Aphasia? What’s that?

- Research demonstrates the need for increased aphasia awareness
- Awareness and advocacy go hand in hand
- Awareness and advocacy efforts involving people with aphasia (PWA) are consistent with an LPAA framework

“There is more hope than I had ever thought for people with aphasia.”

-Nursing Student
Making the message meaningful

- Begin with brief introduction to aphasia, then move on to...
- Main focus: Impact on people
  - Impact of aphasia on people’s lives
  - Hope for future
  - Impact on trainees’ ability to communicate
  - Supported conversations techniques

“I like it because it's different. It's fun for me. Someone said to me, 'I can’t believe you can do it.' I said, 'Better and better and better.'”
-Member with aphasia

Incorporating people with aphasia

- “Patients as educators” model
- Personal stories
- Small group interaction
- Supported conversation techniques

“I just know that it helped me. It gets me into talking and getting my words out, and I feel that a lot of things that I had mentioned to the students helped them to know what aphasia really is.”
-Member with aphasia
Finding an audience

- Healthcare
- Students
- Senior programs
- Community organizations
- Businesses/Corporations
- Just about anyone who will listen!

“Learned to not only better communicate with patients with aphasia but all patients.”
-Medical Resident

Achieving results

- Audience/Trainee results
  - First hand experience with aphasia and communication
  - Increased perspective on what successful living with aphasia looks like
    - Gives them a message of hope to bring to their patients
  - Learned communication strategies
    - Strategies can be applied to patients with any communication disorder

“I feel much more comfortable speaking to patients with aphasia and how to use strategies to better communicate.”
-Medical Student
Achieving results (cont.)

- PWA/Trainer results
  - Pride, purpose and a sense of accomplishment
  - Community re-engagement
  - Connection with others; increased confidence in communicating with people not familiar with aphasia

“It’s interesting to meet different people and explain about aphasia…I kind of have a script in my head. When people ask questions it gives me the opportunity to be more creative in the answers.”
- Member with aphasia

Examples that worked

- Medical resident/nursing/community training programs
- Aphasia Education Week
- SCALE’s aphasia friendly business campaign
- CSU-East Bay’s Aphasia Friendly Yosemite National Park Guide
- National Aphasia Association’s EMT training program
- “Something Special” - Jewelry and gift items created by and sold by PWA

“This was a great program as I was able to see firsthand the impact of Aphasia on great people who are the same as all of us.”
- Member of the community
KEEP CALM AND Let's Chat

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Select References


