



Best Practices

Disability Competent Communication Access

1. Offer alternate modes of providing information or interacting with your patients so content is understandable and useful to everyone.
2. Make alternatives to phone communication, such as email, text, web forms or relay services available to those who need them.
3. Make sure your website is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act section 508
4. Communicate who is responsible for what and how to meet patient requests in a timely way.
5. Establish specific scheduling procedures that include asking about accommodation requirements. Flag accommodation requirements in the patient's medical record, refer to the health record before and during the appointment to ensure needed accommodations are in place.
6. Provide auxiliary aids and services for people with hearing loss.
7. Have printed materials available in alternate formats such as audio, Braille, and large print. Electronic forms often make this easier.
8. Make all documents that go in the medical record and any other informational materials understandable for patients who may only be literate at the sixth-grade level.
9. Use respectful, accurate language that supports the self-esteem of individuals and helps eliminate prejudice. Train staff in the use of person-first and other strengths-based language.
10. Provide regular training for staff members. All office staff should be able to communicate with patients in a disability-competent manner.
11. Identify someone in the organization who is disability competent to provide ongoing oversight and coaching to others.