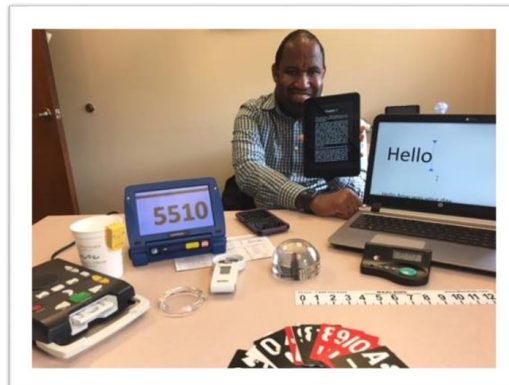


Assistive Technology (AT) Guide for Teams

Who is this guide for? Supported individuals, direct support staff, family, case managers, Coordinators of Community Services - anyone and everyone!

The purpose of this packet is to guide teams through the Assistive Technology process. The Arc Baltimore's Assistive Technology (AT) lead is here to support individuals and their teams in making AT decisions and acquiring needed services and devices to help people achieve their goals. Please consult with the AT Lead for support as you work through this process. Please note that all underlined words in this document link to the website with more info or to an actual application. The full links and all paper forms are in the appendix.



“Without this AT I would not be able to be as independent as I am today.” - Seth, AT User

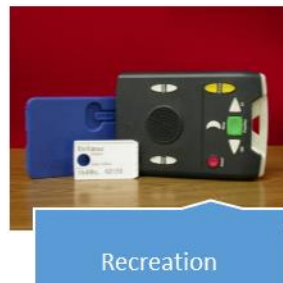
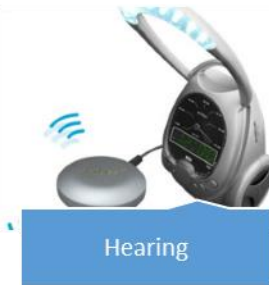
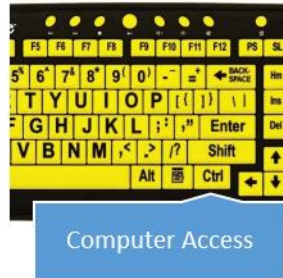
Assistive Technology Lead Contact:
Outreach and Family Services
assistivetechology@thearcbaltimore.org
410-296-2272 x5319

What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

Assistive Technology (AT) is any piece of equipment or strategy used by a person with a disability to increase, maintain, or improve his or her functional capabilities. AT enables people to live, work and learn more independently. AT consists of both high tech and low tech tools.

“For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.”

-IBM training Manual 1991



How do I know whether Assistive Technology (AT) is right for me?

Using assistive technology can be very helpful. AT can be beneficial when there is an identified need. Here are some primary questions that will determine if AT is right for you?

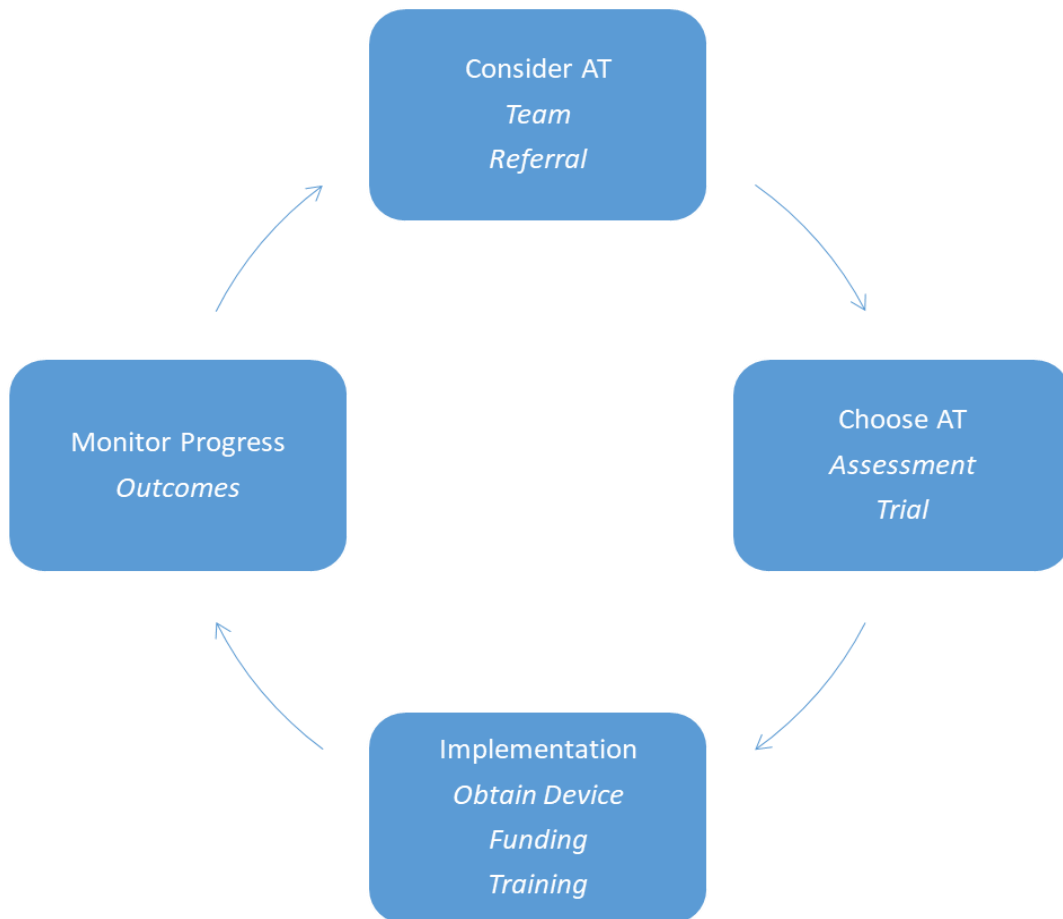
- Is there a task or activity in which you would like to accomplish that is difficult?
- In what environment will you accomplish this task?
- What are some of the barriers you have in accomplishing this task?
- Would assistive technology enable you to meet your goal?
- What has been tried in the past to address the needs of the person?
- Is there something you want to do independently but are unable to do? (i.e turn off the light, read a letter, or send an email)
- What is your expected outcome using AT?

