

With the right strategy Scotland could become the first Inclusive Communication Nation!



Let's debate

This “essay” has been written by some of those who have been heavily involved in promoting Inclusive Communication in Scotland over the last decade:

- Amanda Bennett, Kim Hartley, Mandy Reid.

with input from the experts, that is people who have communication support needs and have been involved in Inclusive Communication projects:

- Robert Dalrymple, Helen Gowland, Bill Jones, Alison McCormack, Connor Stewart.

What do we want?

We want **Scotland to become the first Inclusive Communication Nation.**

Scotland would be the first nation to remove the persistent and universal barriers to equality and human rights that our present exclusive approach to communication imposes.

Aim of this essay

The aim of this essay is **to stimulate a debate**, which is both positive and inclusive, among the broadest range of stakeholders.

Based on the results of this debate, we want **to develop a consensus on an Inclusive Communication strategy for Scotland** and thus create the first ever “Inclusive Communication Nation” in the World.


We want an **Inclusive Communication strategy** which is:

- ✓ **progressive.** This means the strategy takes Scotland forward and builds on all the tangible and intangible assets available.
- ✓ **evidence based.** This means the strategy identifies what is good practice as evidenced by the real life outcomes for people with the broadest range of communication support needs. It is not enough just to identify practice.
- ✓ **sustained and sustainable.** This means the strategy is funded, subject to continuous improvement and protected from changes of personnel in agencies involved.
- ✓ **collectively “owned”.** This means by people with communication support needs, national and local government and statutory public, independent and third sector agencies.

Join the debate

We do not have all the information or knowledge about what is going on around Inclusive Communication in Scotland. **We don't have all the answers.**

For the sake of equality and human rights in Scotland we hope you will:

- read the essay. **If you read nothing else look at the quotes** marked with the symbol . They tell the whole story.
- sign up to join in the debate with us.
- add your knowledge, skills and information to take this vision forward.



Bill Jones was an active member of the Civic Participation Network project. He is now an active foster parent. Bill is deafened. Bill says:

“We need this debate now.... Its time for everyone to pull together to get Inclusive Communication off the ground and running. The only way to do it is to get everyone together to debate it and make them realise there are shortcomings and we know there are shortcomings. Work we did earlier was brilliant and taught us a lot and got a lot of people off their backsides and started to use inclusive communication. It feels to me like it has dwindled off a bit since then so by bringing it back into the open maybe it will start making people realise OK maybe we need to start doing this again. Because without it and I’m speaking from personal experience I feel excluded from in a lot of things.”



Robert Dalrymple was an active member of the Civic Participation Network project and is active in the Stroke Association. He says:

“I thought the idea of Inclusive Communication had died but I am pleased it is being brought to the fore again. In the last couple of years I have heard nothing about it and I have been very disappointed. I was very involved before in projects like the Civic Participation Network. I thought I’d been left out.”



Connor Stewart was an active member of the Civic Participation Network project . Now 21 he is an editor with a local online TV station. Connor believes:

“It’s important that we let other people know we’re still here and we need to get back to the forefront of government.



I know how difficult it is living with communication support needs and how much still needs to be done to break down barriers. If Scotland was an Inclusive Communication nation it would make life and work more inclusive and less isolating for people like me.”



Helen Gowland was an active member of the Civic Participation Network project. She is from Dundee Speakability a self-help organisation for people with aphasia and has been actively involved in inclusive communication projects previously. Helen believes

“The debate is a good idea – yes absolutely. Don’t just sit down and say nothing.... We need to do something positive. We all need to shout out again... even more loudly.”

To join the debate contact us by:

	Visit www	
Add in	Email	Add in
	Telephone or text / mobile	Add in
	Post	c/o RCSLT Scotland 49 North Castle Street EH2 3BG

Contents of the essay

	Section	Page
1	What is inclusive communication?	5
2	What is an Inclusive Communication nation?	8
3	Vital social, economic and political reasons for Inclusive Communication in Scotland	8
4	Route map to an Inclusive Communication nation	13
5	Where are we now?	15
6	How can we get there?	28
7	Appendices	30

Section 1: What is inclusive communication?

Inclusive Communication is **communication which is inclusive**.

An approach

Inclusive Communication is an approach to communication **which enables as many people as possible to be included** in that communication.

The Inclusive Communication approach:

- ✓ recognises that all human beings use many ways of understanding and expressing themselves (see [Appendix 1](#) for a list of these ways).
- ✓ encourages, supports and enables people to use whatever ways of understanding and expressing themselves which they find easiest.
- ✓ encourages and enables organisations which serve people (from any sector) to use whatever ways of communicating with the public which people find easiest.

For example if people find it easiest to understand information in photographs or video then an organisation would provide information about how to access services in that way.



Bill says:

“A simple example of Inclusive Communication is receptionists in doctors’ surgery. You go to one receptionist and its fine. She faces me and it’s very positive. She is doing it in the way that I need it to be done. It allows me to lip-read and communicate with her on my level rather than communicate on their level. So by facing me it’s a simple thing that doesn’t cost anything and makes such a difference.

Not just me – it’s important for anyone who is struggling to understand and look at people’s mouths and facial expressions. Even people who have hearing still lip-read. They reckon even hearing people pick up 20% of their understanding from lip-reading – and facial expression.”



Connor says:

“My employment support worker knows I’m better with texts, social media and emails than on the phone and even face to face. So we use these to communicate with each other. When we meet face to face she always writes things down for me and emails it so I know what she has said and I can look back on it. Because she knows how to communicate with me, I am able to work alongside her and help young

people who needed support to find work. I helped them with CVs, job searching and using websites and IT which is what I'm good at."



Robert says:

"When I speak slowly I can be understood but when I don't – or am not given the time – I get all mixed up and can't be understood.

I don't want people to pretend they understand me. Tell me when they don't understand. I'm happy to repeat it."

Inclusive communication is not a specialist subject

Communication is the bridge across which all services is delivered and received by humans to humans.

So Inclusive Communication:

- **is not** a specialist subject.
- **Is not** related only to groups with specific disabilities or language/communication.
- **Is not** restricted to only some circumstances in which a person might need to communicate.

Inclusive communication is more than just ways of communicating

Inclusive Communication is about more than different ways of communicating. It is **about awareness and attitudes**. Inclusive Communication only happens if organisations and the individuals who lead and work in those organisations are:

- ✓ aware of the diversity and impact of communication barriers.
- ✓ able to recognise the barriers they create when their communication is exclusive.
- ✓ willing to take responsibility for taking down these barriers to inclusion.



