

ADP daily living component activity 7 – communicating verbally

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Introduction

1. This chapter provides information on activity 7 of the daily living component of Adult Disability Payment (ADP).
2. This chapter should be read and applied in line with the Overview of Decision Making and the Daily Living Component Introduction.
3. Daily living component activity 7 considers an individual's functional ability to communicate verbally (using words) with regard to both
 - receptive (receiving, hearing and understanding) communication
 - expressive (conveying, talking) communicationin one's language of preference.
4. A case manager should consider clarity of an individual's speech. In some cases the other participant in the conversation may have to concentrate slightly harder than normal. For example after a certain type of stroke it can be hard to find the words to say or to articulate some sounds in speech. The speech may sound different but is still understandable. This may be considered to be to an acceptable standard.
5. If an individual is unable to make themselves understood and has to use hand gestures and write notes this would not be to an acceptable standard.
6. A case manager should consider:
 - an individual's ability to find the words they want to say
 - an individual's ability to articulate sounds in speech
 - an individual's ability to understand what is being said to them and respond appropriately.
7. A case manager should make a distinction between basic and complex verbal information.

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8. For the purposes of daily living component activity 7, a case manager should consider whether an individual satisfies all of the following:
- an ability to say short sentences such as “can I help you” “I would like tea please” and understand short sentences/instructions “could you pass me the bottle?” “Stay away from the painted wall”.
 - an ability to understand basic verbal information given to them.
 - complex verbal information – an ability to say longer sentences such as “I would like tea please, just a splash of milk and no sugar, as I always have sweeteners with me for when I go out”.
 - an ability to understand longer sentences and instructions “please come into the room, take a seat on the chair to the left and take out your paper work”
 - an ability to understand the complex verbal information given to them.
9. The scope of daily living component activity 7 considers health conditions where an individual’s ability to speak has been affected, including but not limited to the following:
- a stroke causing word finding difficulty or difficulty articulating words to make themselves understood
 - oesophageal cancer causing difficulty in making themselves understood
 - brain injury resulting in words in the wrong order for example
 - significant shortness of breath

This list is not exhaustive and the use of aids and appliances and / or communication support may be considered.

10. A case manager should consider:
- an individual’s ability to hear. One ear with no restrictions may be considered sufficient for the purpose daily living component activity 7 to be able to hear.
 - If an individual uses a hearing aid/s or cochlear implant/s, the aid should be relied upon to be able to hear.
 - Without using the hearing aid or cochlear implant the individual would not be able to hear. A hearing aid or cochlear implant should only be regarded as an aid if it’s necessary for an individual to hear to an acceptable standard.

The daily living component activity 7 descriptors describe five levels of functional ability to complete the activity:

- A. Can express and understand verbal information unaided
- B. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear
- C. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information
- D. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information
- E. Cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support.¹

¹ ADP regs, Schedule 1 Part 2 - Daily Living Activities, Activity (7)

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11. Basic verbal information is information conveyed in a simple sentence in an individual's native language:

- "Can I help you?"
- "I would like tea please"
- "I came home today"
- "The time is 3 o'clock"

12. Complex verbal information is information conveyed in either more than one sentence or one complicated sentence in an individual's native language:

- "I would like tea please, just a splash of milk and no sugar, as I always have sweeteners with me for when I go out."

13. Verbal information is information that is spoken and received aurally.

14. Communication support means receiving support from either:

- someone trained or experienced in communicating with people with specific communication needs (for example, through a BSL interpreter)
- someone directly experienced in communicating with the individual themselves (for example, a family member or carer)

15. An individual who cannot express or understand verbal information and would need communication support to do so should receive the appropriate descriptor for daily living component activity 7 even if they do not have access to this support.

For example, a deaf person who cannot communicate verbally and cannot use sign language might need communication support to support them in another way even if they do not routinely have such help.

16. An individual who has combined sight and hearing loss may connect, communicate and experience the world differently. The approach to support may vary.

