current Specialty physician:	Emergency Phone:	
Specialty:	Fax:	
Current Specialty physician:	Emergency Phone:	
Specialty:	Fax:	
Anticipated Primary ED:	Pharmacy:	
Anticipated Tertiary Care Center:		
Diagnoses/Past Procedures/Physical Exam:		
1.:	Baseline physical findings:	
2.:		
3.:	Baseline vital signs:	

The Hospital Communication Book: Helping to make sure people who have difficulties understanding and /or communicating get an equal service in hospital

The Hospital Communication Book is a book that contains useful information about why people may have difficulties understanding or communicating. It has useful tips you can use to improve communication, and pages of pictures you can use to help you communicate. And is a valuable resource for patients, providers and family members. The book was designed by The Clear Communication People Ltd on behalf of The Learning Disability Partnership Board in Surrey, England.



There are two sections with lots of pictures and diagrams. The first section is for **hospital staff**. It contains basic information about the kinds of communication needs people have. It includes information about how to communicate with someone who has difficulty speaking and how to

support people with vision and hearing impairments. There are also sections on using manual signs, pictures and photos for communication.

The second section has pictures and simple explanations of basic hospital procedures, pain levels, personal care, choices for food and drink, symptoms (some examples shown below) and more. These materials make it easier for **patients** to understand what is happening and for **nurses and doctors** to explain things. This book is a terrific patient-provider communication tool.

The Hospital Communication Book can be downloaded online for free at:

<http://www.surreyhealthaction.org/going-to-hospital-section/the-hospital-communication-book.html>

The ICE (In Case of Emergency) Communication Card

The Widgit ICE Card is credit card sized, and easily folds out to a larger sheet. One side contains your ICE information, with each section illustrated by a symbol. On the reverse is a symbol communication sheet.



The communication sheet provides easy access to a pain scale and core responses that may be used at any time. For example, the responses 'Yes' and 'No'.

Who is it for?

ICE cards can save time and lives in medical emergencies, by providing a quick visual tool that can be used by **anyone** to clarify understanding.

- If a person **cannot hear or speak** as a result of an accident, symbols can be an effective tool to aid communication.
- For people **travelling** in a foreign country, symbols can aid communication with people who speak another language.
- Symbols are a common information tool used by people with a learning impairment or a communication challenge, for example **Autism, Down's Syndrome or Dyslexia**

- The **elderly** are particularly vulnerable as they may depend more on medication and suffer injuries more easily.
- People with **dementia** may find it easier to use symbols when communicating in a emergency situation.
- People suffering a **stroke** may slur their speech and find it difficult to find words or understand speech.



For US and Canadian orders (pack of 20 for \$12 Canadian) visit Bridges/Canada at: <https://www.bridges-canada.com/products/9316-1>

Critical Communicator

Patients may have difficulties communicating on a temporary basis or a long-term basis. Either way, there are many simple and inexpensive tools available to help these patients communicate to the health care providers or their families. AliMed has created an easy-to-use communication board with pictures and scales to assist patients in talking about pain, medical needs, food, comfort and the people around them. The Critical Communicator is available in 21 languages, sold in packs of 10 or 30 for \$25-\$43.00: <http://www.alimed.com/the-critical-communicator.html>. There

is also a Critical Communicator aimed specifically for children, which is available in both English and Spanish, sold in packs of 25 for about \$35.00:

<http://www.alimed.com/the-critical-communicator-for-kids.html>.

