



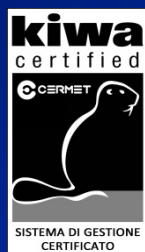
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*XI Autism-Europe International Congress 2016*

# Visual communication in hospital

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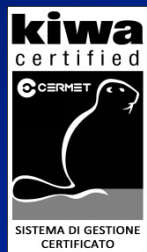
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## *The matter is...*

What about the reception of people with an autism spectrum condition in hospital?

- Lack of social and psychological intuition
- Language and communication impairments
- Sensory issues
- Unexpected events

may cause difficulties for both the patient and the medical and nursing staff



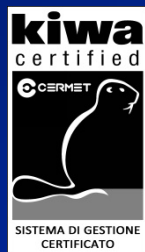
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# What can we do?

## Lack of social and psychological intuition:

*« I do not know what it will happen »*

*« I do not know what I have to do »*

*« I do not know what you are going to do »*

- To explain to the patient what will happen during the medical examination by visual language (pictures, videos)
- To explain to the patient what he is expected to do during the medical examination by visual language
- To train the patient to be visited simulating the medical examination step by step



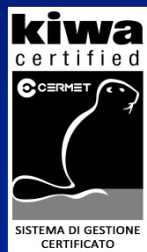
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## What can we do?

### ➤ Language and communication impairments:

I cannot ask: «*What is going to happen?*»

«*What do I have to do?*»

«*What are you going to do?*»

- To make videos which illustrate accurately the medical examination
- To use videos which answer visually to these not expressed questions
- To separate the whole procedure in steps which highlight the most important phases of the examination



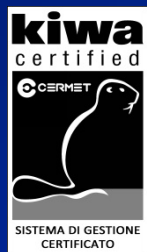
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## What can we do?

### ➤ Sensory issues:

«*This hurts me*»

- To use the step by step procedure to identify the sensory elements the person cannot tolerate
- To train the person in order to better tolerate the unpleasant stimuli
- To find out different ways to carry out the medical procedure avoiding the sensory issue
- To inform the medical staff about the patient's sensory issue



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# What can we do?

## ➤ Unexpected events:

*«I do not like unexpected events»*

- To make the medical procedure known in order to remove (or reduce) the unforesees
- To create a step by step procedure of the medical procedure in order to make the visit predictable
- To follow the step by step accurately during the visit in order to make the patient secure



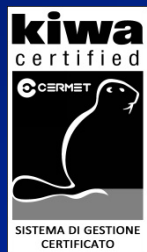
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# Results?

## Are these strategies really efficient?

## Let's test them!





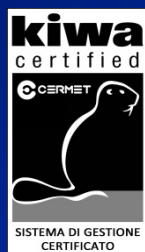
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# Field test

**Subjects: 9 boys with ASD who need a blood test**

Subject	Age (years)	Language	Intellectual disability	Previous experience
1	8	verbal	no	none
2	8	verbal	no	none
3	9	verbal	no	none
4	18	verbal	yes	physical control
5	18	not verbal	yes	physical control
6	16	not verbal	yes	physical control
7	17	verbal	yes	physical control
8	17	not verbal	yes	physical control
9	14	not verbal	yes	physical control





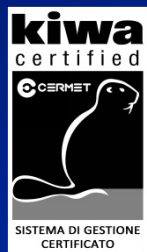
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# *Field test*

## The communication interface

The *drawing blood procedure* was filmed, photographed and drawn, in order to create a step by step procedure using three different codes: iconic, photographic and video.



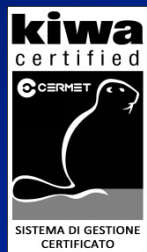
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# Field test

## Drawing blood



I roll up my sleeves and stretch out my arm.



