

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Some points to remember when talking to someone with speech difficulties**

- 1 Regardless of the severity of the language loss, the person must be treated as a mature, intelligent individual. They have the same thoughts and feelings they had before their injuries.
- 2 Do not raise your voice when talking to the person. This does not help and may prove provocative.
- 3 Keep explanations short and simple. Explain slowly and clearly. Practically all people with speech problems have some difficulty in understanding speech. If the person fails to understand you, try repeating what you said.
- 4 All those with speech problems fluctuate in their abilities from day to day and sometimes moment to moment. Be patient.
- 5 Don't force the person to speak when they don't wish to.
- 6 Don't criticise or correct their attempts to communicate. They need to feel that their attempts to communicate are acceptable.
- 7 Let the person attempt to communicate whenever they want to.
- 8 Don't talk for the person unless absolutely necessary. Give them ample opportunity to speak first even if they are slow in expressing themselves. Not allowing the person to speak for themselves destroys or diminishes their self confidence.
- 9 Don't interrupt them when the person tries to say something. They often have to stop after a few words to think of the next word. Don't be tempted at this point to have your say or supply the word for that person.
- 10 People with a head injury use automatic expressions – such as swear words. Do not comment about this as that person often may not be able to control these words and may be very embarrassed about it.

