

## AGE-FRIENDLY HEALTHCARE *Quick Guide*

<b>The Challenge</b>	<b>Consumer Response</b>	<b>Healthcare Provider Response</b>
<p><i>The invisible patient</i></p> <p>This happens when a provider speaks to someone else instead of the patient or when the provider doesn't make eye contact with the patient.</p>	<p>Ask your provider to speak directly with you.</p> <p>If you brought someone else along, let your provider know that they can share information with you both.</p>	<p>Speak directly with the patient first. Address information to them, unless told otherwise.</p> <p>Ensure you're at the same level - sit across from them instead of standing over them.</p>
<p><i>"Because of your age"</i></p> <p>Sometimes this is implied or even stated in response to a patient's health concern or diagnosis, implying that it is not worth treating, or even actually limiting the treatment response.</p>	<p>Do not let this response be the end of the conversation. Your chronological age is not the sole determinant of your health concerns. Ask what your treatment options are and ask additional questions to get clarification.</p>	<p>Aging is normal, and a patient's health concerns should be addressed respectfully. Explain possible treatments. If a patient says "oh, I'm just old", you can respond with curiosity. Ask about their health concerns. What are their symptoms? Learn what's important to them.</p>
<p><i>Elderspeak</i></p> <p>This is a condescending way of speaking to older adults. Calling someone "sweetie" or speaking in a simplified way may come from good intentions, but it can make a person feel inferior and incapable. Speaking slowly or loudly are other examples.</p>	<p>Politely stand up for yourself. "My name is . . . Please call me by my name." When you respond, make it clear that you don't need oversimplification. "Could you explain that in more detail?" "Thanks but I'm capable of doing that myself."</p>	<p>Speak to any adult the way you would like someone to speak to you. Someone may have a hearing impairment or other cognitive issues that need consideration, but they should be treated with respect and inclusion.</p>