Bill says:

"although you tell them that they need to face you so you can lip-read them they still have their head stuck in a computer or appointments book and will not look at you. The receptionist needs training so she can learn to look at people. Other receptionists are much better.... So why she can't pick up what they are doing I don't know. I spoke to the practise manager but it doesn't seem to have made any difference...."

It also means the receptionist is taking notice of the person in front of her. You are not just another number. They are interested in what you have to say..... if she wasn't then she wouldn't be bothering to look at you."



Helen says:

"I have had a stroke ... I have problems with communication. If you say that, people say oh right but they don't do anything. Numbers... telephone numbers....everyone says I'll see you at 2.00 at so a so and if you have a problem ring this number 0131..... Very very fast....I can't do it.. Its getting other people to understand ... look my brain is perfectly alright but I need you to write it down.... Speak slowly. "



Robert says:

"Re SDS the council worker is very helpful to me and my communication. She understands I need time to tell her what I want and she gave it to me. Not everyone understands me. I have a real problem that some people say they understand and they haven't. It is very frustrating because I know what I want and need and I can tell people. I just need time.

Some people just won't try They think I'm having them on..... or drunk. It's a lack of training but also attitude.

It's a two way thing – they've got to understand me and I have to speak slowly so they can understand what I'm saying.

People should be aware that large numbers of people have difficulty with communication. I don't think people realise that. "



Alison (Connor's mum) says:

"I think some organisations have tried, but not enough. Attitudes vary as to whether it's 'important' enough!"



Connor says:

"My real problem is face to face and answering questions. The receptionists at my doctor's surgery are really good. They start a conversation and talk to me normally. They look at me and write everything I need to know down. A lot of other people start talking to me okay because I have a smiley face and look okay, but when they hear me speak they look for someone else to talk to and start to treat me as if I'm daft."

Section 2: What is an Inclusive Communication Nation?

An Inclusive Communication Nation would:

- ✓ ensure that **everyone receive the support needed** to engage meaningfully and equally with the public services we provide in Scotland, regardless of their communication strengths and weaknesses.
- ✓ **recognise a significant number of people in the general population require support** to understand and express themselves for a broad range of reasons. This includes people with and without identified disability.
- ✓ ensure we **apply an Inclusive Communication standard to all communication**. This would include public place signs and face-to-face, phone, print and online exchanges. This would include, for example,
 - a “simple language” standard.
 - easily understood and standard symbols for common key public services on buildings and door signs, letterheads, posters and leaflets.
 - a standard range of ways of communicating available to people to be enabled to for example self refer to services, comment on services and be effectively consulted on the quality of services.

Section 3: Four good reasons why Inclusive Communication is vital for Scotland

Reason 1: It saves money and time for individuals, communities and the country

Being socially connected and having access to employment and education are primary factors for promoting an individual’s health and well-being and for creating fair, safe and wealth enhancing communities.

So communication barriers to social inclusion, education and employment are conversely bad for health and well-being, community cohesion and the public purse.

The Scottish Government commissioned a review of the literature and it reported that in comparison with the general population people with communication support needs are more likely to:

- experience negative communication within education, healthcare, criminal justice system and other public services.

- have difficulty accessing information required in order to utilise services.
- be misjudged in terms of cognitive and educational level.
- be unemployed or employed at an inappropriately low level.
- live in socially deprived areas (2).



Bill says:

“For example – education. I was going to do a course on engineering When I got there for the first lesson I couldn’t understand a thing the guy was saying. I asked whether there is a loop and he said ‘no there isn’t a loop’. I asked is there a chance of getting one and he said no there isn’t the money for it. So I walked out and never went back. This was two years ago. They didn’t have the funding to get the loops working.

Since then I’ve picked up on something else – the lipreading tutor’s course. But to me it was like a kick in the teeth. They wanted me to do the course – they wanted me to pay for the course but they don’t want to supply the equipment or communication for me to do the course. Without that communication I can’t understand what the guy is saying. So how can I complete the course and get anywhere. So I just thought there is no point and so walked away from it.”

A study using data from a UK birth cohort of 17,196 children, followed them from school entry to adulthood. The study found that, even after adjustment for a range of other factors, speech and language difficulties at age 5 are significantly associated with poor literacy, mental health and employment outcomes at age 34(3).

In relation to employment a study of young unemployed men found that over 88% were described as presenting with language impairment, having some degree of difficulty with language(4).

Outcomes for young people with identified communication support needs can be negative in the extreme. For example in Polmont Young Offenders Institute 26% of young men have clinically significant communication impairment and 70% have difficulties with literacy and numeracy (5).



Alison says:

“I thought it would be different when Connor left school. At school it was difficult for him as he was very intelligent and not everyone understood his support needs. I thought the workplace would be better and things would be different for him and he’d have opportunities for him to show what he can do and is good at, but it’s not really been like that. People think he chooses what he wants to do and don’t understand why he can’t do the other tasks they want him to do. They think he can challenge himself and learn it, but he can’t! Employers would need to adapt the duties to fit Connor’s skills and strengths and support his communication support needs. They

don't fully understand or take the timethey want employees who can do everything on the job remit."

Reason 2: Scotland's communication profile is changing

People are living longer. This includes many with long term conditions associated with communication difficulties e.g. children and young people with complex additional support needs, the frail elderly, and people living with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia.

This means Scotland's population includes increasing numbers of people requiring more effective and universal communication support.

Reason 3: It is the law

Equality and Human Rights international and national legislation compel services to implement an Inclusive Communication approach.

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (2007)
- EU Convention on Human Rights 1953
- The Equality Act 2010
- Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
- Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

See [Appendix 2](#) for details.

Reason 4: It is policy

Human rights

Empowerment is a core pillar of the human rights based approach outlined in the Scottish National Action Plan on Human Rights. In respect of participation of people in decisions that affect them *"there is a need for greater consistency to ensure meaningful participation of people in decisions that affect their lives."*

Person-centred, asset based, co-produced service planning and delivery

National strategies and action plans (see [Appendix 3](#) for details) emphasise the need for services to be person centred, rights and asset based and developed using a co-production model. To be effective they all require inclusive communication.

Person centred service provision requires services to interact and communicate with actual and potential service users in ways that work for the service users.



