Parenting and Disability
Considerations for communication with parents with particular problems

The theme of ‘communication runs throughout all the ‘Parent and Disability’ course materials. For those of you who are interested in exploring this theme further, the next activity explores the concept of communication from another dimension.

e-tivity 1 (2 hours)

Purpose
To provide the opportunity to find out how you can avoid communication barriers with parents living with a disability who have a variety of problems. Some simple steps in preparation of yourself or the environment will greatly enhance the communication between you and the parent or patient.

Task
1. Listen to Dan’s story entitled ‘communicate with me’ (54 seconds)
   
   [Link to Dan’s story]

2. Write 25 words about how you, as a health care professional, feel about what Dan has said about how people communicate with him…(Note to facilitator – suggest a blog)

3. Identify at least one barrier to verbal communication and one barrier to written communication…(Note to facilitator – suggest a wiki)

Respond
Using some of the responses made by your colleagues, suggest at least two ways the interprofessional team can overcome these barriers (25 words…(Note to facilitator – suggest a wiki)
**e-tivity 2 (2 hours)**

**Purpose**
To review the language used in practice which may be either prejudicial or stereotypical.

**Task**
1) Review the following statements in table 1 and the terms in table 2.

### Table 1

- All disabled people are the same
- Disabled people should not have sex
- All disabled women will have ‘high risk’ pregnancies
- The child will be born handicapped
- Disabled people are dependent so cannot care for another dependent on them
- Having a child when you cannot predict your own health or lifespan is irresponsible
- Children are in danger of neglect because disabled parents won’t be able to look after their physical needs
- The child will have to do a lot of household chores and care for their disabled parent
- They are ashamed of their abnormalities
- Any able bodied person who marries us must have done so out of pity or suspicious reasons
- We envy and resent able bodied people
- We are bitter
- We never give up hope of a cure

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This work was produced as part of the TIGER project and funded by JISC and the HEA in 2011. For further information see: [http://www.northampton.ac.uk/tiger](http://www.northampton.ac.uk/tiger).

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Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past terms</th>
<th>Present terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disabled/handicapped/cripple/invalid</td>
<td>Disabled person/person with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf</td>
<td>Positive: people with a hearing impairment/deaf person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind</td>
<td>Blind person/visually sighted/has a visual impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally handicapped/retarded</td>
<td>People with learning disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongol</td>
<td>Person with Down’s syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spastic</td>
<td>Person with cerebral palsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally ill</td>
<td>Person with mental health disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mute/dumb</td>
<td>Person with a speech impairment/disability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


2) In your group select 3 points from each table and work up a team response to what effect this may have to your professional relationship to the parent with the disability. What does this interprofessional team need to do to address this?

3) Post your responses on the…*(Note to facilitator – suggest a wiki)*(at least 100 words)

Respond
Post at least two responses to another group’s contribution. (50 words)