

MODULE 3

The OSTRICH Tool

Get Started



What we'll cover...

- 1 **Introducing the OSTRICH**
- 2 **Exploring the tool**
- 3 **Consumer and healthcare worker voices**
- 4 **Applying the OSTRICH**

1

Introducing the OSTRICH

This section introduces the Observation Tool and Resource for Inclusive Communication in Healthcare (OSTRICH), how it was developed, and what it captures.

The OSTRICH Tool

Observation Tool and Resource for Inclusive Communication in Healthcare (OSTRICH)

An environmental domain assessment for communication accessibility in healthcare services.

Bogart, E., Brunner, M., Rietdijk, R., Prasad, T., Carorasan, R. A., Chapman, N., ... & Togher, L. (2026). Healthcare should be accessible for all: development of the ObServation Tool and Resource for Inclusive Communication in Healthcare (OSTRICH). *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 1-18.



What does the OSTRICH do?

The **OSTRICH Tool** helps healthcare services assess how inclusive their communication is.

- By looking at communication in usual care, it reveals the services and systems behind inclusivity.
- Any health worker can complete it, whatever their role.
- It follows the patient journey through a health service.



How was the OSTRICH developed?

Phase I

Preparation: Identifying and addressing a need to capture observations

- We want to observe but we don't want to be in the way
- Being unable to find a suitable resource to meet our needs
- Following the patient journey through a service

Phase II

Design: Development of key constructs

- Environment
- Interactions
- Resources

Phase III

Evaluation: Iteratively refining the tool

- User testing
- Consumer review
- Terminology review
- Readability review

Phase IV

Implementation: Future considerations

- Systems-level “it needs to be business as usual”
- Capacity building “we need skilled ‘champions’ outside of speech pathology”
- Future applications “hope that it will continue to evolve”

Adapted from Figure 1 – Bogart, E., Brunner, M., Rietdijk, R., Prasad, T., Carorasan, R. A., Chapman, N., ... & Togher, L. (2026). Healthcare should be accessible for all: development of the ObServation Tool and Resource for Inclusive Communication in Healthcare (OSTRICH). Disability and Rehabilitation, 1-18.

The three OSTRICH domains

The tool captures the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of a healthcare service across three domains:



Environment

The physical space and wayfinding within a healthcare service.



Interactions

How healthcare workers communicate with people who use the service.



Resources

The written and visual materials used to share information.



HOW TO USE THE OSTRICH



2

Exploring the tool





Environment

Wayfinding

Tick any enablers that are present

Please use the comment box below for any additional observations

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Service entrance sign	☐	☐	☐
Wayfinding support (e.g., technology, maps, or staff)	☐	☐	☐

Additional comments:

 Environment

Sensory Environment

In your opinion, please rate the overall accessibility of the **sensory environment** on the scale.



Very uncomfortable



Uncomfortable



Neutral



Comfortable



Very comfortable



Why did you give this score?



Interactions

Identifying communication supports

Did that healthcare worker identify any communication support needs?

☐ **Yes**

☐ **No**



Interactions

Communication Access Supports

Tick any enablers that are present

Please use the comment box below for any additional observations

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Braille	☒	☐	☐
Pen and paper easily accessible to consumer/staff	☐	☒	☐
Service entrance sign	☒	☐	☐

Additional comments:



Resources

Tick all that were used in the resource to enable communication:

☐

Purpose of the resource is captured in the title

☐

Relevant information chunked together using headings

☐

Uses short, simple sentences that are written in Plain English (e.g. no jargon, medical terms defined)

☐

Avoid acronyms (if unavoidable the resource should provide a definition)

☐

Dot points

☐

Information is available in different languages (if yes, list languages in the comment box)

3

Consumer and Healthcare Worker Voices

The consumer and healthcare worker voices are critical to use of the OSTRICH.

Why seek Consumer and Healthcare Worker Voices?