Bill says:

“If there isn’t Inclusive Communication services can’t be person centred. Without Inclusive Communication and I’m not just talking about face to face communication. Take for example booking a doctor’s appointment or any kind of appointment most time its on the phone. For me I can’t do that I’m deaf so I can’t use the phone. A simple thing like an email address to make that appointment would make all the difference. It would allow me to be able to make that appointment without having to actually travel to the surgery or office or whatever I’m going to do. For other people they maybe need speech to text or other ways in which to communicate. Without this range of communication how can it be person centred because they aren’t including that person’s needs so it can’t be person centred.....”

If people are not allowed to get their thoughts and points across they aren’t being served as they should be. . Unless the person offering a service can actually communicate in the way that the other person does that person isn’t going to get anything out of it. Ultimately that could be the difference between them engaging with that person and not and if they don’t engage with that person how is that person going to get the care or services they actually need.”



Robert says:

“I think you must understand a person well if you are going to offer a person centred service. If you haven’t been understood the other person will put their own thoughts down – they will put down what they think is best – instead of your personal thoughts. It won’t be person centred it would be how someone else feels it should be done.”

Rights based services apply the equality and human rights laws described above.

Asset based approaches means using the assets of an individual and / or community to problem solve. To exploit the communication strengths (assets)

individuals and / or community public service providers need to take an inclusive view of what those strengths are. Not everyone can read, write or speak.

Co-production requires all parties to listen, to understand each other and to facilitate equal expressions of opinions and choices no matter their communication needs and abilities.

Self management and informed choice

For example the present development of self directed support requires individuals to make and express an informed choice, whatever an individual's communication strengths and weaknesses.

Section 4: Route map to an Inclusive Communication Nation

We have drawn on the following to develop our ideas:

- **Our own personal experience and observations** over a combined 80 years experience working with and for individuals with a diverse range of communication support needs and in organisational development, change management and strategic planning.
- **“No More Mr Nice Guy: we just want to be equal”** (2011) Summary report of Scottish Government funded **“Civic Participation Network Project”** (2007-2011). The report, produced by people with a range of communication support needs, celebrates the success of the project and identifies future actions which could remove barriers for people with communication support needs who wish to be active citizens. [Click here for report.](#)
- **“The 'Joe' Report - Making Scotland an Inclusive Communication Nation for him and everyone else”** Final report of the Scottish Government funded **“Inclusive Communication in Scotland Project”** (2012). The report, again compiled in consultation with people with communication support needs and other stakeholders, recommends actions which could make Scotland an Inclusive Communication nation and identifies who should take those actions. [Click here for report.](#)

To create an Inclusive Communication Nation we believe Scotland needs six vital assets:

Asset 1: Widespread understanding of the economic, legal and policy arguments for quality assured Inclusive Communication practice.

Asset 2: A shared, evidence based definition of quality Inclusive Communication practice founded on reliable and valid “outcomes” evidence which is relevant to the whole population.

Asset 3: A shared vision for and of an Inclusive Communication nation.

Asset 4: A joined up, comprehensive national Inclusive Communication Strategy in order to make that vision a reality.

A national Inclusive Communication Strategy would:

- establish the link between inclusive communication, national strategic objectives, the law and prevailing policy.
- enjoy supportive and shared ownership and committed leadership in national and local government, the statutory, independent and third sectors.
- establish an evidence based Inclusive Communication standard.

- develop mainstreamed awareness of, positive commitment to, knowledge of and skills in Inclusive Communication best practice.
- develop quality assured, universally accessible Inclusive Communication resources to enable the general population and service providers to implement Inclusive Communication best practice.

Asset 5: Sustained and sustainable investment of both time and money resources to ensure effective implementation of the Inclusive Communication Strategy at national and local government levels.

Asset 6: A means of regulating, monitoring, evaluating and continuously improving Inclusive Communication practice across Scotland's public facing, publicly funded services.

Section 5: Where is Scotland on the route to an Inclusive Communication Nation?

Scotland has been **making some progress** towards becoming an Inclusive Communication Nation for at least the last decade.

This is the result of the active participation of people with diverse communication support needs and the work of a very wide range of organisations from national and local government and the statutory and third sectors. (See [Appendix 4](#) for list of some national level projects and initiatives).



Bill says:

“From a deafened person’s point of view nowadays going into banks can be better. Loops may not be working all the time but I find people now if I ask for the loop system to be switched on people way will say sorry and switch it on. So that’s a positive thing ...people taking their time to say we recognise you have a disability and by just switching the loop on makes a big difference.”



Robert says::

“In some ways there has been progress. I would say there is more choice now of formats to get information e.g. Braille, tape, large print which didn’t happen before.

When I speak to people who I’ve phoned before and know me its ok. For example the doctor’s surgery is very good. Because they understand me on the phone and I can get the doctor to come and see me. Its more frustrating when I speak to someone I don’t know.”



Connor says:

“Apple’s technological developments are what’s helped me through my life and helping me now. I have an iPhone, an iPad and a Mac Book. This means I can access screeds of information any time and I can get it read back to me. New apps are coming out all the time which are helpful for people with Communication Support Needs. But all organisations need to be made to sign up to them. For example travel and time are difficult for me. There is a new Apple watch coming out which will help me even more – all train stations, airports, etc. need to sign up so I can get countdowns, alerts and directions to gates, etc. Then I could travel independently. I can get solutions as the technology is there... but service providers and companies need to sign up....it needs to be in legislation to make it happen.”

But we are **not there yet**.



Robert says::

“For me I think everything should be available in large print.

But it’s different from one person to another.

But Inclusive Communication is not just about written information. It’s about being allowed to express myself independently.”



Connor says:

“I don’t think there’s been any progress.

When I’m out there in the real world I don’t see any of the things that we’ve been working on over the years. For me there’s been no change.

We’ve been trying to work with councils and other people and I go in and still get faced with the same barriers.

I’m working part-time now with an online TV Station, editing material for their weekly news and community shows. I got the job because they know me, and they understand what I can do and what I’m not going to be able to do. My previous experience since leaving school has not been good. Some people don’t want to understand and some people want to understand but say they don’t have the time. I struggled at school due to the exam system and because some people didn’t understand my support needs and I’m still struggling now!”



Helen says:

“I don’t know if anything is better.

Its really hard for me to do this – we need to have 6 shared principles – it’s the same principles that we’ve had before but we need more power about itWe’ve been saying this for years and years.

In Scotland there are only just over 5 million people. We only have 14 local health boards. We can surely speak to each other about it.....I think its pathetic.”

