



## Primary Health Liaison team

The role of the Primary Health Liaison team is to ensure that people with disabilities access health care screening. However, this can cause distress to individuals and often as a result many do not attend which has a detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing.

The Primary Health Liaison team work alongside individuals in the community and in hospital.

**The comments below are from a Health Care Support Worker whose role is to support people with learning disabilities when they are admitted into the hospital.**

*“A gentleman whose dementia was deteriorating rapidly and was engaging less every day, engaged with me when I showed him the football game getting the ball into the net. He also enjoyed the whack a mole game, this gave the gentleman some 1:1 attention for a period of time in the day where he otherwise was on his own, withdrawing and experiencing low mood. During this short period of interaction, he was able to give full eye contact when I was speaking to him.”*

*“I was able to settle a male who was experiencing auditory hallucinations. This male had a keen interest in Elvis Presley which allowed me to work with a person-centred approach when providing support to him. After exploring the device with many prompts from myself, this gentleman was able to search for the music he wished to listen to and relax while doing so. Once he finished listening to music he was then supported with jigsaws. These activities kept this male calm and reduced his anxiety. Being preoccupied made a difference to him as he was very fixated on the auditory hallucinations that he was experiencing.”*

*“I presented RITA to a woman who was refusing to engage with O/T. After some exploring of the device, we found some light exercises that she was happy to engage with. Refusing to work with O/T was delaying her discharge. With light prompts we were able to encourage her with basic movements of problematic area/s. This boosted her confidence in her mobility and slowly she began working with O/T.”*

*“A gentleman I supported was becoming emotional at being away from home. I explored the many different options that RITA offers. We were able to find his favourite radio station, which he spent lengthy amounts of time listening too. He stated this had helped him because he has his radio on 24/7 at home, being away from home he understandably was missing the comforts. I also introduced him to pig racing; he was very impressed with this and enjoyed watching the pigs.”*

*“Overall, I have had many positive reactions when presenting patients with RITA. Equally some have not been interested at all and refused to even acknowledge myself or the device.”*

*“I have used the device several times and had brilliant success.”*

Question	Answer
How often is RITA used?	Every other day
Has the RITA system in your opinion improved the mental health and wellbeing since the RITA system has been introduced?	Yes
Has the RITA system created a calmer environment and improved wellbeing?	Much better
Has the number of challenging behaviours reduced since the RITA system was introduced?	Yes - Barriers to communication reduced, patient no longer withdrew from professionals/medical staff when trying to support him with physical and emotional health.
Has RITA improved patients engaging in group work activity resulting in greater stimulation & confidence?	Very effective - Patient went from non-engagement/withdrawal to interacting with nurse and improved communication supporting positive and effective treatment whilst in hospital. Mood much improved and willingness to engage with others improved greatly.
Has engagement and interaction with family members and friends improved since using RITA?	Much better
Has RITA system Improved mental health and stimulation after residents have returned from hospital/medical treatment and aided their recovery?	Very effective - Patient already in hospital, mood and mental health much improved, and has encouraged a better recovery in order for sooner discharge from hospital.
Have you seen an improvement in food and fluid intake by residents using the RITA system?	Yes - RITA has improved the mood of patient therefore they are more willing to eat better. Previously he did not want to eat, he was feeling very low and wanted nothing other than to sleep.
Has medications, PRN's (sleeping pills/anti-psych) reduced for residents as the RITA system is used?	Yes - Patient has avoided having to have any intervention such as tablets due to the improvement in his mood.

*"RITA has been of such a benefit to our patients within the acute hospital so far. We continue to use the device with the patients who are admitted, so far it has helped in a variety of ways."*