

Aphasia?



Aphasia New Zealand Charitable Trust
mate ngaronga reo

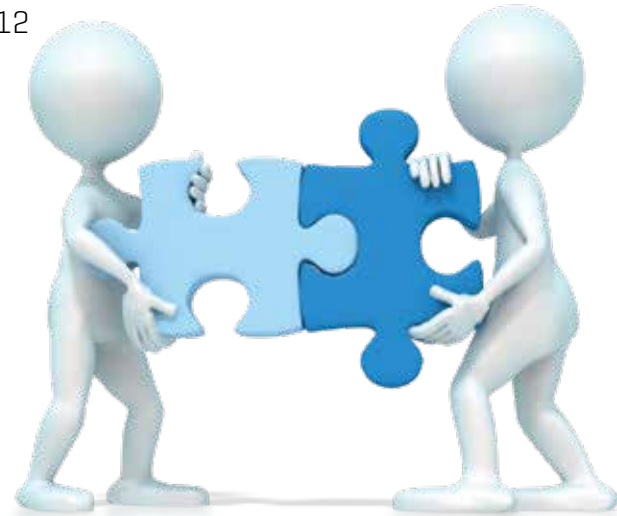
))) ahve ahapisa

giving a voice to people with aphasia

Contents

What is aphasia?	2
What causes aphasia?.....	5
Fluent and non-fluent aphasia.....	6
Communication tips	8
Further information	10
Friends of AphasiaNZ.....	11
Thank you to all our funders and donors	12

*Until you've met it,
you just don't get it.*



What is aphasia?



Imagine going to sleep tonight and waking up in a foreign country.

It's hard to:

- **Speak** the language – ask for bread in a shop, ask for directions, join in conversations, use the telephone.
- **Understand** what is spoken to you – conversations, jokes, TV, films.
- **Understand** what you are **reading** – books, magazines, street signs.
- **Write** – sign your name, fill in forms.
- Get your **thoughts** out – you know what you want to say, but can't find the right words. Communication fails or is limited to facial expressions and gestures.
- **Use numbers** – work out change, use the ATM.

This is what it's like to have aphasia.

Aphasia affects a person's ability to communicate.

It affects each person differently – it may be hardly noticeable or very severe. A person with aphasia may not have a physical disability, or look any different to someone who doesn't have aphasia.

- It is a loss or disruption of language.
- It is NOT a loss of intelligence, hearing or vision.

Communication difficulties may vary from day to day and are likely to be worse when it is noisy, or if the person is tired, unwell or under pressure.

Imagine how frustrating it must be when a person with aphasia knows what they want to say, but can't make themselves understood.

Quotes from people with aphasia

"My mind is one hundred percent ... um ... all the time. Speaking is bad."

"The brain is thinking. He cannot get the words out but he's thinking."

"It's just as if there's an empty space – like opening doors and there's nothing in there. But that is the only way I could describe it. It was just as if my brain was a cake and a piece of it was cut out."

**자연스러운
맞춤형 의치를
원하십니까?**



What causes aphasia?

The most common cause of aphasia is a stroke. Every day in New Zealand, 6 or 7 people acquire aphasia after a stroke. We estimate there are at least 17,000 New Zealanders living with stroke-acquired aphasia right now – but the actual number is probably closer to 20,000.

Aphasia can also result from head injury, brain tumour, and other neurological disease.

The true extent of aphasia in New Zealand is unknown.



Quotes from people with aphasia

"They were talking to me and sometimes I didn't even know ... they'd say something but by the end of the sentence they was saying I didn't know what it was because I'm still thinking of the first little bit. It was ... that was strange, you know, because I really wanted to get into people's conversations but I couldn't ... and I would look at them."

Fluent and non-fluent aphasia

Aphasia has many different characteristics. Usually aphasia can be thought of as either 'fluent' or 'non-fluent'.