Where do we think we are in developing the 6 essential assets we outlined above?

Asset 1: Widespread understanding of the economic, legal and policy arguments for quality assured Inclusive Communication practice.

👍 Some Scottish Government departments, local government agencies and authorities, have recognised that barriers are created when communication is not inclusive.

👍 Some people and organisations now recognise that equality of access does not just mean physical access but communication as well and that communication issues go wider than those relating to hearing and sight loss.

👍 Some are now using the term ‘Inclusive Communication’ though the interpretation of the term differs.

*However we are **not there yet ...***

👎 There is **no widespread understanding** of the diverse nature of communication support needs and the impacts of communication barriers whatever their cause.

For example:

- Policy and practice commonly overlook communication barriers arising from impairments other than sensory impairment such as aphasia.
- When explaining why people do not engage with services it is rarely explained in terms of straightforward communication barriers. Although for example literacy levels are known to be relatively low in “hard to reach” communities.
- Many believe that Inclusive Communication practice remains a “nice to do” rather than a “must do” in many parts of Scotland’s public facing services. The recent “Mystery Shopping of Health Services in Scotland Project Report *“Through a Different Door”* (1) (which saw people with communication support needs visits to NHS premises to test take up of *“Making Communication Even Better”*) revealed *“...that the standard of service received by people with communication support needs from health services in Scotland is a lottery. The lottery is not a postcode lottery – positive and negative experiences were found across all health boards. The deciding factor in the lottery is the individual member of staff the mystery shopper interacts with and how skilled they are in making communication even better.”*
- Quality indicators for accessing services tend to focus on what is available to you locally and waiting times. A number of high profile initiatives designed to improve access, such as phone help lines, in fact can act to increase inequities for people with communication support needs.



Helen says of phonline automated services:

“For example a bed that is going to come into the house and a text from the delivery man saying” it will be delivered between 2 and 4” – very basic things. I can’t be there between 2-4 but what can I say so I had to stay there for two hours – if I’d been able to get on the phone I could have asked for another time.

Another thing trying to get a taxi is very hard. I’ve got one on my phone and it’s automated so they know my address. It used to be a lady who did everything who would say he’s out and you’ll get a taxi in two minutes and she could repeat it. Now it’s a computer which says “we’ll be there in 10 minutes” and I think is that right – have I understood it right – I find that very hard.

I want a lady who goes back to the basics – so I can have a conversation with a real person. I’m happy to say to someone I have communication difficulties...these new ways of communicating don’t make it easier for me.

Why is it that when I want to see a GP. I have to get my husband to do it because you don’t say” I want to see the doctor” it is an automated service which says ‘do you need to speak to this, that and another’..... this doesn’t make it easy for me to access it. I always have to ask my husband to do it..... But sometimes I have to do it myself. The receptionists can sometimes be rather nippy and say “date of birth?” – and I can’t repeat these numbers. So I have to ask someone else to do it. It makes you feel as if you are thick as mince.”



Robert says:

“Some people think I’m drunk – e.g. using the phone, every other day it happens. I try to use the phone for example phoning the bank or ordering stationery. It’s difficult to get people to understand what I’m saying.

The council have an automated system and you speak to a machine. Say I have a housing repair it doesn’t understand what I said. The machine keeps on repeating it Eventually I do get an operator. But its very frustrating.”

- The negative impact of communication barriers on outcomes for individuals (and organisations), such as Health and Social Care Outcomes and the statutory outcomes set out in the Children and Young Persons Act, are infrequently identified in policy. The role that Inclusive Communication can play in removing these barriers and therefore improving outcomes is not widely understood across national or local government or other agencies.

Asset 2: A shared, evidence based definition of quality Inclusive Communication practice

👍 Every national project aimed at developing and implementing Inclusive Communication approaches has defined what the project team means by the term 'Inclusive Communication.'

*However we **are not there yet...***

👉 Different initiatives have used different definitions of Inclusive Communication and have suggested different principles of Inclusive Communication good practice.

For example the Scottish Government funded Talk for Scotland toolkit and the Inclusive Communication in Scotland project. Although similar in some ways this variety is confusing to service providers trying to understand how to implement Inclusive Communication.

👉 **There is wide variability in how organisations “do” inclusive communication.**

- Some believe that Inclusive Communication is covered if an organisation uses:
 - ✓ Easy Read
 - ✓ Randomly selected symbols or cartoons applied to documents
 - ✓ Accessible IT applications
 - ✓ Large font
 - ✓ Braille
 - ✓ Hearing loops
 - ✓ Story boards (often complex flow diagrams with text)
 - ✓ Talking Mats for work related to eliciting views or decision making

None of these are wrong. But it is not appropriate to say an organisation is practising Inclusive Communication if they 'do' only one or two of these.

Where organisations put Inclusive Communication into practise it tends to apply to only certain parts of the service pathway e.g. face to face interview. This overlooks the fact that before a person attends an appointment they may have to be able to speak on the phone, read a letter, find a building and communicate effectively with a receptionist.



Helen says:

“Some people are great. Take banks. .

The manager in Arbroath she was great. She came to talk to us at one of our Speakability meetings. She gave us little basic tips about it and said she would tell

everybody that some people need more time to communicate. She'd never thought about it before.

Other bank was absolutely pathetic. Some people are interested and willing to do something but it's piecemeal. You can say that about everything. It's like when you go for your glasses You go and see what's that guy called opticians – some of them are so quick and say “look right/left”. I have to say just a minute give me a minute.

Then they speak a little slower – and louder – at least they are trying.”

There is no common definition or approach to Inclusive Communication at a population level

A common refrain in Inclusive Communication policy and practice is “no one size fits all”.

We wholly agree with the view that every individual – with or without communication support needs – has preferences in relation to how we can and like to receive information (understand) and express ourselves.

But we argue that at a population level public services must act on the principle that “a more generous size fits more”.

Many people find it helpful if communication includes simple language, gesture, photographs, and symbols. We accept that even if these were consistently used not every person in Scotland would be included. But it would be a huge improvement on current population level communications which predominantly use complex verbal language and / or written communication.

Also consistent (or standardised) practice would both enable people to learn faster and transfer that learning from one situation to another as well as offering economies of scale in the development and production of communication accessible resources.

Good examples of how useful consistency can be in population level communications are offered by international road signs, health and safety symbols and brand logos. Imagine if every country used different symbols for these. We believe we can extend the principle of multi-lingual communication needs and consistency to more than just communication about roads, health and safety and branding.



