

# SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST AND AUDIOLOGIST INTERVENTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF PAIN IN THE ELDERLY

Meaningful, precise communication is essential to good health care. Residents need to be able to express their needs, concerns, choices, hopes, and feelings. They also need to receive and understand information that is accessible, in order to be informed and involved in health care decisions. Good communication is central to many activities and fosters dignity, involvement, and connectedness. It is a shared responsibility.

Patients with pain may experience difficulty with concentration and memory, affecting their ability to express themselves and understand. This effort to communicate is magnified for individuals with hearing loss, word-finding difficulties, dysarthria, aphasia and cognitive impairment.

Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists work with residents and caregivers to provide "communication ramps" for residents with communication challenges, permitting a richer exploration of issues during conversations around pain.

Speech-Language Pathologists also work with patients and caregivers to ensure that medications are swallowed in the safest and most comfortable way.