People with fluent aphasia usually have:

- Fluent speech that lacks content and may contain 'nonsense' words
- Difficulty making sense to other people
- Difficulty understanding what other people say or write
- Reduced awareness of their language difficulties

Helpful strategies to support a person with fluent aphasia include:

- Trying to follow their train of thought, and not changing the subject
- Checking that you are understanding their message
- Using pictures/props to support what you are saying
- Rewording what you are saying to the person to check they are understanding you

People with non-fluent aphasia usually have:

- Difficulty finding words and effortful speech
- Good understanding of what other people say or write
- Good awareness of their own difficulties

Helpful strategies to support someone with non-fluent aphasia include:

- Giving the person lots of time to find words
- Encouraging the person to write down words/draw pictures if they can't say a word
- Asking the person if they want you to guess what they are trying to say



Communication tips



These are the strategies you can use to make communication easier with someone with aphasia:

- Speak slowly and clearly, pausing at natural breaks such as commas and full stops.
- Give them time to respond.
- Avoid background noise/distractions/more than one person speaking at once.
- Use short clear sentences – one question/piece of information at a time.
- Use easily understood gestures to support what you are saying.
- Have a pen and paper handy to write things down, or draw pictures. Some people read or write better than they can speak.
- Ask yes/no questions – e.g. 'Do you want a cup of tea?' not 'What do you want to drink?'

- Offer choices – e.g. ‘Do we need to go to the bank or the post office?’
- Be honest if you don’t understand and check that they have understood you.
- Be flexible – use any way to communicate - understand their message, don’t aim for perfect speech.
- Ask for help.



Further information



Aphasia New Zealand [AphasiaNZ] Charitable Trust

We are a national charity which receives no government or regular funding. We provide individualised and group support services, resources and educational information to anyone in New Zealand living with or affected by aphasia, including PPA [Primary Progressive Aphasia].

You can contact us:

On our freephone: 0508 APHASIA [0508 274 274]

By email: info@aphasia.org.nz

On our website: www.aphasia.org.nz

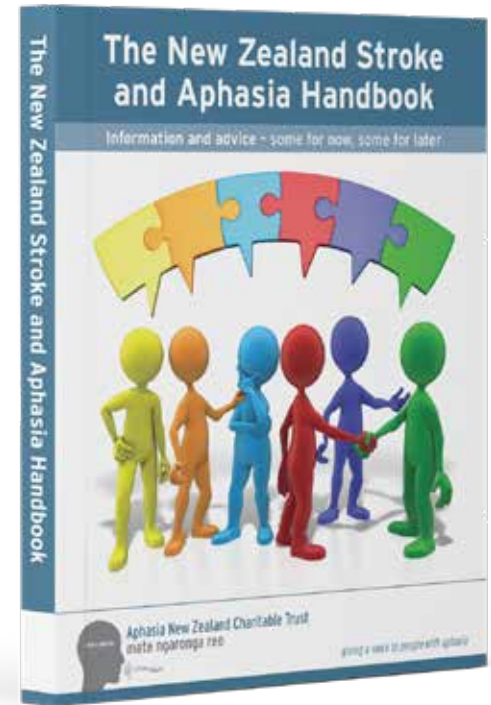
Stroke Aotearoa New Zealand supports people and their families affected by stroke. Call **0800 STROKE** [0800 787 653] or go to www.stroke.org.nz for more information.

Friends of AphasiaNZ

Can you support AphasiaNZ to provide Community Aphasia Advisor (field officer) services, information, and resources like this booklet by becoming a 'Friend of AphasiaNZ?'

For a small joining fee, 'Friends' receive a copy of the NZ Stroke and Aphasia Handbook, and can access our resource library and device loaning programme at no cost.

To become a Friend, please visit our website www.aphasia.org.nz and click on the **Become a Friend of AphasiaNZ** button. This will take you to the form to complete.



Thank you to all our funders and donors



AphasiaNZ is very grateful to all the individual donors, Trusts and Foundations who make our work possible. Without your support, we would be unable to provide any of our resources or services to those affected by aphasia across Aotearoa New Zealand.

If you would like to know more about aphasia and our work, you can sign up to our newsletters and e-updates through our website, and follow us on social media.

Our Facebook page is: **AphasiaNZ**

Our Instagram account is: **aphasia_nz**

Our YouTube page is: **www.youtube.com/@aphasianz2048**



Aphasia New Zealand Charitable Trust
mate ngaronga reo

Charities Commission registration: CC47907