Helen says:

“Health boards and access is absolutely awful. If you go into a big hospital where do you go if you don't know what that means. There's only one place that I know that has colours to tell you where to go. It's a big hard for people to access hospitals they have no idea where they're going.


Access is with colours and basic things – basic signs - like a wheelchair picture. It wouldn't take too much surely. It would be nice if it was a Scottish wide thing. So when you go to Kirkcaldy it's the same as Aberdeen or anywhere else. So you know when you go into ICU you know where that is because of the colours.”

We are acutely aware of the strong arguments about what Inclusive Communication actually means in practice. Fundamental to establishing a shared definition of Inclusive Communication is the identification of common solutions which help diverse communication support needs populations.

From the perspective of a person with communication support needs the variability in practice between and within organisations – or even within one episode of contact with a service - produces the very disempowering experience of intermittent communication which sometimes includes and sometimes excludes.

 Connor says:


“I went for a visit to a college to find out about a course I was interested in. The placement officer had given the college information about me. I met the lecturer and he started by taking me to see the department. When we got to the bottom of the stairs he turned round and shouted loudly back to the placement officer and mum (who were waiting in the background) “can he manage the stairs?” It made me feel angry and upset at the downright rudeness on his part. I said I didn't want to do the course as I wanted to go somewhere where I would be treated with respect.”

 Robert says:

“I am involved in consultation and advisory groups. I really enjoy being part of it however I sometimes don't say as much as I would like because I know I won't be understood or it will take too long. I tend to hold back and just say the minimum.

I would like to contribute my thoughts but it takes too long to make me understood. If I'm asked a direct question I will answer it as full as I can but I don't take part in general conversation.

There's a lot going on in my head which I can't contribute.”

 Helen says:

“Looking at it from our area, in Dundee it does a lot of things... there's a disability forum that is supported by the council that's for everything that is not good with buses and everything and they've been very good about writing doing emails and they know how to do it and they have all the photographs and pictures that we used.

I can only say it for Tayside and Dundee but don't know what they are doing in Perth – how do you speak to everyone. I find it so oddall the country still not speaking about it to each other.

There are very good areas because we've done work with it but it's not easy. It's not comprehensive.... I always go on about health but councils are really doing as much as they can as long as they have the same principles.

Often people just say other people are doing that. Can't say all charities are doing it either."

From the perspective of the organisation the effect can be a response such as “we did Inclusive Communication but it made no difference” which naturally discourages further action.

Asset 3: A shared vision for an Inclusive Communication nation.

👍 As we said under Asset 1 some Scottish Government departments, and local government agencies and many third sector organisations recognise a national approach to Inclusive Communication has merit.

👍 Inclusive Communication has been identified by the Independent Living Strategy as a key priority.

👍 Inclusive Communication remains a key strand of future government policy related to disability equality and human rights. For example it features in Scotland's report on implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.

👍 In 2012 Scottish Government produced some promotion materials promoting the term “Inclusive Communication Nation”.

However we are **not there yet...**

👎 There is no common definition or approach to public service, population level Inclusive Communication practice.

👎 There is no proclaimed, focussed, long-term strategic vision of Scotland as an Inclusive Communication Nation.

This lack of a collectively owned vision among strategic stakeholders such as Scottish Government, local government and public and third sector agencies has led to a confused journey towards achieving an Inclusive Communication nation with short term and small scale projects delivered by sometimes unconnected organisations.



Bill says:

“...since “Talk for Scotland” (project) ended – it made a difference at the time but it doesn’t seem to have gone any further. Now needs to be joined up so that all the different organisations and different charities they are all doing things but none of it is joined together. It needs to come together so we can say we know what’s going on until that happens we are never going to know what’s happening. That’s why this essay is a good idea.”

Asset 4: A joined up, comprehensive national Inclusive Communication Strategy in order to make that vision a reality.

👍 The Inclusive Communication projects listed in [Appendix 4](#) have achieved a number of measurable outputs which may have had an impact on the desired outcome of establishing an Inclusive Communication Nation.

👍 There is a Scottish Accessible Information Forum, funded by the Scottish Government.

👍 Hundreds of public and third sector staff has attended workshops and other events to learn about Inclusive Communication and what they can do to make their services more communication accessible.

👍 Scotland has nationally available free resources which provide Inclusive Communication support principles; information and advice about implementation e.g. Talk for Scotland toolkit.

*However we are **not there yet...***

👎 Scotland has no Inclusive Communication strategy setting out the short, medium and long term strategic objectives which will be required if it is to become an Inclusive Communication Nation.

👉 Scotland has no named and leading champion for Inclusive Communication Strategy (with knowledge of broadest speech, language and communication needs) at national and local government levels. That is an individual to “lead the coherent and comprehensive charge” - in partnership with the very wide and diverse communities with communication support needs – to develop a shared vision of Scotland as an Inclusive Communication nation.

👉 There is no obvious or explicit strategic ownership and leadership of Inclusive Communication at key management level in Scotland’s national and local government or statutory public and the third sector organisations.

👉 There is no forum or infrastructure which brings various agencies with an interest in the field of Inclusive Communication and public communication practice together. This would enable the sharing of emerging evidence from across the world, and would allow for efficient task allocation based on lessons learn to ensure continuous improvement and effective use of public resources.



Bill says:

“The approach is definitely piecemeal. Even to this day you are still getting people who don’t realise they are meant to be doing for example under the Equality Act. A lot of this is about education – without the education of these people how are we ever going to get through to everybody that people need Inclusive Communication – how do you get the education out there. A question for the debate to be honest! We can keep sending them leaflets but do they read them that’s the question.”



Helen says:

“Who is speaking to each other? That’s a big thing that I get angry about so whether you are looking at councils across Scotland or whatever who is speaking to each other.

What are they doing in Fife? What are they doing in Galloway? Why are everybody not speaking to each other about it.”

Asset 5: Sustained and sustainable investment of both time and money to ensure effective implementation the Inclusive Communication Strategy at national and local government levels.

👍 Scottish Government are to be applauded for funding a number of national level projects undertaken by third sector organisations. Since 2004 upwards of £0.5 million has been invested in Inclusive Communication projects designed to meet the needs of all those with communication support needs. This figure rises to an estimated £7 million if investment in initiatives focused on specific communication support needs groups, public sector agencies or policy areas is included. See [Appendix 4](#) for outline of these projects.

👍 Local government and local authorities have similarly invested time and resources to develop awareness and skills in Inclusive Communication and to develop a myriad of Inclusive Communication resources.

