

## Communicating With Your Provider



### How you communicate with your provider can affect the quality of care you receive.

Having good communication is the first step to a positive working relationship.

In order to communicate well, always state your needs clearly. Listen to how your provider responds and ask questions about anything you do not understand.

#### Take time to learn about your provider.

- Ask your provider what name he/she would like to be called and use that name.
- Ask about any habits your provider may have that could affect you such as smoking, and talk about habits you have that your provider should be aware of.

#### Make sure what you are saying is being understood by your provider.

- Don't talk too fast or too slow.
- If you are talking to your provider and he/she looks confused, ask them if they understand what you are saying. By asking your provider, you will know for sure if he/she understood you or if you need to provide more details.

#### Helpful hints for good communication.

- Keep the lines of communication open to avoid misunderstandings.
- It may help to use humor and patience when dealing with difficult situations. The tone of your voice can also improve the outcome.
- Take responsibility for your own feelings and respect your provider's concerns by using "I" statements.



For example:

*"I see/hear/feel (state the issue).*

*It makes me feel (state your feelings).*

*I need (state a possible solution)."*



This might sound like:

***"I understand this task is hard to learn, but it makes me feel uncomfortable when you grumble under your breath. I would like you to ask me for more direction and let me know what you are feeling so we can work out the problem."***

***"This is the third time this week you have been 20 minutes late. I'm feeling frustrated because my schedule is off when you are late. I need you here on time."***

### **Keep the lines of communication open and focused on your care.**

- Be friendly, but keep your relationship as professional as possible. Remember he/she is there to provide IHSS services for you.
- Your provider may not want to share details about his/her personal life. Respect their privacy.
- Cultural differences may sometimes affect how you get along and may create misunderstandings. Talk about these things immediately and work on a solution that will satisfy both of you.

