

IMPAIRED COGNITIVE PROCESSING Impaired cognitive processing ability can interfere with the communication process and leads to anxiety and confusion.

COMMUNICATION DEFICITS ASSOCIATED WITH SOME MENTAL DISORDERS Clients with serious mental disorders may have a different type of communication deficit resulting from a malfunctioning of the neurotransmitters that normally transmit and make sense out of messages in the brain. The responsibility for assessing ability to understand, to give consent, and to overcome communication difficulties rests with both social services and health care workers. Because there is a significant increase in the prevalence of children with developmental disabilities, more nurses will be caring for them both in clinical agencies and in the community (Betz, 2012). In addition to illness-related communication problems, social isolation and impaired coping may accompany the client's inability to receive or express language signals. In some forms of schizophrenia there are alterations in the biochemical neurotransmitters in the brain, which normally conduct messages between nerve cells and help orchestrate the person's response to the external environment. Atypical communication is often the first behavioral clue to cognitive impairment in young children, associated with conditions such as mental retardation. For example, children with Down syndrome, have been shown to judge nonverbal facial expressions more positively than other children, which could lead to a misinterpretation of the nurses' messages. As an example, some clients with mental disorders can perhaps have intact sensory channels, but they cannot process and respond appropriately to what they hear, see, smell, or touch. Understanding involves receiving new information and integrating it meaningfully with prior knowledge. You need to continually determine the extent of your clients' understanding and even their ability to understand self-care activities. Cognitively impaired older clients may have altered communication pathways. Other communication problems occur with different mental disorders: retardation, autism, and affective disorders.