👍 Strategic agencies, such as the NHS, have invested funds and resources in numerous local Inclusive Communication related activities by statutory and third sector organisations.

*However we are **not there yet...***

👉 Funding and application of resource in Inclusive Communication activity by national and local agencies has been short term and piecemeal. It is not “joined up” or delivering continuous improvement in an ordered way.



Bill says:

"All too often, as a person with Communication needs, I find that organisations will pick up the baton for Inclusive Communication and run with it for awhile. But then the funding will run out or members of staff will leave and the baton gets dropped again, there is very little if any continuity in what is happening.

...I know the government has their hands tied but it seems that they just get these things started and then they pull out the funding and you are left high and dry and it goes nowhere."

Asset 6: A means of regulating, monitoring, evaluating and continuously improving Inclusive Communication practice across Scotland.

👍 Improvement Scotland includes Inclusive Communication principles and performance measures in their Public Service Improvement Framework.




*However we are **not there yet...***

☞ There is, as yet, no national or even local means of regulating, monitoring, evaluating and continuously improving Inclusive Communication practice across Scotland.

☞ Accessible data on performance against indicators in the Public Service Improvement Framework is not readily available.

☞ Evidence on Inclusive Communication activity and related interim and ultimate outcomes is unavailable.

The rationale behind all Inclusive Communication is as illustrated:

Phase 1: Before	Phase 2: During	Phase 3: Interim Outcomes	Phase 4: Ultimate Outcomes
People with communication support needs are excluded by communication barriers. 	Inclusive Communication practice is implemented including time and money "inputs". 	More staff and organisation are Inclusive Communication competent. More people with communication support needs are more included. 	People with communication support needs lead wealthier, fairer, smarter, healthier, safer, stronger and greener lives.

The evidence available for Phase 1: Before cannot be disputed.


Information available on Phase 2: During is not readily available or easily comparable.

Independently generated (therefore reliable and valid) information on Phase 3. Interim Outcomes is vague, unquantified or at the level of relatively small case studies.

There is no independently generated evidence available on Phase 4: Ultimate Outcomes in relation to Inclusive Communication.

In describing above we are not suggesting that Inclusive Communication makes no difference or that quality practice is not taking place and that there is no evidence out there. Our aim is to highlight that there is an urgent need to generate an evidence base which identifies the inputs required to deliver the best interim outcomes which deliver best ultimate outcomes for people with communication support needs. That is a shared, evidence based definition of Quality Inclusive Communication practice.

Outcomes to date from the perspective of people with communication support needs in Scotland:


 If proof is in the pudding Inclusive Communication activity to date has led to an outcome where adoption of Inclusive Communication practice is at best patchy. Inclusive Communication practice remains the exception rather than the rule.

 Bill says:

“Although at the time of the "Talk for Scotland" project things did start to change and people did start to include people with communication needs, this has largely been forgotten.

All too commonly these days I find I am having to constantly remind people how I have to communicate and have to get them to do the things I need to be able to communicate effectively.

As I am deafened and in comparison to some people my needs are fairly simple, I can only imagine how people with more complex communication needs are having to cope.”

 Robert says:

“I think the money that has been spent already will be wasted if it doesn't progress. Lots of good work has been done but it's not followed through. If it's not followed through it will be for nothing.”

Section 6: How can we get there?

We believe we **need the following**.

1. **A national Inclusive Communication Champion** at Scottish Government level to lead on the development of an Inclusive Communication vision and implementation of an Inclusive Communication strategy for Scotland - in partnership with a network of senior local government, third and independent sector leaders.
2. The Scottish Government to develop and champion measurable, directly observable, evidence based **National Standard of Inclusive Communication** which would act to communicate the irrefutable link between Inclusive Communication and National Outcomes and function as the baseline for best Inclusive Communication practice for all sectors and agencies.
3. **A national audit** of what is happening now in publicly funded government and non-government organisations against the National Inclusive Communication Standard
4. **A strategy**, with long term funding from central, local and possibly European government, to take Scotland from where it is now to establishment of Scotland as an Inclusive Communication Nation.
5. **Regulation of Inclusive Communication** practice as a means of monitoring, evaluating and continuously improving Inclusive Communication practice across Scotland's public facing services. Regulation would include a requirement that all procurement of services and / or funding of organisations and projects will include a commitment to implement Inclusive Communication best practice standards.

What do you think?

If you are interested in equality join us in to debate the issue.

ADD in details re signing up/notifying support etc.

Authors:

Amanda Bennett, Kim Hartley, Mandy Reid



Bill says:

“Anybody and everybody should get involved in the debate. We need communication in whatever form it takes to carry on as human beings. Our form of communication is what makes us different from the animal kingdom. Without that we are just an animal”



Connor says:

“It would mean we could get our message across easier and better with more people involved.”



Alison says:

“The debate is a good idea because we need to raise awareness again as once the momentum of the ‘voice’ and visible presence from the ‘experts’ stops, so do any changes being ‘promised’.



Helen says:

“The debate is a good idea – yes absolutely. Don’t just sit down and say nothing....We need to do something positive. We all need to shout out again... even more loudly.”

Appendix 1: Ways of understanding and expressing

This table shows the different ways that humans use to understand and express themselves.

1.	Routines
2.	Place/location
3.	Objects
4.	Environmental sounds, smells, taste
5.	Human sounds
6.	Head and body language, eye pointing
7.	Gesture
8.	Facial expression
9.	Signing
10.	Photograph
11.	Symbols and drawings
12.	Verbal language
13.	Written word

Appendix 2: Laws

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – ratified 1989

- *Article 12 (respect for the views of the child)*
Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.
- *Article 13 (freedom of expression)*
Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive information of any kind as long as it is within the law.

To enjoy equal rights children must be enabled to express themselves and enabled to understand information to the best of their ability.

[Click here for link.](#)

UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol ([A/RES/61/106](#)) was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, and was opened for signature on 30 March 2007.

- *Disabled people should get support to make sure they enjoy the same human rights as everyone else.*
- *Countries must make sure that disabled people have the right to find out and give information and to say what they want, the same as everyone else.*
- *Countries should make sure information is made accessible from the beginning.*

[Website link: http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=15&pid=150](http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=15&pid=150)

EU Convention on Human Rights

The European Convention on Human Rights is the first Council of Europe's convention and the cornerstone of all its activities. It was adopted in 1950 and entered into force in 1953. Its ratification is a prerequisite for joining the Organisation.

