

## Covid 19

### **Guide to Accessible and Friendly Communication with Children and Adults who have Intellectual Disability and/or Autism**

Please speak slowly, be clear and accurate and say what you mean.  
Some people need time to process what is said, some are very literal.  
Use signs, pictures and gestures to support communication as needed.  
Always ask the person what may help.

- Use plain simple language
- Speak slower
- Speak to the person themselves
- Give plenty of time for a response
- Use pictures if possible but only when needed
- Use family or friends as a 'communication partner' if needed
- Use easy-to-read information if available e.g.  
[www.inclusionireland.ie](http://www.inclusionireland.ie) or [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie)



**Communication with adults:** Remember every adult is presumed to have capacity to make his or her own decisions unless there is evidence to the contrary. With the consent of the person, family and friends can assist in identifying the will and preferences of the person receiving care, support or treatment.

**Be Aware:** In medical situations, when triaging or treating, some individuals with an intellectual disability, for example [Down Syndrome](#), may present atypically with serious illness (e.g. fever may be masked) and co-morbidities are common. Ask how they normally feel when ill.