Planning Booklet

Planning Area 2:
Communication

Sharing my thoughts and feelings

Even when we don't use words, we communicate our thoughts and feelings by using our tone of voice, eyes, facial expressions, or body. We use our behaviour to express thoughts and feelings too. For example, we might move towards or try to get things we like, and try to get away from or push away things we don't like. Sometimes when the people around us don't understand what we are trying to say, our attempts to communicate can be called challenging behaviour.

What things do the people in my life need to learn about how I communicate?

Choose anything below that is important to you.

How I communicate my likes and dislikes

How I communicate my feelings

How I communicate who I like and don't like spending time with

How I communicate when I am feeling happy and safe

How I communicate when I want something

How I communicate when I am feeling bad

How I communicate when I am in pain or sick

How I communicate when something is wrong

Is there anything else my supporters need help to understand?

Focus on your answers from above. Now think about what is needed to make these things happen. You can record these in the table on the next page.

Some ideas might be **training my supporters, creating a dictionary that tells people how I communicate, or updating my communication device.**

As part of this, it would be good to think about what support you may want to make these things happen. What do you want to do yourself and what do you want support with?

Fill in the columns that ask you about the support you need.

We've also given you an example.

Describe the next steps needed to share my thoughts and feelings	What can I do to make this step happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
Example: My supporters need more training	I can do some of this. I will ask my peer group for advice on how to organise training.	Yes. I don't know how to organise training on my own. Support from a person who can record how I communicate these things Support from a person who can help me train others.	No I don't have someone who can help. I will ask my peer group for advice about who I should get.	At the next peer group meeting next month Maybe I can talk about this at my NDIS Planning meeting.
Example: Creating a dictionary	I'm going to draw and write all the things I want to explain.	No	-	Next week I'll start.

Describe the next steps needed to share my thoughts and feelings	What can I do to make this step happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
1.				
2.				
3.				

We've included a document in this Planning Area, which you can download and use to develop your own dictionary. It's called "How do I communicate".

Saying no, refusing and rejecting choices

Being able to say 'no', and to have that respected, is essential to your quality of life. Sometimes you might need to try new things to see if you like them, but it is important that you can say 'no' at any time and that your supporters respect your choice. It's ok to change your mind about any part of your plan at any time, and to say 'no'.

Look at the list in the tables on the next pages.
Do you need any support to say No?
Choose as many ideas as you want.

Once you have done this you can think about whether you need support to make these things happen. What things can you organise yourself and what do you need support to do? Fill in the columns that ask you about the support you need.

We've also given you an example.

Choose the ideas that relate to you	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
Example: Make sure the the way I say yes and no is clearly understood	I don't think everyone is listening to me when I say no.	I will tell Pam I don't think people are listening to me.	I will need help to have a discussion with my supporters to tell them this. Support person - Pam. I will ask Pam what we can do.	Yes. I have Pam to talk to.	When I next see her
Example: Make sure I have many ways to say yes and no (for example by learning to shake or nod my head, use a key word sign, use eye gaze (e.g. up for 'yes', down for 'no'), or to use switches or a communication board to say 'yes' or 'no')	Yes this relates to me. I want to learn more ways of saying No.	I can tell Pam about this.	Yes. I need support because I don't know what other ways I can learn. Support person - Pam. I will ask her what we should do.	Yes. I have Pam to talk to.	When I next see her

Now it's your turn.

Choose the ideas that relate to you	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
Make sure that my supporters understand that it is my right to say 'no', even when that might be inconvenient for them					
Make sure my supporters understand how to give me real choices					

Choose the ideas that relate to you	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
Make sure the way I say yes and no is clearly understood					
Make sure I have many ways to say yes and no (for example by learning to shake or nod my head, use a key word sign, use eye gaze (e.g. up for 'yes', down for 'no'), or to use switches or a communication board to say 'yes' or 'no')					

Getting someone's attention

If you don't or can't use speech, other people sometimes think you don't need to interact much or have conversations. That's not true. We all need to know that we matter, what's going on, and to feel connected. Sometimes the only way we can get people to talk with us is by doing something which might be called 'challenging behaviour'.

Look at the list in the tables on the next pages.
Do you need any of these things to support you to get attention and interaction?
Choose as many ideas as you want.

Once you have done this you can think about whether you need support to make these ideas happen. What things can you organise yourself and what do you need support to do? Fill in the columns that ask you about the support you need.