The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the 47 Council of Europe member states. Individuals can bring complaints of human rights violations to the Strasbourg Court once all possibilities of

appeal have been exhausted in the member state concerned. The European Union is preparing to sign the European Convention on Human Rights, creating a common European legal space for over 820 million citizens.

The Convention protects the right to:

- life, freedom and security
- respect for private and family life
- freedom of expression
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- vote in and stand for election
- a fair trial in civil and criminal matters
- property and peaceful enjoyment of possessions.

The Convention prohibits:

- the death penalty
- torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- slavery and forced labour
- arbitrary and unlawful detention
- discrimination in the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms secured by the Convention
- deportation of a state's own nationals or denying them entry and the collective deportation of foreigners.

[Website link: http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf](http://www.echr.coe.int/Documents/Convention_ENG.pdf)

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 (also known as the Act or the HRA) came into force in the United Kingdom in October 2000. It is composed of a series of sections that have the effect of codifying the protections in the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law.

All public bodies (such as courts, police, local governments, hospitals, publicly funded schools, and others) and other bodies carrying out public functions have to comply with the Convention rights.

This means, among other things, that individuals can take human rights cases in domestic courts; they no longer have to go to Strasbourg to argue their case in the European Court of Human Rights.

The Act sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms that individuals in the UK have access to.

[Website link: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/your-rights/human-rights/what-are-human-rights/human-rights-act](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/your-rights/human-rights/what-are-human-rights/human-rights-act)

The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act came into force from October 2010 providing a modern, single legal framework with clear, streamlined law to more effectively tackle disadvantage and discrimination.

It is unlawful to treat someone with a protected characteristic less favourably than others. Barriers to accessing information or having your views heard is clearly therefore discriminatory.

[Website link: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/key-legislatures/equality-act-2010/what-is-the-equality-act](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/key-legislatures/equality-act-2010/what-is-the-equality-act)

Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000

This provides a framework for safeguarding the welfare and managing the finances of adults (people aged 16 or over) who lack capacity due to mental illness, learning disability or a related condition, or an inability to communicate.

Principle 3 requires services to take account of the wishes of the adult. In deciding if an intervention is to be made and, if so, what that should be views of the person should be sought ... so far as they can be ascertained by any means of communication appropriate to the adult.

[Website link: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/03/25120154/1](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/03/25120154/1)

Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 applies to people who have a mental illness, learning disability or related condition. The Act calls this mental disorder.

Most of the time, when people become unwell, they understand that they need treatment. But sometimes, people are unwilling or unable to agree to treatment. The Mental Health Act sets out:

- When and how people can be treated if they have a mental disorder
- When people can be treated or taken into hospital against their will
- What people's rights are, and the safeguards which ensure that these rights are protected.

General principles underlying implementation of the Act *require that all relevant agencies take into account the present and past wishes and feelings of the patient, where they are relevant to the exercise of the function and in so far as they can be ascertained by any means of communication appropriate to the patient.*

The Act emphasises the importance of the patient participating as fully as possible in any decisions being made and the importance of providing information to help that

participation *(in the form that is most likely to be understood by the patient)*. Where the patient needs help to communicate (for example, translation services or signing) then these should be considered. Any unmet need should be recorded.

[Website link: http://www.mwcscot.org.uk/the-law/mental-health-act/](http://www.mwcscot.org.uk/the-law/mental-health-act/)

Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004

The Act:

- introduced the concept of additional support needs
- places duties on education authorities to identify, meet and keep under review the needs of pupils for whom they are responsible
- gives parents a number of rights, including the right to access mediation, dispute resolution and refer decisions to the Additional Support Needs Tribunals for matters concerned with a co-ordinated support plan.

[Website link:](#)

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone/additionalneeds/learningact/introduction.asp>

Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 is a piece of law to try to protect people from being harmed.

This is because some people may find it more difficult to stop harm happening to them. The Act calls people in this situation 'adults at risk'.

The principles underpinning the Act require that any public body or office holder performing a function under the Act, *in considering a decision or course of action... must have regard to the present and past wishes and feelings of the adult...in so far as they can be ascertained. Efforts must be made to assist and facilitate communication using whatever method is appropriate to the needs of the individual.*

[Website link: http://www.actagainstharm.org/what-the-act-does](http://www.actagainstharm.org/what-the-act-does)

The Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011

The Act aims to improve patients' experiences of using health services and to support people to become more involved in their health and health care.

The Act gives patients the right that the health care they receive should consider their needs, consider what would be of optimum benefit to them, encourage them to take part in decisions about their health and wellbeing, and provide information and support for them to do so.

The Schedule to the Act sets out that people who provide NHS health care (such as doctors, nurses, dentists) must from April 2012 take into account a set of Health Care Principles when providing services. The schedule includes sections on **Patient Focus; Quality Care and Treatment; Patient Participation; Communication; Patient Feedback;** and **Waste of Resources.**

[Website link: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/Patients-Rights](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/Policy/Patients-Rights)

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

The Children and Young People Act 2014 comes into force in April 2015. This delivers a better package of legislative rights for care experienced children and young people.

To comply with their duty under the Act Scottish Ministers and responsible authorities *must take such account as they consider appropriate of any relevant views of children of which the Scottish Ministers are aware; must promote public awareness and understanding (including appropriate awareness and understanding among children) of the rights of children.*

To ensure children and young people (and their parents and carers) enjoy provisions of the Act it will be important authorities enable those with communication support needs to express themselves and access information to the same degree as those without communication support needs.

[Website link: http://www.whocaresscotland.org/professionals/children-and-young-people-act-2014/](http://www.whocaresscotland.org/professionals/children-and-young-people-act-2014/)

Appendix 3: National Strategies and Action Plans that mention or allude to communication

We list below the key projects, strategies and action plans that we mention in the essay and we believe are relevant to this debate. It is not a comprehensive list.

