Background:

In an ongoing effort to increase communicative access for clients at the Association for the Rehabilitation of the Brain Injured (ARBI), two projects were initiated by the first author in collaboration with undergraduate students. These projects were conceived to address the lack of existing aphasia-friendly client forms at ARBI, and to meet Canadian Best Practice Recommendations for Stroke Care (2013, viii), which states that “All information intended for patient use should be available in aphasia-friendly formats.”

1) Development of aphasia-friendly (AF) resources to accompany the Canadian Occupational Performance Measure (COPM). The COPM is a widely-used tool for goal-setting with clients in both in-patient and out-patient rehabilitation programs.

2) Development of an aphasia-friendly version of ARBI’s annual client satisfaction survey.

Methods:

Basic guidelines were provided to both students with respect to creating aphasia-friendly documents, including: use of photos, larger font, simplified language, and bolding key words.

Results:

Some of the learning outcomes identified by the students included increased awareness of the need for clients with aphasia to have communicatively accessible documents, and an opportunity for hands-on practical experience with developing aphasia-friendly material.

Students also identified the challenge of translating complex ideas into an aphasia-friendly format, and finding appropriate photos to represent an idea.

The following benefits for ARBI were identified:

1) An increase in the leadership’s awareness for the need to make all existing client forms aphasia-friendly.

2) A demonstration of how students can add value to client care by their involvement with developing AF resources.

3) System-level change, since there is now greater recognition that going forward, any new client forms should have an aphasia-friendly version available.

Next Steps:

Future plans include developing aphasia-friendly versions of the COPM, and all consent forms. Also, a workshop will be offered to staff on how to develop aphasia-friendly resources.

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2. York-Durham Aphasia Centre (YDAC): How to Make Your Presentation “Communicatively Accessible” or “Aphasia-Friendly” for Adults Living with Aphasia and Related Communication Disabilities.


8. York-Durham Aphasia Centre (YDAC): How to Make Your Presentation “Communicatively Accessible” or “Aphasia-Friendly” for Adults Living with Aphasia and Related Communication Disabilities.