We've also given you an example.

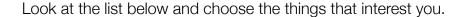| Choose the ideas that relate to you about having attention and interaction	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
Example: Make sure my supporters understand the ways I like attention and interaction	Yes, this relates to me. Some of my supporters think I'm acting badly.	I think it could be put in my dictionary. I think some supporters need training.	Yes - put things in a dictionary. Organise training Support person to put the things in a dictionary Support person to organise training	No, I don't know anyone who can do this.	Maybe I can talk about this at NDIS Planning
Example: Support me to build new relationships	Yes, this relates to me. I'm bored and want some new things to do.	-	Yes, I don't know what I can do so I need some ideas and places I can go. I will need someone to help me research and come with me to try new groups.	Maybe Ameer can help me with this.	Ameer sees me on Tuesdays

Now it's your turn.

Choose the ideas that relate to you about having attention and interaction	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
Support me to build new relationships					
Make sure my supporters give me that attention and interaction					
Help me successfully get the attention I need from other people					

Choose the ideas that relate to you about having attention and interaction	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? If I don't, who can I ask for this support?	When do I want to do this by?
Make sure my supporters speak with me and not about me					
Support to strengthen my relationships and spend more time with people I like					

Asking for what I want

The things you want in your daily life should be easily accessible to you, so that you don't need to ask every time you want something. If you don't use speech, there are many ways you can ask for the things you want which you can't get yourself. It is important that your supporters know to always respond to your requests, even if the answer needs to be 'no' or 'I don't know'. You should not be discouraged from asking for what you want, when you want it.

Do I need to find more ways to ask for what I want?

Look at the list below and choose the things that interest you.

  Symbols

  Pictures

  Photos

  Gestures and pointing

  Signing, e.g. key word signing or Auslan

  Taking or directing another person to what I want

  Auditory scanning*

  Using objects

  Technology

*Auditory scanning is when a communication partner (or a communication device with a synthetic device) says words, one at a time, until the person hears what he or she wants to say and selects the item. For example, they might do this by nodding their head or hitting a switch

Are there any other ways I can ask for what I want?

Focus on your answers from above. Now think about what is needed to create these new ways of asking for what you want. You can record these in the table on the next page in the first column.

Once you have done this you can think about whether you need support to make these ideas happen. What things can you organise yourself and what do you need support to do? Fill in the columns that ask you about the support you need.

We've also given you an example.

Describe the next steps needed to ask for what I want	What can I do to make this step happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? **What kind of support do I need?** (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
Example: We've tried new ways before and didn't work. Maybe it's time to try again. I want to learn about auditory scanning	I can research auditory scanning on the internet.	Yes, I need help to learn about auditory scanning and find a person who knows it. I need an example of it. I need technology if it works for me.	No. I don't know anyone who uses it. I will ask in my peer group.	Next peer group meeting

Now it's your turn.

Describe the next steps needed to ask for what I want	What can I do to make this step happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
1.				
2.				
3.				

Knowing my calendar and routines

People can feel anxious if they don't know what is going to happen next in their life, what is expected of them, or when things are going to happen. When things are not predictable, or feel out of our control, we can feel stressed. Sometimes expression of this anxiety and stress can be called 'challenging behaviour'.

I need support to develop a schedule or a routine which

Choose the ideas that are important to you.

Are based on what is important to, and for, me

Help me know what's happening now and in the future

Suit my needs and wishes

I have input to

Respect the ways I like things to be done

Are recorded in ways I understand

I can access using visual, auditory, sensory supports

I can learn to access on technology, eg an iPad or smartphone

Is there anything else you need to be able to ask about and know your calendar and routines?

Focus on your answers from above. Now think about what is needed to make these things happen. You can record these in the table on the next page in the first column.

Once you have done this you can then think about whether you need support to make these ideas happen. What things can you organise yourself and what do you need support to do? Fill in the columns that ask you about the support you need.

We've also given you an example.

Describe the next steps needed to ask for knowing my calendar and routines	What can I do to make this step happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this?
Example: I want to have my routine in my iPad and for people to show it to me	-	Yes. I need to talk to my service. I need someone to put in to my iPad each week. I need to learn about my iPad more.	Yes, the people are there but they don't do it. I need help to talk to the service.	Once I have found someone to help me talk to the service

Describe the next steps needed to ask for knowing my calendar and routines	What can I do to make this step happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
1.				
2.				
3.				

