

TOP 5



- **TOP 5** is a tool to support people who have a cognitive disability and who live within the community.
- **TOP 5** helps hospital staff to be aware of the person's specific communication abilities and signs, their needs, likes, dislikes, rituals and preferences for support.

What is TOP 5?

- As a carer, no one knows the person you care for as well as you do. You know their history, behaviours and body language, and may hold the key to their communication. You also know their interests, likes and dislikes, fears, rituals, and triggers.
- **TOP 5** is a tool to provide care tips and unique information about the person you care for, to assist care staff to better understand the person and his/her needs.
- **TOP 5** helps staff in day centres, health settings, and support services.

What should I write?

Consider the five most important things you think care workers or health staff need to know to:

- understand any risks to the persons safety ie choking
- keep the person you care for reassured and settled
- gain co-operation in personal care activities
- encourage communication
- provide person centred care

These suggestions are called the **TOP 5**. Each TIP has three parts.

1. What **action** the staff need do, or not do.
2. **Why**
3. The expected **outcome** this will achieve.

Consider:

- situations that cause distress
- signs or actions that indicate a need
- set routines and rituals
- 'must haves' or comforters
- preferred activities e.g. music, radio cards, games—board or electronic, TV, gardening

These are recorded on the pumpkin coloured **TOP 5** form. [ADD LINK HERE](#)

Examples of CARER TIPS:

Jonathon has a unique sign for YES: He taps his head with a closed fist.

- Mother

Tina will eat anything including non-edibles. Take care to keep medical supplies etc. out of her reach. All meals must be supervised or she will eat the containers and cutlery.

- Support Worker

Brett clicks his tongue when he is thirsty, and he squeals when he smells food.

- Father

Matthew must have a magazine that features girls such as a fashion magazine. He will tuck it under his arm and sit patiently.

- Sister

Suzanne will comply with you cleaning her teeth if she holds another toothbrush in her hand.

- Support worker

Write your tips and suggestions on the **TOP 5** form.

The **TOP 5** is an important part of the **Admission2Discharge (A2D) Folder**. Place 2 copies in the folder.

Family Carers or Disability Support Workers should review the **TOP 5** tips regularly to ensure the tips are still relevant for the person



The form is titled "Support Strategies" and features a "TOP 5" logo. It includes a photo placeholder, a form for personal details (Surname, Given name, Date of Birth, Sex), and a list of five numbered boxes for tips. At the bottom, there are fields for "Compiled by:", "Date:", "Emergency Contact:", and "Telephone:". A small disclaimer at the bottom reads: "FACT Disability Services (DES Business) would like to acknowledge Carer Support Unit, Central Coast LHD for developing TOP 5 and supporting our agency to further develop TOP 5 for a person with an intellectual disability."

If an ambulance is required, give the **A2D Together Folder** to the paramedic and show them the **TOP 5**. The paramedics will use it during the trip to hospital, and will hand the **A2D Together Folder** to emergency staff at transfer of care.

TOP5 is all about providing individual and specific care and support for any person who has reasoning, thinking, and communication difficulties.

Do you want to know more? Watch the presentation here **TOP 5** (PowerPoint presentation link here)

Or visit <http://www.cclhd.health.nsw.gov.au/patientsandvisitors/CarerSupport/top5>

<http://www.cec.health.nsw.gov.au/programs/partnering-with-patients/top5>

We would like to acknowledge the Carer Support Unit, Central Coast Local Health District for the development of the TOP5 initiative, and their generous support in sharing it. www.cclhd.health.nsw.gov.au/services/carers-support/