Seeking these perspectives helps to:

1 **Understand** what healthcare users want and need

2 **Show respect** and responsiveness

3 **Build trust** in the healthcare service



Consumer voice

Ask a wide range of consumers about their thoughts on the resource:

Do you feel comfortable understanding the information in this resource?



Very uncomfortable



Uncomfortable



Neutral



Comfortable



Very comfortable



Consumer Feedback



How to seek feedback from **consumers**:

1

Explain in simple terms why the feedback is being collected

“We want to improve communication in our service.”

2

Reassure the person that there will be no negative consequences

“You can say what you think. This won’t impact your care”

3

Offer the opportunity to participate

“Would you like to share your thoughts?”



Healthcare Worker Feedback



How to seek feedback from **healthcare workers**:

1

Explain in simple terms why the feedback is being collected

“We want to ensure that we are a communication-inclusive service”

2

Reassure the person that there will be no negative consequences

“You can say what you think. This won’t impact your work or responsibilities”

3

Offer the opportunity to participate

“Would you like to share your thoughts?”



4

Applying the OSTRICH

Let's use the OSTRICH to understand issues in a health service.





Resources

Parking information

Imagine you receive this parking information before attending a clinic.

Important parking information:

Please read the parking information carefully. **The clinic takes no responsibility for visitors who do not follow these instructions and receive a fine.**

- The parking entrance is located on the left-hand side of the building, as you face the building.
- You must not park in any other parking bay. **If your parking bay is occupied at your allocated time please call Reception on 1212-3434 and do not park in any other bay.**
- Please note that if you arrive early for your appointment, you will need to wait for the allocated bay to become available at the start of your parking booking period.
- You must move your car at the end of your parking booking period, as there may be another booking directly after yours.
- Vehicles parked outside of their allocated booking period may be fined.

Please note all visitor parking vouchers are virtual permits which are linked to the vehicle registration number provided with your booking request. If you arrive with a vehicle with a different registration number for any reason please notify Clinic Reception as soon as possible after you arrive otherwise you may be fined. The clinic is not liable for any fines issued due to incorrect registration numbers.

Please press the Intercom button located on the door at the rear of the carpark and advise Clinic reception of your arrival. The access door into the building will be unlocked for you and you will be able to walk directly down the corridor and turn to the right at the end to access the lifts.

Please be aware there are currently construction works happening around the car park entrance, which is causing reduced access when entering the car park.

Please take extreme care on approach to the building, make sure you watch for pedestrians and oncoming traffic.

Resources

Evaluating the parking information

Do you feel comfortable understanding the information in this resource?



Very uncomfortable

☐

Uncomfortable

☐

Neutral

☐

Comfortable

☐

Very comfortable

☐

Tick all that were used in the resource to enable communication:

☐

Purpose of the resource is captured in the title

☐

Avoid acronyms (if unavoidable the resource should provide a definition)

☐

Relevant information chunked together using headings

☐

Dot points

☐

Uses short, simple sentences that are written in Plain English (e.g. no jargon, medical terms defined)

☐

Information is available in different languages (if yes, list languages in the comment box)



Resources

What improvements could be made?

Suggested improvements to the parking information:

Important parking information:

Please read the parking information carefully. **The clinic takes no responsibility for visitors who do not follow these instructions and receive a fine.**

- The parking entrance is located on the left-hand side of the building, as you face the building.
- You must not park in any other parking bay. **If your parking bay is occupied at your allocated time please call Reception on 1212-3434 and do not park in any other bay.**
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Please be aware there are currently construction works happening around the car park entrance, which is causing reduced access when entering the car park. Please take extreme care on approach to the building, make sure you watch for pedestrians and oncoming traffic.

