

## **Communicating with the person with dementia – top tips**

**People with dementia are more sensitive to what is going on around them. How we adapt to their method of communication will influence how they respond to us.**

### **Do:**

- Approach the person quietly, and from the front
- Get down to the person's level. Let them see your face
- Introduce yourself
- Seek out a quiet area, or reduce any noise or other distractions
- Give the person your full attention and remain unhurried
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Use short sentences
- Use other cues and gestures to maximise understanding
- Ensure that only one person speaks at one time
- Allow the person time to respond
- Express an interest in what the person is saying or attempting to communicate, even if it is difficult to understand
- Recognise that behaviour is a form of non-verbal communication and expression of need
- Respect the person for who they are – not for what they say or do

### **Don't:**

- Try to communicate when there are distractions
- Use long complicated sentences (or jargon)
- Use gestures that could be seen as threatening
- Assume that pronouns like 'he' 'she' or 'it' will be clear to the person
- Keep repeating something if you are misunderstood
- Get involved in confrontations and arguments
- Assume that the person does not understand

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