

## **Providing opportunities for learners to make choices**

Give students the opportunity to make real choices, needs or preferences. For example, offering a choice between beer or wine in the pub or asking '*Which apple do you want?*' The response to this could be a reach or a simple gesture, with or without vocalisation, or could be more sophisticated, for example the name of the preferred item, or 'That one!' Practitioners need to be careful to avoid overcomplicating choices and extend the students as appropriate from closed choices, to open choices, to decision making, and from concrete choices to more abstract choices.

### **Case study**

Chris, an independently mobile man with severe communication difficulties shows very limited skills in seeking attention or satisfying his needs. He has been given opportunities to choose between items of food and drink by reaching towards and making contact with the hand of the staff member who is holding the thing he wants. Physical prompting has been necessary, but this is now a fairly well established means of communication.

Adapted from Coupe O'Kane, J.C. and Goldbart, J. (1998) *Communication Before Speech: Development and Assessment* (2nd edn). London: David Fulton Publishers.

[CCc/M3b.2](#) and [Ces /M5.1](#)