Use People First Language when talking to a person with a disability.

A person with a disability is a person first. They are not defined by their disability. At CCAI, we put the person first and the disability second. Taking a moment and thinking before speaking can make a huge difference. Here are some examples:

Old way	New way
They are confined to a wheelchair.	They use a wheelchair.
Helen Keller was blind and deaf.	Helen Keller was a human rights activist and writer who was blind and deaf.
Michael J. Fox has Parkinson's disease.	Michael J. Fox is an actor, and was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

Guidelines for Universal Respect:

Remember when interacting with people with disabilities they are just people!

• Do not make assumptions. Ask before you help.

• Speak directly to the person in a normal tone.

• Respect personal space. If someone uses a mobility aid, do not touch, use or lean on their aid. Do not ask someone in a wheelchair to hold something for you.

• Be sensitive about touching a person with a disability.

• Be specific and detailed when giving directions.

• Give the person your full attention.

• Provide a quiet environment.

• Not all disabilities are transparent or visible. For example someone may have a learning disability and needs you to repeat your instructions or to write them down. Do not think their behavior is strange or different.

• A person with a mental illness might not be able to communicate their disability. Stay calm and assist the person.

• Be patient. Allow the person enough time to feel comfortable.

• Do not touch or pet a service animal without asking.

• Do not assume the person with a disability cannot make a decision by themselves.

• Consider that a person with a disability may need extra time to communicate or get things done. Do not rush.

• Treat the person with a disability like you would like to be treated.

Community Care Alliance
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What is Universal Design?

Accessibility for all people!

Universal Design is the development of products and environments to be utilized by all people. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a U.S. law enacted with disabled people in mind. Accessibility standards produced under the ADA are suitable for use by any organization seeking to ensure the accessibility of their products and facilities. The ADA focuses more on numbers and measurements, and Universal Design is focused on all space. Universal design requires thinking broadly.

Provider Office Accessibility Checklist:

You can make a person with a disability more comfortable in your office if you can answer yes to these questions:

- Do your exam rooms accommodate individuals who use wheelchairs?
- Do your exam tables allow a person with a disability to transfer for a full examination?
- Is your receptionist desk at a height that can accommodate a person in a wheelchair and/or a person standing?
- Do you have assistive and communication devices available for the person who is deaf or hard of hearing?
- Does your waiting room have a designated space for people in wheelchairs?
- Can your scale accurately weigh all of your patients?

For more information on the Community Care Alliance of Illinois please call 866-871-2305.

Visit us on the web at www.ccaillinois.com

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