Talking with Deaf Patients

- Be Patient and Take Your Time

- Get Their Attention
  Tap a deaf person on the shoulder or wave to get their attention. They don’t know when you are talking to them if you are not directly and intentionally speaking to them.

- Ask What Communication Method They Prefer
  Each deaf person has their preferred method of getting information. Ask what works for them. This establishes what they need and what you can provide.

- Speak to the Deaf Patient Directly
  Do not speak to the interpreter or a person who is with the deaf patient. Speak to the deaf patient and look directly at them, even if they are looking at their interpreter.

- Use Visual Aids
  Pictures, drawings, or visual boards can all help when providing information to deaf patients.

- Use Teach Back
  Be sure the patient has understood what you said by asking them to explain it back to you.

- Use Facial Expressions and Body Movements to Communicate

- A Little Effort Goes a Long Way!
  Reduce background noise and make sure lighting is good. Try not to use jargon – keep it short & simple. Use a clear face mask. Do not look at your computer when speaking to the patient. Do not shout, and do not give up. If you are not understood the first time, try again!

Resources

Learn American Sign Language
- ASL Nook
- The ASL App
- Gallaudet ASL Connect

Interpreters
- Registry for Interpreters of the Deaf, Inc.

General
- Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center
- National Association of the Deaf
- World Federation of the Deaf

Deaf People of Color
- National Alliance of Black Interpreters
- National Black Deaf Advocates
- Council De Manos

Deaf LGBTQ
- Rainbow Alliance of the Deaf

Deaf Children
- American Society for Deaf Children
- Hands and Voices

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Go to Resources at www.thephcl.org for more information