Use subheadings
to “chunk” information

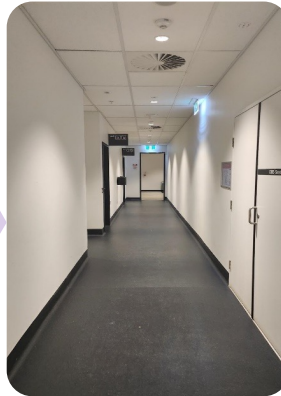
Change to short, simple sentences

Use dot points

Environment

Navigating to the clinic

Now imagine you have parked and are navigating to the clinic



Environment

Evaluating wayfinding

Please use the comment box below for any additional observations.

Wayfinding

Tick any enablers that are present

Please use the comment box below for any additional observations

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Service entrance sign	☒	☐	☐
Wayfinding support (e.g., technology, maps, or staff)	☐	☒	☐

Signs

Tick any enablers that are present

	Yes	No	Not applicable
Clear	☒	☐	☐
Easy to read	☒	☐	☐
Include visual prompts (e.g. arrows)	☐	☒	☐
Large font	☒	☐	☐
Clear and bold colours	☒	☐	☐
Sufficient number of signs located throughout the facility	☐	☒	☐

Do you feel comfortable communicating in this space?



Very
uncomfortable
☐



Uncomfortable
☐



Neutral
☐



Comfortable
☐

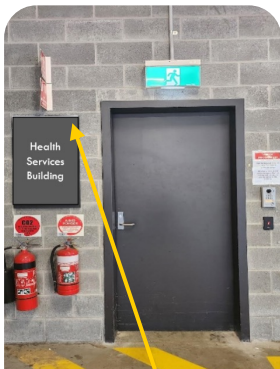


Very comfortable
☐

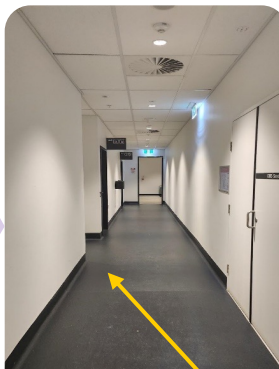
Environment

Navigating to the clinic

Suggested improvements to wayfinding



Make it clearer that this is the entrance. Add a visual prompt



Add another wayfinding sign at this point



Interactions

At the reception desk

Now imagine you are at the reception desk



Interactions

Matt at reception



Matt has a hearing impairment and approaches the reception desk.

Staff: Hi, how can I help you today?

Matt: My name is Matt. I have an appointment.

Staff: Okay, when I call your name you need to meet the therapist outside the clinic room which is down on the right-hand side of that corridor.

20 minutes later (Noisy waiting area)

Matt: I haven't heard my name yet.

Staff: Sorry, we called out but no one came.

Missed opportunity to ask about communication support needs

Lots of information provided

Waiting room noise impacts ability to hear name.

Potential impacts on consumer experience and service delays



Interactions

Evaluating the scenario

Identifying communication supports

Did that staff member
identify any communication
support needs?

Yes

☒

No

☐

Person's voice

How easy was it to get a message in and out with this staff member? (Prompt: was the message easy to follow?)



Very Bad

☐


Bad

☐


Okay

☐


Good

☐


Very Good

☐

Providing information

How does the staff member provide information?

Use everyday language (e.g.,
free from jargon, easy to
understand)

Yes

☐

No

☒

Not applicable

☐

Adjusts explanations when
needed (e.g., saying information
in a different way)

☐
☒
☐

 Interactions

What can be done differently?

Staff: Hi, how can I help you today?

Matt: I have an appointment.

Staff: Okay. Do you have any communication support needs?

Matt: Yes, I wear hearing aids.

Staff: Thanks for letting me know. What can I do to help?

Matt: Not too fast please. I need to see your face and hands.

Staff: Sure. I'll come over to you when it's time.

Staff: Take this corridor here (points). The room is on the right, number 5 (holds up hand to gesture number 5).

Asks about communication support needs

Obtains information on how to support

Reasonable adjustment for the support need

Simple language, use of gestures



That's a wrap

You've completed Module 3:
The OSTRICH Tool