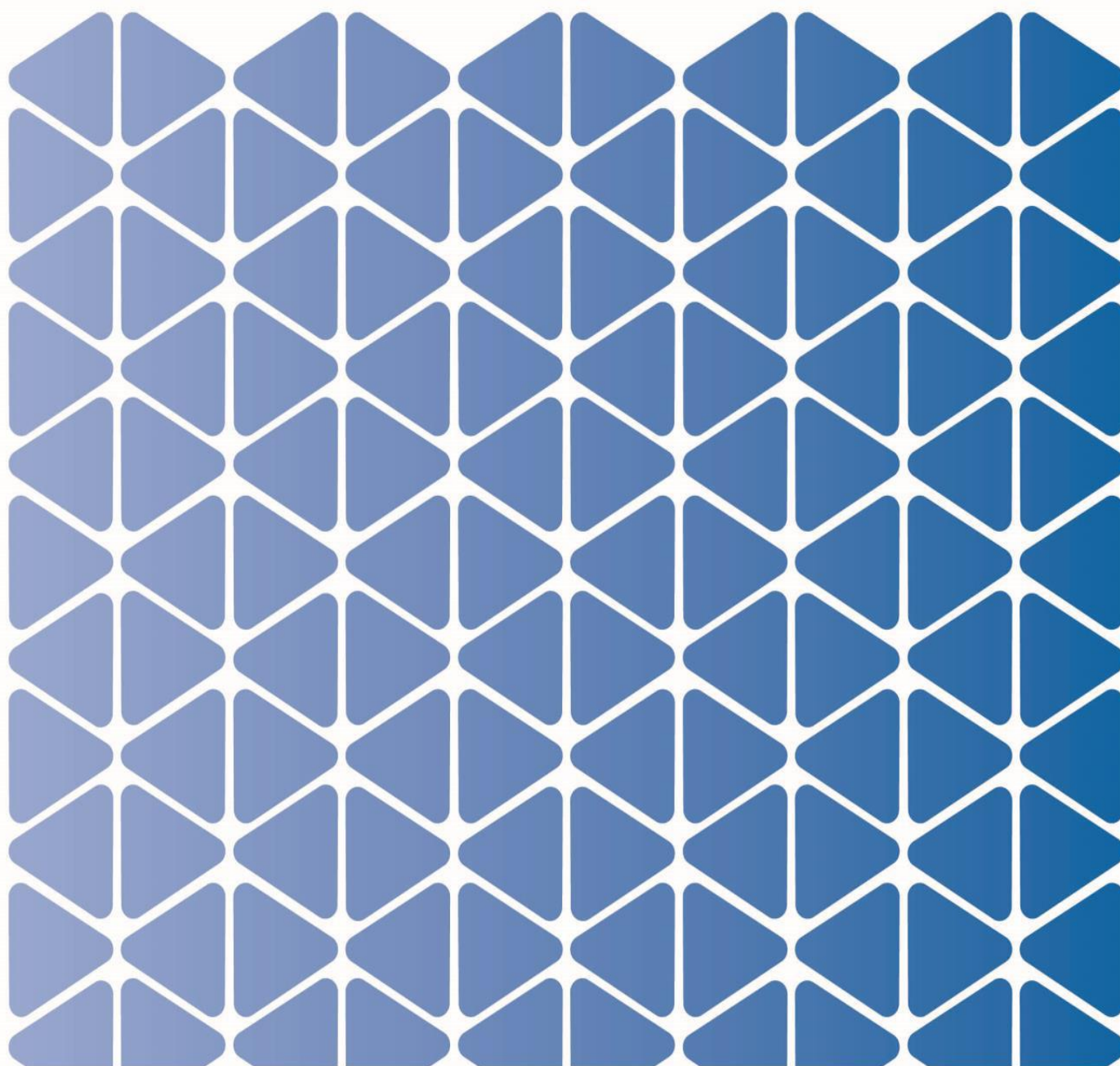


PATIENT INFORMATION**Speech and Language Therapy Department****DEMENTIA AND COMMUNICATION**

Advice and Strategies



Dementia can affect speaking, understanding, reading and writing. People can have trouble finding the right word following a conversation, staying on topic, expressing emotions, taking turns or knowing that they need to respond.

Tips to support conversation

- ✓ Wear **hearing aids** and **glasses**.
- ✓ Say **one thing at a time, slow down**.
- ✓ Use **simple short** sentences. **Repeat** if needed.
- ✓ **Reduce distractions** (turn off TV/radio).
- ✓ Get the person's **attention** before talking, ensure they are **alert** (e.g. make eye contact, say their name or gently touch their arm).
- ✓ Make questions **simple**. **Yes/no questions may be easier** (e.g. Would you like tea?).
- ✓ Use **objects or pictures** so the person can point to make their choice (e.g. apple or orange).
- ✓ Write down **key words** during conversation.
- ✓ If they cannot think of a word, **ask them for an alternative word** (e.g. sofa, couch, settee).
- ✓ Encourage **gestures** e.g. thumbs up/down, smile, nod, facial expressions.

Useful resource:

www.alzheimers.org.uk Tips for communication from The Alzheimer's Society, the UK's leading Dementia Charity.

Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust
Covering the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch, Worcestershire Royal Hospital and
Kidderminster Hospital

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Produced by:
Speech and Language Therapy Department
Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust

If your symptoms or condition worsens, or if you are concerned about anything, please call your GP, 111, or 999.

Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help.

If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.