17. Lip reading is not considered an acceptable way to interpret verbal communication.

18. The ability to text is not considered an acceptable way to interpret verbal communication.

19. Communication support can include but is not limited to the following:

- British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter
- Tactile British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter
- Electronic note-taker
- Lip- speaker
- Visual information such as symbols, photographs and pictures, letters and words

20. A case manager should consider whether an individual needs an aid or appliance for the purpose of an activity. In doing so, they should distinguish between:

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- an aid or appliance that an individual needs to use or could reasonably be expected to need to use, in order to carry out the activity safely, reliably, repeatedly and in a timely manner
- an aid or appliance that an individual may be using or wish to use because it makes it easier to carry out the activity safely, reliably, repeatedly and in a timely manner.

An aid or appliance is not required in the latter.

21. An individual may use an aid or appliance to assist them in completing this activity and this may mean that they satisfy daily living component activity 7 descriptor B, which is covered later.

22. Where an individual chooses not to use an aid or appliance that they could reasonably be expected to use and would enable them to carry out the activity without assistance, they may be considered as needing an aid or appliance rather than a higher level of support.

23. The following are not usually considered to be in scope for daily living component activity 7:

- any restriction that comes from a difficulty to engage with people as this is covered in daily living component activity 9
- any mental health condition symptoms unless this leads to an impact on an individual's cognitive abilities
- a need to remember and retain what is being said. There is no requirement for an individual to remember an instruction given to them once the instruction has been understood and completed.

Daily living component activity 7 descriptor A (0 points) – can express and understand verbal information unaided

24. Within the assessment criteria, the ability to perform an activity unaided means without either the use of aids or appliances and without prompting, supervision or assistance.

Daily living component activity 7 descriptor B (2 points) – needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear

25. Daily living component activity 7 descriptor B may apply to an individual who requires a hearing aid or a cochlear implant in order to hear to an acceptable level due to a difficulty with their hearing function, or who requires an electro larynx in order to speak due to a difficulty in being able to form speech.

26. Daily living component activity 7 descriptor B is most likely to apply to an individual with needs relating to a sensory condition or conditions.

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27. A case manager should consider exploring why an individual does not wear a prescribed hearing aid or cochlear implant, to establish if there is a good reason including but not limited to:

- chronic ear infection
- damage to the cochlea or auditory nerves
- the individual is totally deaf
- discomfort in wearing them

If there is a good reason then function without the aid should be considered. If there is not a good reason, expected function with the aid should be considered.

28. If an individual cannot speak or hear to an acceptable standard even with the use of aids or appliances then a higher descriptor may be more appropriate.

29. Aids or appliances may include but are not limited to:

- hearing devices
- electro larynx
- speaking valve
- pointer
- adapted mouse for a computer
- eye tracking device
- pen and paper
- aided augmentative and alternative communication methods such as speech generating devices.

30. Where an individual is either:

- prescribed a hearing aid but is able to hear to a sufficient level without it
- prescribed a hearing aid in one ear and has functional hearing in the other

then daily living component activity 7 descriptor B is unlikely to apply.

31. If an individual has been prescribed hearing aids or cochlear implants in both ears and is unable to use them, the reasons for not being able to wear them should be established before considering a higher descriptor.

Example: an individual who had throat cancer who satisfies daily living component activity 7 descriptor B

Cariad had a cancerous growth on her throat and as a result had an operation to remove some of the structure of her throat. This means that she is unable to produce sound when she is talking however, she was given an electronic voice box.

In her application for ADP she explains that she holds this against her throat and the vibrations of her throat make the words come out of the device. This is supported by a letter sent from the ear, nose and throat doctor.

As Cariad cannot express verbal communication herself, she requires a device to do this for her. The case manager determines that Cariad satisfies daily living

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component activity 7 descriptor B because the electronic voice box is an aid in expressing verbal information.

Daily living component activity 7 descriptor C (4 points) - needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information in an individual's native language.

32. Daily living component activity 7 descriptor C would apply to an individual:

- who can express or understand basic verbal information, but who needs support to be able to express or understand complex sentences.

33. If an individual is unable to express or understand basic verbal information then daily living component activity 7 descriptor D or descriptor E may be more appropriate.

34. An individual who is unable to express or understand verbal information and would need communication support to do so should receive the appropriate descriptor even if they do not have access to this support.

35. When awarding this descriptor an individual should be able to express or understand basic verbal information.

36. An individual may use an aid or appliance but still require communication support to express or understand complex verbal information.

