



Information Technology for People with Aphasia

Information Technology (IT) may be able to help people with Aphasia communicate more effectively with the people around them. It is not essential for the user to be able to read text in order to use an electronic aid as many aids are symbol/picture based or software can be used that reads the text out loud.

However, a specialist assessment should be made either by a Speech and Language Therapist who has expertise in communication aids or by a Communication Aid Centre.

The range of equipment available is wide and will vary from Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA) to specialist communication aid software that can be used with a personal computer. The main difference between the two is the cost – a dedicated communication aid will cost more.

Uses for Equipment

Uses will be very wide, so it is important that advice is sought to ensure that an individual purchases the right equipment to meet their particular needs and abilities. Uses include:

- Being a *communication aid* to back up a person's speech.
- A means of accessing written material by scanning in the article and using specialist software to read it out loud.
- Providing fun activities that can offer stimulation, increase concentration and co-ordination through games and drawing.
- Computer-assisted therapy. There are a number of specialist programs available. It is recommended that advice is sought from a Speech and Language Therapist to ensure that the programs most appropriate to the person with Aphasia are purchased. These include exercises to help with speech and writing.
- Communicating by email using the Internet.
- Maintaining a person's independence by enabling them to shop via the Internet.

FINANCIAL HELP

It may be possible to receive financial help for the purchase of equipment, depending on the purpose for which it is to be used.

For Study

Your local authority or education authority may be able to provide some funding towards equipment. Policies vary depending on where you live. You will need to contact the authority in your local area for details: contact the grants department at your local Town Hall.

- Grants may be awarded to people with disabilities in order to purchase equipment to enable them to access higher education.

For more information, contact **SKILL** on 0800 328 55050 or visit their Website at www.skill.org.uk.

For Employment

Job Centre Plus may be able to help you with equipment under the "Access to Work" scheme. Contact the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at your local Job Centre. Under the Disability Discrimination Act, your employer may be required to provide you with additional equipment to enable you to do your job. The DEA can advise on this. Their telephone number will be in the local telephone directory.

For General Use

Under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, local social services have a duty in some circumstances to arrange for the provision of equipment to ensure greater safety, comfort or convenience. For more information, contact **The Disabled Living Foundation** on 0845 130 9177.

If it is not possible to access a grant from a statutory agency, it may be worth applying to local charities and charitable trusts for help. Your local library should have names and addresses of local charities. It may also be useful to refer to '*A Guide to Grants for Individuals in Need*' published by **The Directory of Social Change**. Visit their Website at www.dsc.org.uk/Home or telephone 020 7391 4800 for further information.

The Sequal Trust is a charity that aims to provide communication aids for disabled people with speech or movement and/or learning difficulties. For further information, visit their Website at www.thesequaltrust.org.uk or telephone 01691 624222.

USEFUL ADDRESSES

AbilityNet

AbilityNet provides advice and information over the phone or in writing. AbilityNet offers assessment service and free open days for people with disabilities and training for professionals. It also has useful Website. Under the section *My Computer, My Way* information can be found about customising your current computer and using the software already on the computer, in a way that is more disability friendly. This may be all that is needed to enable the person with Aphasia to use the computer.

PO Box 94
Warwick CV34 5WS
Helpline: 0800 269545
Fax: 01926 407425
Email: enquiries@abilitynet.co.uk
Website: www.abilitynet.org.uk

Communication Matters

C/o The Ace Centre
92 Windmill Road
Headington
Oxford OX3 7DR
Tel: 0845 456 8211

Focuses on the needs of people with severe communication difficulties who may benefit from communication aids to maximise their opportunities and enhance their life. Communication Matters provides information and support for augmentative and alternative communication systems.

COMMUNICATION AID CENTRES

These are specialist centres, generally Health Service based, that offer advice and trials of communication aids. Referral will usually need to be via a health professional such as a speech and language therapist. They deal mainly with severe communication impairment.

