Communicating so people will understand

If you’re talking with someone about their health or medicines, use these simple techniques:

- **Find out what they already know and build on it.**

- **Ask the right questions** – ‘open’ questions will help you check you have been clear; ‘closed’ questions are good for getting key information.

- **Give information in manageable chunks.**

- **Use the person’s actual medicines**, if reviewing medication.

- **Use pictures** – some people understand things better when they see them.

- **Check you were clear** – ask people to tell you what they think you have said.

- **Use plain English** – avoid jargon and technical terms.

- **Let’s PLAN...**

- **Underline or circle key information** in written material.

- **Give your patients a copy of Let’s PLAN for better care** – a simple tool to help them prepare for health appointments (email open@hqsc.govt.nz).

MORE INFORMATION
Read our guide for health professionals, *Three steps to better health literacy* (email open@hqsc.govt.nz).

www.open.hqsc.govt.nz

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