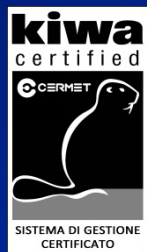
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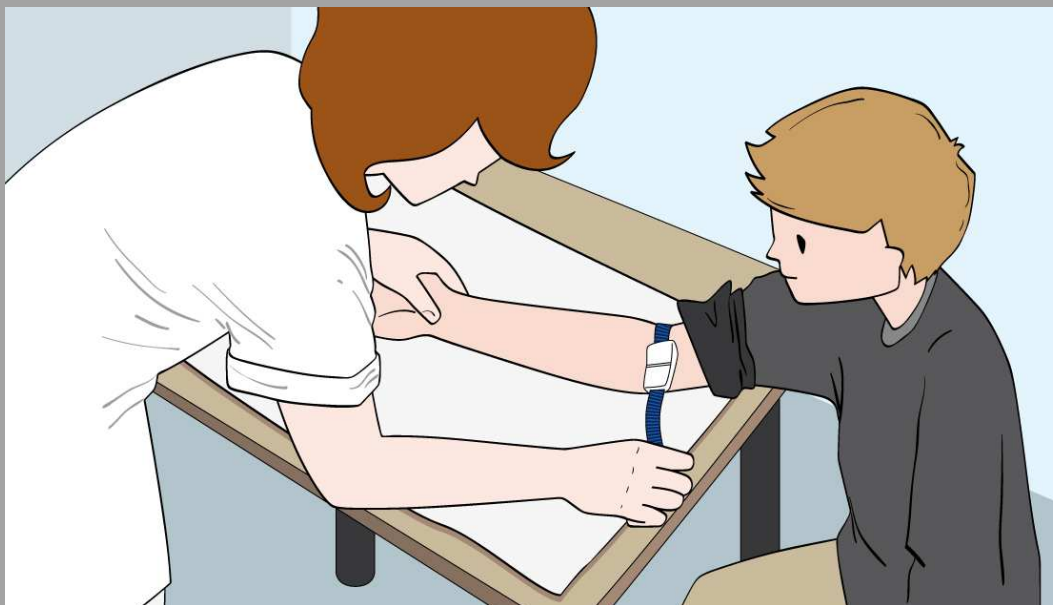
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# Field test

## Drawing blood



The nurse put a tight band on my arm.



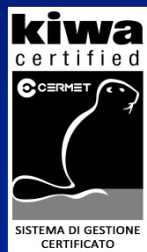
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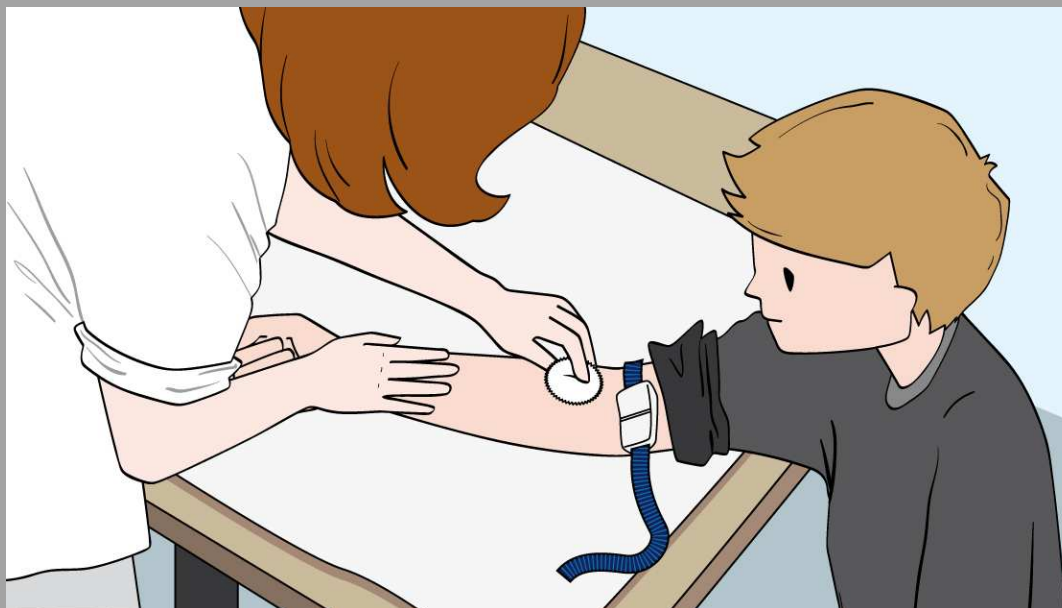
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# Field test

## Drawing blood



The nurse wipes my arm.



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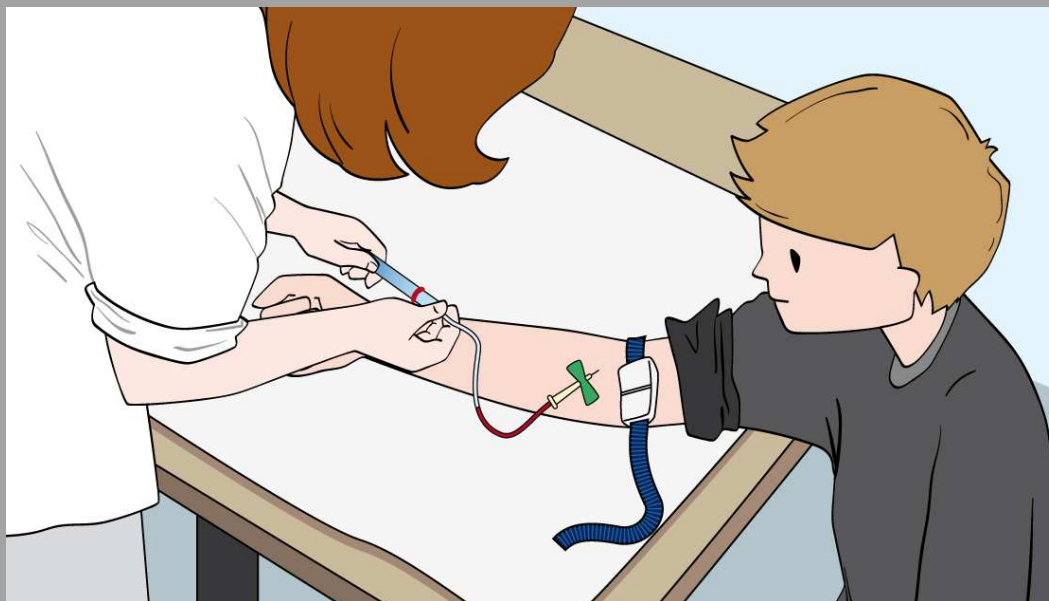
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# Field test

