



## Communicate Confidently with Doctors

As a caregiver, it can be difficult to connect to physicians and other medical professionals. There is also a level of anxiety that makes proper communication, listening, decoding and responding, all the more difficult.

What follows are helpful tips, provided by industry researchers, to help break down the barriers so that an even flow of exchange can take place between you and your caregiver's physician.

### Prepare

- Be fully present. Before entering the health care facility, take a moment to readjust and achieve a calm mindset.
- Make consistent eye contact with the physician.
- Focus on what is being said. Try to the best of your ability to note what you don't quite understand. (Consider keeping a notebook handy to jot down questions or to note key information when communicating with a health care provider.)
- Take stock of your role. You are entrusted with the care of your loved one. You don't have to apologize for not understanding.

### Participate

- Share your information needs (consider preparing a list of questions before the visit)
- Restate any questions that remain unclear.
- Actively listen to what is being explained.
- Make certain you understand the current situation and how it affects both you and your loved one.
- Ask for advice.

### Prevail

- Help the physician with problem solving by offering relevant information based on the given situation.
- Be clear on what the next steps are. If not clearly stated, ask.
- Understand what the protocol is for contacting the physician if you need additional help later.

- Express your gratitude. A simple “thank you” always goes a long way.
- If extra help with caregiving is required due to a particular medical condition or circumstance, seek help from family or close friends.