Example: an individual with a stammer who satisfies daily living component activity 7 descriptor C

Alan has had a stammer since childhood. He has completed his application form for ADP and included a letter from a speech therapist. The letter explains that Alan is able to form short, basic sentences, but anything longer than six words takes him a long time and he often cannot finish longer sentences.

In his application form, he explains that he can say short things like "I'd like a steak please" because he can concentrate on forming the words like the speech therapist has taught him to. But if the sentence is longer like "I'd like a steak cooked medium rare with a mushroom sauce" he would only get halfway through the sentence before he started to stammer and then he can't finish the sentence. He reports that when he has these difficulties his partner will finish the sentence for him.

As Alan has difficulties with completing sentences when he speaks, he needs some help with expressing complex verbal information. The case manager determines that Alan satisfies daily living component activity 7 descriptor C because he needs support from another person to communicate in a timely manner.

Daily living component activity 7 descriptor D (8 points) - needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information

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37. Daily living component activity 7 descriptor D is most likely to apply to an individual:
- who requires communication support such as support from another person trained in communicating with people with specific communication needs (for example, a BSL interpreter).
 - who uses aids or appliances, where those aids do not restore speech, hearing or understanding to an acceptable standard.
38. An individual who is unable to express or understand basic verbal information and would need communication support to do so should receive the appropriate descriptor even if they do not have access to this support.
39. If an individual has access to communication support but does not use it through choice then a case manager may consider the reason for this choice. If there is a good reason, then function without communication support should be considered. If there is not a good reason, expected function with the communication support should be considered.
40. A good reason for not using communication support could include instances where it would still not enable a person to communicate to an acceptable standard, repeatedly or within a reasonable period of time. In this case the individual would likely be awarded daily living component activity 7 descriptor E. It might also not be safe for a person to make use of communication support if this would likely cause harm to the individual or another person either during or after the communication support has been provided.
- If an individual is not able to participate in a conversation or speak for themselves to express or understand basic verbal information a higher descriptor may be appropriate. However if an individual cannot participate in a conversation or speak for themselves however they can with communication support, daily living component activity 7 descriptor D does apply to them.
41. An individual who is reliant on communication support for example a BSL interpreter or Tactile BSL interpreter, is likely to be awarded daily living component activity 7 descriptor D.
42. An individual may use an aid or appliance but still require communication support to express or understand basic verbal information.

Example: an individual with a cleft palate who satisfies daily living component activity 7 descriptor D

Avi had a cleft palate when he was born and throughout his younger life and in to adulthood has had many operations to try and correct this. A letter from his facial surgeon suggests that these haven't all been successful and reports that whilst the hole has been closed, the structure of his mouth is impacted making it difficult for him to speak.

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In his application form for ADP Avi states that he can make some simple words but these are only short words like please and thank you and he cannot speak in sentences. When he goes to appointments at the GP surgery, the doctor knows to only ask yes or no questions, but anywhere else, he states that he relies on the help of his partner, mother or father, whoever is with him at the time to answer on his behalf.

As Avi has difficulties with expressing words he needs someone to help him. Avi doesn't have any difficulty in understanding the information and he is able to say some short words, so he can do some basic communication but he needs support to be able to do this repeatedly and to an acceptable standard.

The case manager determines that Avi satisfies daily living component activity 7 descriptor D because of the support he needs from another person to express verbal communication.

Daily living component activity 7 descriptor E (12 points) - cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support

43. Daily living component activity 7 descriptor E will apply to an individual who cannot either speak, hear or understand verbal communication even with communication support.

Example: an individual with hearing loss who satisfies daily living component activity 7 descriptor E

Adam recently lost his hearing in an accident at work. He has a letter from a hearing specialist at the hospital that shows that as a result of being in close proximity to an explosion his inner ears were badly damaged so it is unlikely that his hearing will recover. He completed his ADP application form himself.

In his application form he explains that losing his hearing has completely changed his life. He has not been able to adapt and explains that he is finding it very difficult to communicate. He takes a note pad everywhere so that he can get people to write things down for him. Due to having dyspraxia, he states that he is not able to learn BSL..

As Adam is unable to hear verbal communication, he cannot understand any verbal information.

The case manager determines that Adam satisfies daily living component activity 7 descriptor E because even with communication support he cannot hear to understand verbal communication.

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