We've included a document you can download in the Extra Resources section to help you create your own weekly calendar.

Expressing everything I need or want to say

It can be frustrating if you don't have access to enough words to express yourself. You might be behaving in ways which seem challenging to others in order to get your message across. You have the right to aids to support your communication and reduce your frustration. There are more choices than ever when it comes to finding a communication system which suits you.

Look at the list in the tables on the next pages.
Do you need any of these things so that you can express everything you want to say?
Choose as many ideas as you want.

Once you have done this you can then think about whether you need support to make these ideas happen. What things can you organise yourself and what do you need support to do? Fill in the columns that ask you about the support you need.

We've also given you an example.

Choose the ideas that relate to you about expressing all you need or want to say	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
Example: Find the right communication system which I can use to have two way conversations with other people (for example a communication book, a communication app on an ipad, sign language, or Braille	I've tried different systems before and they didn't work.	-	Yes, I will. I don't know where to start. I need someone to tell me what would be a system that would be good for me. Support from a person to tell me what system would be good for me	Yes, the people are there but they don't do it. I need help to talk to the service.	Once I have found someone to help me talk to the service

Now it's your turn.

Choose the ideas that relate to you about expressing all you need or want to say	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
Find the best way to access my system, such as pointing, eye gaze, a switch, a head pointer or a keyguard					
Make sure my communication system reflects what I want to say					

Choose the ideas that relate to you about expressing all you need or want to say	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
Learn to use a communication system (even when I sometimes appear to not want or be able to pay attention)					
Get help from local organisations to find the best strategies for me					
Improve my communication and literacy skills over time					

Learning how to use my communication system

Learning to use a communication system is like learning a new language - it takes a lot of time. You will need plenty of opportunities across your day to see your new communication system being used for real interaction. It is important that the people around you are being supported to learn your communication system so they can model how it is used. Communication systems are often called Augmentative and Alternative Communication, or AAC.

Look at the list in the tables on the next pages.
Do you need any of these things so that you can learn to use your communication system?
Choose as many ideas as you want.

Once you have done this you can then think about whether you need support to make these ideas happen. What things can you organise yourself and what do you need support to do? Fill in the columns that ask you about the support you need.

We've also given you an example

Choose the ideas that relate to you about how to use your communication system	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
Example: Make sure my system is accessible at all times	This will be very important. My system needs to be able to be used by me when I need it.	Have at my next team meeting	Yes. Make sure it can be carried with me. Make sure it can be set up in my home. Make sure my staff know what to do I will need support staff to do these things for me.	Yes, it does but they will need training. I need to talk to my staff.	At my next team meeting

Now it's your turn.

Choose the ideas that relate to you about how to use your communication system	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
Find a suitably qualified and experienced AAC professional					
See others using a system before I am able to use it myself					
Make sure my system is accessible at all times					

Choose the ideas that relate to you about how to use your communication system	Is there any more information I want to record about this?	What can I do to make this idea happen?	Is there anything I will need support to do? What kind of support do I need? (technology, equipment, support from a person, a visual plan or example, training for myself, peer support, other)	Do I have this support? Yes or if No, who can I ask?	When do I want to do this by?
Learn how to use the system and to see it used in real situations					
Get help from local organisations to find the best strategies for me					
Attend a conference on communication to learn what's possible					
Find other AAC users to share experiences and support each other					

Do I have any more ideas?

If you want, you can look again at the main topics in this Planning Manual and add any more ideas or steps you think are important.

1. Sharing my thoughts and feelings

2. Saying No or rejecting choices

For example: I want to ask my friend to talk to mum and dad and tell them that I don't want to do some things anymore.

3. Having the attention and interaction I need

For example: I sometimes end up calling one person a lot when I am anxious. I need some help to know when it is and isn't OK to call.

4. Asking for what I want

5. Asking about and knowing my calendar and routines

6. Expressing everything I need or want to say

7. Learning to use my communication system

For example: I've realised I should only have workers who are willing to use my communication system with me. I should put this on my list of interview questions.

Making a Goal

The main Goal with this Planning Area was to help you to strengthen your communication and be better understood. You may now have a list of strategies and actions that can help you do just that!

If there is anything you want to add to this Goal statement, you can do that below.

Now you have finished, you may have a Goal, some Strategies to reach that Goal, and some Actions to get started!