

Why is effective listening important in rehabilitation?

- Effective listening is an **essential skill** for service providers (King, 2022) but it is often taken for granted, or misunderstood as a ‘soft skill’ rather than an advanced clinical competency.
- However, listening matters! The most common complaint from people who had experiences with healthcare providers was that they were **not listened to** (Kagan, 2008).
- Effective clinical listening is **responsive**, and opens the door to **collaborative** goal-setting. It provides space for families to communicate their priorities, preferences, and needs.

How can effective listening be assessed?

- The **Effective Listening and Interactive Communication Scale, or ELICS** (King et. al, 2012) is a 24-item self-assessment questionnaire that allows rehabilitation service providers to assess their listening and communication behaviours.

What strategies can support effective listening?

- 10 years after first publishing the ELICS, members of the team have recently undertaken a three-pronged approach to:

1) Build awareness of the importance of listening:	By publishing a conceptual framework of effective listening in healthcare (King, 2022)
2) Encourage use of the ELICS measure:	By redesigning the original ELICS to improve usability
3) Support skill development for service providers:	By developing knowledge translation (KT) tools that communicate key concepts

What is this questionnaire about?

Listening is an essential clinical skill that is often overlooked. This **24-item scale** is a self-assessment of your listening and communication behavior in professional practice. It should take **5 to 10 minutes** to complete and score this scale.

Effective listening is often overlooked, or misunderstood as a ‘soft skill’. It is actually an advanced clinical competency for rehabilitation service providers!

ELICS Misconceptions about Listening

- Listening is a simple skill. → Listening is a complex process and requires acknowledgement of contextual and relational factors. It is cognitively demanding, and an advanced skill.
- Listening is the same as ‘hearing’. → Hearing is an automatic process. Listening requires attentional capacity, energy, and self-regulation.
- Listening does not involve non-verbal communication. → Silence is a powerful form of non-verbal communication, and is difficult to do. What is not said is just as important as what is. Not all listening requires ‘taking action’ or ‘doing’.

ELICS Listening Stances
Effective approaches to support responsive, person-centred listening and communication in rehabilitation

- Receptive Listening**: By being mindful of the client’s situation and perspective, you can gain a full understanding of their concerns and expectations regarding the intervention.
- Exploratory Listening**: By creating a dialogue, you can encourage questions, information sharing, and establish clarity about issues to help the client move towards a desired change.
- Consensus-Oriented Listening**: By explaining rationales, brainstorming with the client, and co-creating a mutual perspective, jointly determined goals can be established.
- Action-Oriented Listening**: By supporting and enabling clients to plan outcome-oriented aspects of the intervention, they can move forward in achieving their goals and gain a sense of control.

KT activities to build awareness, encourage use of the ELICS, and support service provider skill development:

- 1 **Conceptual framework:** King, G. (2022). Central yet overlooked: engaged and person-centred listening in rehabilitation and healthcare conversations. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 44(24), 7664-7676.



- 2 **ELICS redesign:** The measure has been updated to improve clarity, usability, and visual appeal. It is now available to download via Flintbox:



TECHNOLOGIES STARTUPS RESEARCHERS PORTFOLIOS

The Effective Listening and Interactive Communication Scale (ELICS)

- The ELICS fills a gap in how clinicians and service providers are able to assess their listening and communication behaviours
- The ELICS is a promising tool for rehabilitation that can be used to investigate the role of a crucial yet poorly understood variable in the therapy process

Details Offerings

- 3 **Suite of KT products:** We have also developed:
 - one-page plain language summaries about the four listening stances (King et. al, 2012),
 - a suite of infographics (e.g., ‘Misconceptions about listening’),
 - a mind map outlining why the ELICS tool is unique, and
 - revised educational materials, including a graduate student lecture deck and workshop presentations slides.

Next steps for the CLEAR team

The updated ELICS measure, the supporting KT products, and the revised teaching materials will be used to communicate these concepts to trainees and practicing clinicians. Dissemination and education strategies are underway for the 2023-24 academic year.