England

Birmingham

Access to Communication & Technology

West Midlands Rehabilitation Centre

91 Oak Tree Lane

Selly Oak

Birmingham B29 6JA

Tel: 0121 627 8235

Fax: 0121 627 8892

Email: act@southbirminghampct.nhs.uk

Website: www.wmrc.nhs.uk/act

Bristol

Communication Aids Centre

Speech and Language Therapy Department

Frenchay Hospital

Bristol BS16 1LE

Tel: 0117 975 3946

Email: cacfrenchay@northbristol.swest.nhs.uk

Website: www.cacfrenchay.nhs.uk

Lincoln

Speech and Language Therapy Department

92 Newland

Lincoln LN1 1YA

Tel: 01522 514814

London

Assistive Communication Service

Speech and Language Therapy

Ground Floor, Parsons Green Health Centre

5-7 Parsons Green Lane

London SW6 4UL

Tel: 020 88466626

Augmentative Communication Service

Wolfson Neurodisability Service

Department of Neurosciences

Great Ormond Street Hospital

Great Ormond Street

London WC1N 3JH

Tel: 0207 405 9200 x1144

Email: acsadmin@gosh.nhs.uk

Leeds

Leeds Communication Aid Service
Speech and Language Therapy Department
St. Mary's Hospital
Greenhill Road
Leeds LS12 3QE
Tel: 0113 305 5187

Oldham

ACE Centre-North
Hollinwood Business Centre
Albert Street
Hollinwood
Oldham OL1 3QL
Tel: 0161 6842333
Website: www.ace-north.org.uk

Oxford

Ace Centre
92 Windmill Road
Headington
Oxford OX3 7DR
Tel: 01865 759800

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

The Regional Communication Aid Centre
Walkergate Park
Centre for NeuroRehabilitation and NeuroPsychiatry
Benfield Road
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE6 4QD
Tel: 0191 287 5240
Website: www.communicate.editme.com

Sheffield

Sheffield Speech and Language Therapy Agency
Centenary House
Heritage Park
Albert Terrace Road
Sheffield S6 3BR
Tel: 01142 226 2041

Southampton

Communication Aids Service
Southampton General Hospital
Tremona Road
Shirley
Southampton SO16 6YD
Tel: 02380 796455

Suffolk

Suffolk Communication Aids Resource Centre
Laurel Centre
Violet Hill House
Violet Hill Road
Stowmarket IP14 1NL
Tel: 01449 776030

Truro

Speech and Language Therapy Department
Treliske Hospital
Truro
Cornwell TR1 3LJ
Tel: 01872 250000

Scotland**Glasgow**

SCTCI
West of Scotland Mobility and Rehabilitation Services
1345 Govan Road
Glasgow G51 4TF
Tel: 0141 201 2619

Wales**Cardiff**

Communication Aids Centre
ALAC, Rookwood Hospital
Fairwater Road
Llandaff
Cardiff CF5 2XN
Tel: 029 2031 3956

Northern Ireland**Belfast**

The Communication Advice Centre
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
Musgrove Park Hospital
Belfast BT9 7JB
Tel: 028 9090 2905

Communication Aids

We recommend that you request a free trial of any communication aids before making a purchase.

All About Equipment

The aim of All About Equipment is to give people a quick and easy way to find the advice and information they need about all aspects of equipment for independent living.

Helpline: 0845 130 9177

Website: www.allaboutequipment.org.uk

DynaVox Mayer-Johnson

Provider of speech generating devices and symbol-adapted software, with the aim of assisting individuals to overcome their speech, language and learning challenges.

DynaVox Mayer-Johnson

Units 5 & 6, Benford Court

Lower Cape

Warwick CV34 5DA

Tel: 01926 516250

Fax: 0808 280 1604

Email: enquiries@dynavox.co.uk

Website: uk.dynavoxtech.com/default.aspx

Possum

Helping disabled and elderly people and their carers to achieve independence, control and security through the development and application of electronic technology.

Possum Ltd

8 Farmbrough Close

Stocklake Park Industrial Estate

Aylesbury

Buckinghamshire

HP20 1DQ

Tel: 01296 461 000

Fax: 01296 461 001

Email: info@possum.co.uk

Website: www.possum.co.uk

Inclusive Technology Ltd

Provider of portable communication aids and software.

Inclusive Technology Ltd

Riverside Court

Huddersfield Road

Delph

Oldham OL3 5FZ

Tel: 01457 819790

Fax: 01457 819799

Email: inclusive@inclusive.co.uk

Website: www.inclusive.co.uk

Speech Therapy Software

We recommend that you request a free trial of any speech therapy software before making a purchase.

Propeller Rehabilitation Software

Provider of speech and language therapy software.

Propeller Multimedia Limited
Unit 7 - Cavalry park Business Centre
Peebles, EH45 9YR
Tel: 01721 725 875
Email: enquiries@propeller.net
Website: www.propeller.net

Steps Consulting

Provides a therapy program that has been developed for people with Aphasia.

Dr. Jane Mortley
Steps Consulting Limited
Limes Barn
Luckington Road
Acton Turville
South Gloucestershire GL9 1HG
Tel: 01454 218436
Email: info@steps.eu.com
Website: www.steps.eu.com