

Stop and Think



Scenario

Customer who gets very vocal and anxious during travel, either in the bus, or in her adapted car. This can be very loud and prolonged causing staff that are driving to lose concentration.



Vision

Hypermetropia (long sighted), inability to focus on near objects which will appear blurred for this customer. However Hypermetropia can cause blurry vision at all distances. Intermittent Divergent Strabismus (squint turning outwards) in left eye which can cause depth perception problems. Slow to react pupils (due to medication) which can cause difficulties when moving from darker to lighter areas and vice versa. This can cause too much light to enter the eye causing discomfort. Customer requires time to process visual information. Wears glasses, for reading and distance and also sunglasses. Ensure glasses are the correct ones for task and that they are clean and fit properly.



Consider

What could be contributing to increased levels of anxiety and vocalisation when travelling in a car/bus? Speed of vehicle? Impact of person's sight loss? Positioning in bus or car? Need to balance the speed of the vehicle with person's ability to process information from outside the vehicle. Different weather conditions e.g., bright sunny days versus dull days? Is there a difference in behaviour on different days?



Results

Customer has been repositioned to the front of the bus where visual information from out with the vehicle is coming from the front and not just the sides. She does not turn her head so focusing on the stimulus coming in via the front of the vehicle seems to reduce the information coming in from the side making her calmer. She has been encouraged to wear sunglasses on bright days. Telling the customer when there is a risk of traffic in traffic calming areas as she requires time to process information reducing anxiety and cuts down the instances where the customer is vocal during travel in a bus/car.

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Scenario

Customer who is really social was being transferred from the wheelchair into the bus but stopped communicating and became “withdrawn” while they were in the bus seats.



Vision

Cerebral Visual Impairment (the brain has difficulty in processing visual information sent from the eyes). Hypermetropia (long sighted) inability to focus on near/distant objects which will appear blurred. Intermittent Left Divergent Strabismus (squint turning outwards), can cause depth perception problems. Slow to react pupils which will cause problems on bright days or going into a bright room and vice versa. Optic Atrophy which will also reduce what the customer can see. Reduced peripheral vision on the right side.



Consider

What is causing this behaviour during periods of transportation? Positioning in bus? It would be beneficial for this customer to be positioned on the right hand side of the bus. Her right peripheral vision is reduced and seating her on the left hand side of the bus will reduce her ability to see what is around her. Going into a dark vehicle on a bright day? Due to the customer's pupils being slow to react she requires time to adjust to different levels of lighting.



Results

The customer is transferred into seats on the right hand side of the bus. This has changed the customers' behaviour. She has become more social and animated in the bus again.

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Scenario

Customer has difficulty going up and down stairs, kerbs and this can cause anxiety. She also gets anxious when people approach from the side.



Vision

Customer has Myopia (short sighted) inability to focus on further away objects which will appear blurred. Wears glasses at all times. Astigmatism; this may make seeing detail in people and objects difficult as they may be blurred (without glasses) due to the shape of the cornea and Amblyopia where the connections to the brain from the eye are not as developed causing visual difficulties. Customer also has reduced lower visual fields which could cause depth perception problems. She also has reduced peripheral visual fields. This could cause problems with seeing movement from the sides and also reduced night vision.



Consider

When approaching steps or kerbs she should be allowed time to focus to enable her to judge the size of the step or kerb. She should be encouraged to use handrails where possible. She should be allowed time to step up/down and a verbal prompt on how big a step to take may help alleviate her anxieties. It may help to wait until the stairway is quiet as too many distractions may make anxiety levels increase. She should be given verbal prompts when people are approaching from the sides this will stop her from becoming startled. As the customer is also short sighted ensure that glasses are always clean and that they fit properly.



Results

Customer is more independent, confident and less anxious when out in the community.