1. Inclusive Communication projects

- Civic Participation Network project and Talk for Scotland toolkit ([Website link: www.communicationforumscotland.org.uk](http://www.communicationforumscotland.org.uk))
- Inclusive Communication in Scotland project and the Joe Report ([Website link: www.inclusivecommunicationscotland.org.uk](http://www.inclusivecommunicationscotland.org.uk))
- Partners in Communication (www.sensescotland.org.uk/what-we-do/partners-in-communication.aspx)

2. Government strategy documents and action plan

- Autism Strategy
- Change Fund criteria
- Dementia Strategy
- Intermediate Care Framework
- Joint Sensory Impairment Strategy
- Joint Improvement Team 'Talking points
- National Delivery Plan for the Allied Health Professions in Scotland, 2012-2015
- Scottish Government National Outcomes
- Self directed support: A national strategy for Scotland

3. Organisations involved in Inclusive Communication promotion include:

- Communication Forum Scotland and their individual members.
- Independent Living in Scotland project.
- NES (NHS Education for Scotland).
- NHS Translation Interpreting Communication Support Joint Action Group.
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (Scotland office).
- SAIF (Scottish Accessible Information Forum) now based at SCVO.
- Scottish Council on Deafness.
- Scottish Council on Visual Impairment.
- Scottish Government Equality Unit.

Appendix 4: Projects and policy initiatives addressing communication inclusion

This list is not comprehensive. We aim to show the significant investment and variety of projects which have led to the present Inclusive Communication environment in Scotland.

Dates	Project / activity title	Approximate investment	Links to materials etc.
Since 1995 - Ongoing	Scottish Accessible Information Forum	Unknown by authors	http://www.saifscotland.org.uk/
2004	The Scottish Translation, Interpreting and Communication Forum Good Practice Guidelines	Local agencies pressed to invest. Actual level unknown	http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2004/02/18873/32914#4
2007	Communication Support Needs: a Review of the Literature	£30,000	http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/179456/0051018.pdf
2007-2011	Civic Participation Network Projects 1 and 2	£80,000	http://www.communicationforumsotland.org.uk/2010/TK_Home.php
2011	Inclusive Communication in Scotland – Principles and Guidelines	Unknown by authors	http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/357865/0120931.pdf
2012	Inclusive Communication in Scotland Project 1 (CFS)	£50,000	http://www.inclusivecommunicationscotland.org.uk/
2012-15	Inclusive Communication Project : Project 2 (Sense)	£300,000	http://www.sensesotland.org.uk/what-we-do/partners-in-communication.aspx
Work focused on specific communication support needs groups, public sector agencies or policy areas.			
2009,	Adult Support and Protection – Communication Support Projects – 1 and 2	£42,000	http://www.rcslt.org/speech_and_language_therapy/Adult_Support_and_Protection_Communication_Toolkit
2012 - ongoing	Making Communication even Better, NHS Education Scotland And	Unknown by authors	Website link: http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-

	Mystery Shopper Project "Through a Different Door" impact report (2014)		professions/about-nes-ahp/resources-and-publications/making-communication-even-better.aspx "Through a different door" - Website link: http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions/resources-publications-and-useful-links/making-communication-even-better/through-a-different-door.aspx
2012-15	A Right to Speak Supporting Individuals who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication	£4,000,000	Website link: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0039/00394629.pdf
2013	See Hear: A strategic framework for meeting the needs of people with a sensory impairment in Scotland	Unknown by authors	http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/04/2067
		Estimated total:	

Appendix 5

References:

- (1) Mystery Shopping of Health Services in Scotland Project Report - Through a Different Door - [Website link: http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions/resources,-publications-and-useful-links/making-communication-even-better/through-a-different-door.aspx](http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions/resources,-publications-and-useful-links/making-communication-even-better/through-a-different-door.aspx)
- (2) Law J et al (2007) *Communication Support Needs: a review of the literature* Scottish Executive Social Research
- (3) Reported in All Party Parliamentary Group on Speech and Language Difficulties (Westminster): The Links Between speech, language and communication and social disadvantage (Feb. 2013): [Website link: http://www.rcslt.org/governments/docs/appg_report_feb_2013](http://www.rcslt.org/governments/docs/appg_report_feb_2013)
- (4) Elliott, N. (2009). An investigation into the communication skills of long-term unemployed young men. Pontypridd: University of Glamorgan
- (5) SPS statistics reported to Scottish Parliament in answer to PQ 2003

Appendix 6

About the Authors and Contributors

Amanda Bennett	Amanda is an independent speech and language therapist who specialises in working with adults with neurological conditions. She was Project Manager of the Civic Participation Network project and has been involved in a range of other activities promoting inclusive communication and the increased participation of people with diverse communication needs in Scottish life.
Robert Dalrymple	Robert was a member of the Civic Participation Network and is presently actively involved with the Stroke Association including as a member of the reference group for the Stroke Association in Scotland. He is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Bankers in Scotland and editor for the newsletter for Headway East Lothian. Robert had a brain stem haemorrhage in 1999 ('At the Stroke of a Brush', Robert Dalrymple 2012).
Helen Gowland	Helen has been actively involved in inclusive communication projects and runs Dundee Speakability a self help organisation for people with aphasia. Helen lives with aphasia following a stroke. This means she has difficulty talking, reading and writing, particularly when under pressure.
Kim Hartley	<p>Kim Hartley is a registered speech and language therapist and is Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) Head of Scotland Office.</p> <p>Kim co-designed and contributed to project management of a number of national IC projects including Civic Participation Network Projects 1 and 2; the Inclusive Communication in Scotland Project and Adult Support and Protection – Communication Support Projects – 1 and 2. Kim also contributed to Principles of Inclusive Communication and led the campaign for and helped to design the “Right to Speak” Action Plan.</p> <p>Kim is a founding member of the Communication Forum Scotland.</p>
Bill Jones	Bill who is deafened was previously a member of the Civic Participation Network and worked with Hearing Link. He is now an active foster parent.
Mandy Reid	Mandy is the Policy and Research Officer for the Scottish Council on Deafness. She has worked for SCoD for seven and ½ years. Throughout her working life, she has worked with

	<p>many people who have a communication support need. She was a member of the ILiS Inclusive Communication Working Group. She has both a professional and personal interest in equality and inclusive communication.</p>
<p>Connor Stewart</p>	<p>Connor Stewart (21 years old) is an editor with a local online TV station and has previously been actively involved in inclusive communication projects. Connor has communication support needs as a result of a brain injury which happened whilst going through a bone marrow transplant for leukaemia.</p>
<p>Alison McCormack</p>	<p>Alison McCormack is Connor's mum. She has been Connor's main supporter since his brain injury at 5 years old. Alison has supported Connor to use his experience to help educate others to 'break down the barriers' throughout his life – in Education and Employment. She hopes that Service Providers and other companies can be encouraged to better support people with Communication Support Needs by taking the time to listen to the 'experts' and help them 'break down the barriers' that do exist.</p>