

Communication in HD

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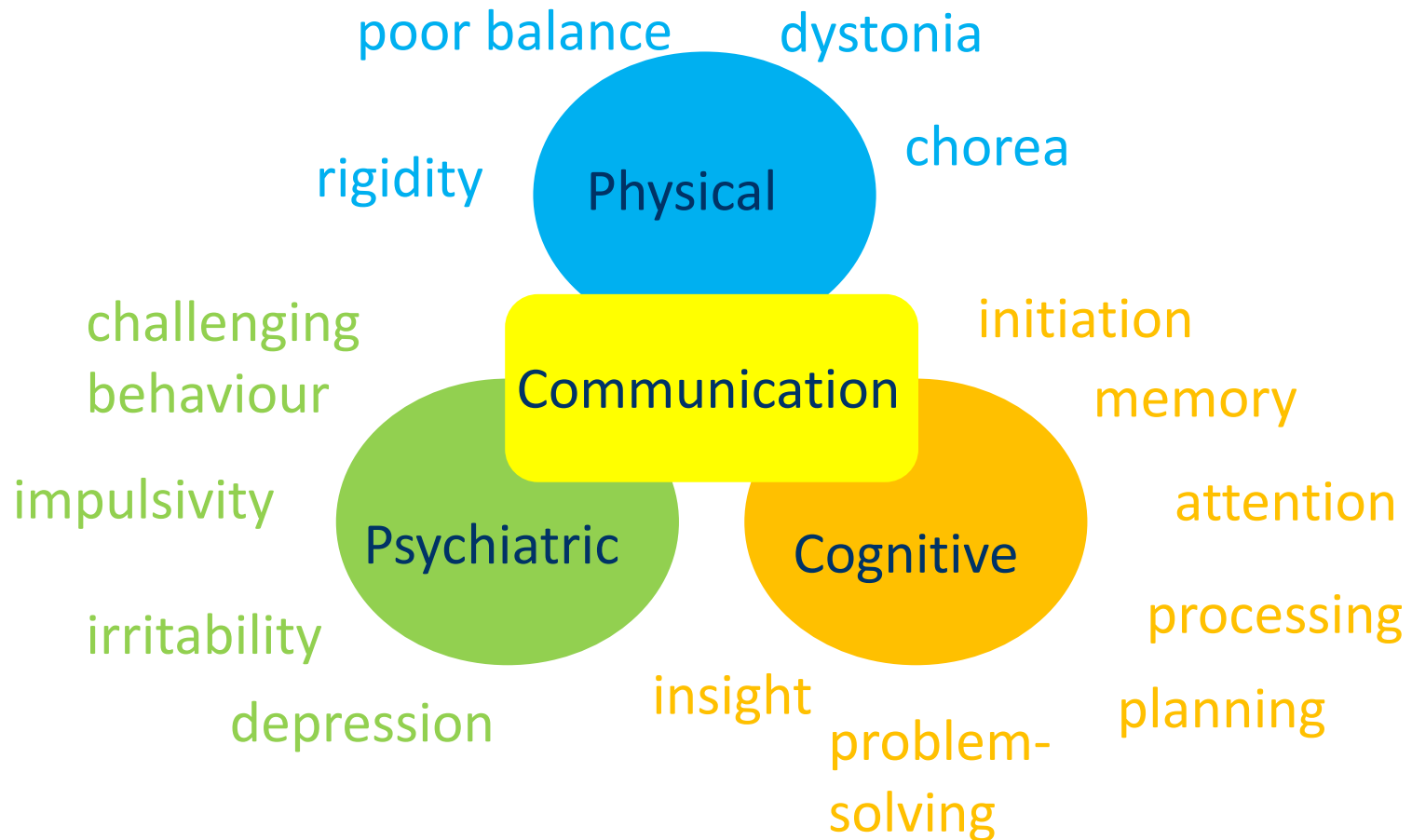
Advanced Specialist SLT



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Triad of Impairments



Impact on Communication

Physical: Speech

- Dysarthria
 - Difficulty producing sounds with tongue, lips and palate.
 - Reduced coordination of breathing and using voice
 - Harsh/strained voice
 - Volume can vary
 - Lack of rhythm
- Impacts on other people understanding them.
- Often an early symptom

Impact on Communication

Cognitive

- Reduced understanding of complex/abstract info
- Delayed response
- Word finding difficulties
- Reduced vocabulary
- Shorter and simpler sentences
- Difficulty staying on topic
- Repeating self/getting 'stuck' on a topic

Impact on Communication

Social Interaction

- Body language, gesture, facial expression, eye-contact
- Reduced initiation
- Attention
- Agitation, frustration, irritability, impulsivity
- Behaviour

Early stage

- Mild dysarthria
- Mild cognitive changes
- Difficulties understanding complex information

What can help?

- Allow enough time
- Simplify complex information
- Reduce distractions



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Mid Stage

- Increased dysarthria – difficult to understand
- Cognitive abilities have reduced

What can help?

- Encourage the person to:
 - Slow down speech
 - Repeat
 - Simplify
 - Use gestures



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Mid Stage



What can help continued...

- Break information down into simple 'chunks'
- Use objects/gestures to help them understand
- Give lots of time to process
- Minimise distractions
- Be honest if you have not understood
- Look out for facial expressions and gestures
- Limit choices e.g. 2 options



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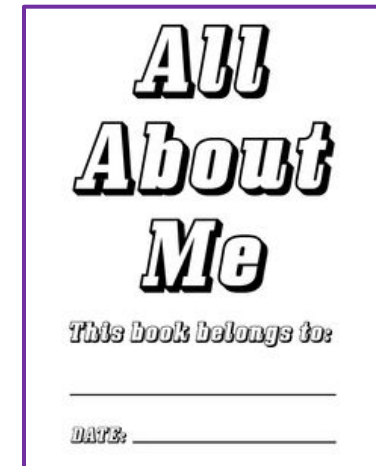
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Late Stage

- No or very limited speech.
- May be some non-verbal communication.
- Difficulty understanding others.

What can help?

- Ask simple yes/no questions
- Give choices from 2 objects
- Look out for non-verbal communication
- Continue to talk to the person as though they understand – keeping it simple.
- Spend time looking at photos/magazines/listening to familiar music etc – make comments, give the person opportunity to participate.
- Make a life book



Speech & Language Therapy

- Early referral useful!
- Might involve:
 - Repeated communication assessment over time
 - Improving breathing/voicing/intonation (early stage)
 - Use of communication strategies (person and others)
 - AAC (communication aids)
 - Advice & training for family members/carers
 - Optimising communication environment
 - Supporting with decision making
 - Assessing capacity



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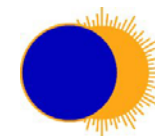
Communication Aids

Might include:

- Picture charts
- Communication books
- Alphabet boards
- High tech e.g. iPads/computers



A	B	C	D		
E	F	G	H		
I	J	K	L	M	N
O	P	Q ^u	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y	Z



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AAC User

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Any Questions?



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