



# **Facilitating Social Participation for People with Communication Disability in Coffee Shops and Restaurants: Exploring Multiple Perspectives**

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# BACKGROUND

- **Communication impairments can include difficulties with communicating due to stroke, brain injury, neurological illnesses, hearing loss, intellectual disability or stuttering.**
- **A survey of 155 catering students in Ireland found that they lacked awareness of communication impairments (Guinan & Carroll, 2015).**
- **Focus groups with people with communication impairments in Galway highlighted issues they faced when ordering.**



# EXPLORE FUNDING RECEIVED

**NUIG Speech and Language Therapy students and staff, speech and language therapists and people with communication impairments from Galway designed and delivered the Communication Awareness Programme (CAP).**

**It is a training package for catering staff which aims to:**

- **Enhance their ability to facilitate customers with communication difficulties by learning strategies**
- **Understand the personal perspective from people with communication impairments.**



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# ENACTUS NUIG SUPPORT



- **Two training events were carried out in 2015**
- **10 catering staff attended**
- **We evaluated the the pilot training**
  - **By exploring the experiences of people who were involved in the pilot CAP training programme.**
  - **This involved interviewing four catering staff, two students, two speech and language therapists, one person with a communication disability and one carer**



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# PARTICIPANTS

- **Participants who were involved in the design or delivery of CAP in 2015 and participants who attended a CAP training event were invited to take part**
  - **6 student speech and language therapists**
  - **3 speech and language therapists**
  - **4 adults with communication impairments**
  - **10 catering staff**



# IMPACT



- **Joe: ‘We offered the experience of our lives to the project’.**
- **Sinead (catering manager): ‘His mother was so shocked that he had the ability to order for himself. We all sat and discussed [the changes]. It was really really helpful. It’s one of the best things that I have done in my career’.**
- **(SLT student #1) ‘I suppose a light bulb moment was when the people completing the training were no longer scared of communication impairments’.**



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# PROGRAMME FEATURES THAT FACILITATED THE TRAINING

An open safe atmosphere

A collaborative approach

Hearing personal stories about people's experiences in cafes and restaurants

Learning practical strategies

Video demonstrations and written information

Participation of catering service managers

Follow-up visit by person with communication impairment to the restaurant

Ensuring sustainability by providing on-going training for new staff

# PROGRAMME FEATURES THAT HINDERED THE TRAINING

- **Time and resources**
- **Ways in which the programme was advertised**
- **Turn-over of staff within the industry. It was important to negotiate times for the training considering the busy schedules in coffee shops.**
- **Sinead (catering manager): ‘In the university you can be absolutely dead quiet and use these simple changes and then all of a sudden you have queues out the back door which can be more challenging particularly seeing as it coming up to exam time’**





# Power of personal experiences



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# DIFFICULTIES GARY FACED WHEN ORDERING FOOD

- **Menus difficult to read**
- **Not being understood by staff**
- **Person who accompanies him being asked for assistance**
- **Being rushed**
- **Noise**
- **Queues**



# CHANGES MADE BY STAFF TO IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCE

- **Providing Supports (pen and paper, visual menu for tea coffees and breads)**
- **Staff smiling and engaging with the person ordering.**
- **Numbering menus**
- **Staff to be patient and allow more time, not flooding him with choices**
- **Use of gestures, Pointing**



# IMPACT AND CHANGES FOR GARY

- **Improves independence and self esteem**
- **Makes it a more enjoyable, positive and less stressful experience**
- **Resulted in Gary now having the confidence to give his presentation at CAP training.**



# LEARNING OUTCOME FOR ME

- **Catering Staff are anxious when dealing with people with Communication Impairments.**
- **Training raised awareness of the important role they have in assisting them when ordering.**
- **Assumed that Gary would not be able to order his own lunch but the supports enabled him to do it independently**
- **The emotional experience for me seeing him do this for the first time**



THANK YOU



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