## Drawing blood



The nurse puts the needle in my arm  
and draws blood.



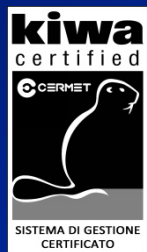
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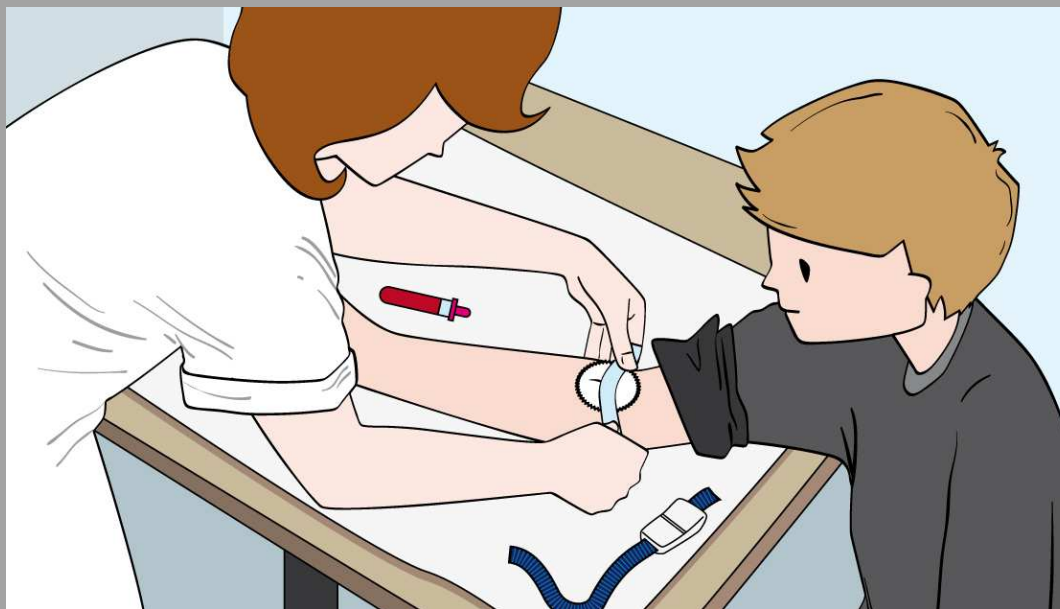
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# Field test

## Drawing blood



The nurse take the needle out and puts  
a plaster on my arm.



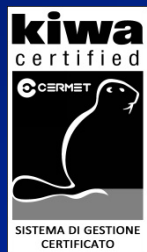
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# Field test

## The training

- the step by step procedure was shown in order to make the it known to the subject
- simulates of each procedural step were fulfilled by therapists in order to train the subject to respond to the requests of the nurse
- specific training was done in order to desensitize the subject to specific sensory stimuli, if necessary





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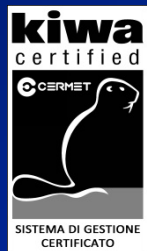
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# Results

## In the hospital:

- the step by step procedure was used during the blood test in order to facilitate the communication between the nurse and the patient
- the parents intervened, when necessary, in order to help the nurse in understanding the patient
- each boy was collaborative
- each nurse was able to do the blood test

Facilitating communication between medical and nursing staff and their patients on the autism spectrum is essential to assure the best quality of health care to ASD people.



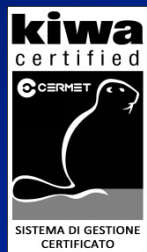
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**Thank you  
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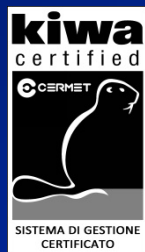
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