

Communication Systems - High Technology AAC Systems

Many individuals experience communication difficulties or have limitations in their speech, language, reading and writing as a result of acquired disabilities, congenital disabilities, or neurological differences. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) offers individuals with complex communication needs a means of achieving their communication goals in circumstances where this may not be possible. Individuals with communication difficulties can benefit from using an external resource, aided AAC (High & Low tech) which may complement or be integrated with an individual's current communication skill set (ie. gestures, body movements, eye movements).

This fact sheet focuses on High technology systems. High technology systems utilise electronic devices and specialised software.

Dynamic Display

The display of a dynamic display device changes when a picture/symbol/icon is selected. Dynamic display devices allow for extensive amounts of vocabulary as each page can then be extended into another. Dynamic displays also have many options for the use of direct and indirect access. For example, eye gaze, head tracker or switch technology.

Examples of dynamic display devices include the Tobii Dynavox TD I-13/ TD I- 16



Static Display

A static display device has a stationary or fixed display and when a picture or symbol is selected the display remains in the same format. This type of display allows users to remember the layout of the display. Some static display devices may or may not have a voice output function, so that when a picture or symbol is selected, the symbol/word is spoken through digitised speech.

Examples of a static display device include the GoTalk Device which allows communication partners to record messages corresponding with the appropriate symbol or picture presented on the display layout.



Single Message Devices Sequenced Message Devices

Single message devices make use of a voice-output communication device which records speech and then plays back a single message. These devices can be accessed by touching a single switch.

An example of single message devices is the BIGmack.



Sequenced Message Devices

Similar to single message devices, sequenced message devices record a sequence of messages to be produced from one switch. Some devices allow for sets of messages to be stored. The messages are recorded using digitised speech.

Examples of sequenced message devices include Smooth Talker, Big Button Communicator and QuickTalker S and 1.



Text-to-Speech and Spelling Devices

Text-to-speech devices refer to any software or device that generates speech output. The majority of high-tech AAC devices have a voice output function. The user may use symbols, photos or spelling input for synthesised speech.

Examples of text-to-speech devices include the Allora Speech Generating Device, LightWriter Speech Generating Device and Click2Speak Text-to-Speech Software.



More information

For further information, or advice, about any item contained in this information sheet, please contact Independent Living Centre Tasmania Inc.(ILCT):

- Call 1300 452 827 to speak to a health professional.
- Visit our website www.ilct.com.au or email info@ilct.com.au.
- ILCT visits communities around Tasmania. Contact ILCT to find out when we will be in your area.

ILCT provides Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology, and Allied Health Assistant services, on a fee-for-service basis. Our team delivers comprehensive assessments and support that may include assistive technology, home modifications, communication aids, and other tailored interventions to enhance independence and quality of life.

ILCT specifically provides supports to those aged over 18, who are Tasmanian residents and are of any culturally-diverse background. ILCT are a registered provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

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