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## Your Rights as a Hard of Hearing or Deaf Patient

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### Include:

- Being consulted regarding the best accommodations for effective communication individualized for you.
- Full participation in your health care
- Informed consent regarding medical treatment
- Obtaining more than one opinion about your medical treatment
- Conscientious effort by staff members in communicating your medical needs to you
- Provision of reasonable accommodations including auxiliary aids and services such as assistive devices or interpreters
- Clarification of all bills and medical documents before you sign
- Help in obtaining information about financial aid
- Contact information for the hospital language access services, patient advocate, patient relations or ombudsman for problem solving

*For more information on your rights, see Federal laws such as the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Affordable Care Act Section 1557*

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## Suggestions to Reduce Communication Difficulties in Emergency Situations

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- Consider wearing a medic alert bracelet or necklace indicating that you have hearing loss.
- Keep your hearing aids and/or processor on for as long as possible.
- Keep a hearing loss ID card with your personal identification cards and papers.
  - On this card have:
    - ✓ Communication Tips
    - ✓ The International Symbol of Hearing Loss
    - ✓ Your Specific Communication Needs
- Inform family/friends of your specific needs so they can advocate on your behalf if you are unable to do so.
- Remember you have a right to effective communication and medical professionals have the responsibility to provide it!



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## So You and Your Hearing Loss Are Going to the Hospital!

*Know your rights and  
responsibilities*



International symbol of  
access for hearing loss

*Produced in partnership by the Hearing Loss Association of America Kentucky Chapters and the Kentucky Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental, & Intellectual Disabilities*

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## Planning and Preparing for Your Hospital Stay

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### Items to Ask for:

- Amplified Phone, VideoPhone, or TTY
- Visual Alerting System for Phone
- Captioning on TV
- Personal Amplifying Device
- iPad
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Items to Take:

- Hospital Communication Kit
  - Extra Hearing Aid Batteries
  - Your Personal Communication Equipment - Well-Marked with Your Name and Contact Information
  - A Storage Container for your Hearing Aids or Implant Processor – Well-Marked with Your Name and Contact Information.
  - Small Dry Erase Board and/or Pen and Paper
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
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## Pre-Admission

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- At your pre-admission hospital visit, discuss your hearing loss and other special needs.
  - Inform your doctor, surgeon, and anesthesiologist of your hearing loss and access needs. Be specific on what you need!
  - Inform hospital personnel of the items in your Hospital Communication Kit. Ask what procedures they use to alert caregivers of your hearing loss.
  - If you do not want your hearing status posted publicly, inform the hospital.
  - Consider asking that a prominent note be put in your medical record that spoken communication be brief, clear, and to the point.
  - Ask to receive instructions before staff put on surgical masks.
  - Inquire about medications that may affect your hearing.
  - Inquire about facility policy regarding removal of hearing aids or implant processors during procedures. If removed, suggest that they put the instruments in a plastic bag attached to your gown or physical medical chart.
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## In the Waiting Room

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- Inform receptionist of your hearing loss when you check in.
- Explain that you may not hear your name called and ask to have someone come directly to you.
- Sit facing the door where the providers enter and exit.
- Consider asking to have records show prominently that you have a hearing loss and what access needs you have.
- Express your appreciation for the attention you have.

### TIPS

- Visit your local hospital while you are well and find out what procedures it has for communicating for people with hearing loss. If none, educate them!
  - Find out the procedures for filing a formal complaint if effective communication is not provided.
  - Don't bluff. Ask for written instructions on anything that is not clearly heard or understood.
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