If you have determined an unresolved need, AT is right for you!!!

The next step in this process is to request an assessment. What is an assessment? It is a simple process which entails gathering information about the person from a team consisting of family, staff, case managers, COCS and the supported person. The team will identify the need, desired outcome, evaluate skills and ultimately assist with device trials. Throughout this process, the team will revisit the desired outcomes until the right fit is found. When the right fit or device has been selected, the device is procured. Training is implemented and follow up is provided to ensure needs are met.

Throughout this process remember:

- This is a team approach
- The desired outcome for the individual



Here is a quick guide to start the process:

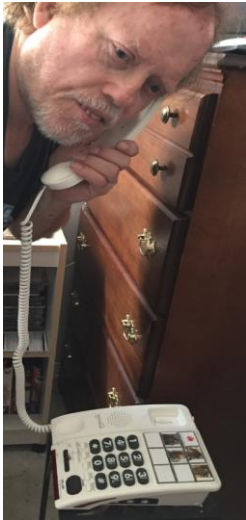
FIRST, pick a number/color for the MAIN REASON you are interested in AT, # 1-7.

#	What do you want AT to help with?	Description/examples...
1	Phone	An adapted telephone is needed because I cannot use a standard phone (ex. need someone to dial for me, cannot hear the person on the other end)
2	Work	AT is needed to achieve an employment-related goal (ex. remembering steps in a job, staying on schedule, using the computer for work)
3	Communication	AT is needed for communication (ex. I use only nonverbal communication or I am difficult to understand if you don't know me very well)
4	Activities of Daily Living, Environmental Control, Computer Access, Memory/Cognition, or Home Safety	AT is needed for tasks of daily living (ex. eating), computer access, memory/cognition (ex. need reminders, visual/audio schedules, task cueing apps), hearing (assistive listening devices), vision (talking watches), home safety (bed shaking smoke detectors, stove shut-offs)
5	Reading	Difficulty reading due to disability (ex. could benefit from large print, books on tape, braille)
6	Not sure	General AT exploration, not sure if AT is needed

NEXT, Jump to that number/color in this packet for guidance.

Start with #2 WORK if the AT would help you with work (even if it's for one of the other areas ex. communication)

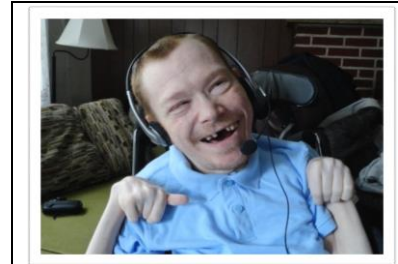
#1. Phone



“Richard could no longer dial 911 or any other number correctly. Pictures of fire and faces of important people in his life are pasted for him to just press the button. He says this is very helpful.”

-Oluchi, Direct Support Professional

Check out [Maryland Relay](#)'s Maryland Accessible Telecommunications (MAT) program which provides assistive equipment to qualified applicants. Must have landline service already in home or must have applied for landline service.



Keith loves talking to his girlfriend with his hands-free phone!

Things to include when sending your MDRELAY application:

- ✓ Maryland Relay application and Authorization for Medical Release Information Form (Appendix 1)
- ✓ **SSI letter;**
- ✓ **Copy of Photo ID;** and
- ✓ **Phone/utility bill.** If the phone/utility bill is not in individual's name because the agency pays through Contribution to Care, contact The Arc Baltimore's benefits specialist Ben Swartz (410-296-2272 x5236) for

a letter to include in your MDRELAY app. If supported by another agency please contact your agencies contact for assistance in obtaining.

#2. Work

- Do you feel like you might be eligible for [DORS services](#)?
 - ✓ If YES, find your [local DORS office](#) and call them to begin the referral process.

- Complete the [DORS application](#).
 - Complete the [Release of Information Form](#) to designate anyone who should receive copies of service reports and status updates from DORS. Ex. CCS, Provider agency.
 - Once you are assigned a DORS Counselor, tell your DORS Counselor you need an AT assessment.
- ✓ If **NO**, pick out the second best area that describes your AT need (1, 3-7).

#3. Communication

In order to determine what type of communication device is most appropriate, you will need an assessment. In some cases the assessment will need to be done with a speech and language pathologist who specializes in AT. The Arc works closely with Unified Community Connections (UC2) for this service. UC2 will travel to the individual's environment and meet with staff to provide input. It is a good practice to coordinate so that all the key people in a person's life (including direct support staff, family, and other advocates) are involved in the entire process and UC2 works well on that with us. UC2 does not accept medical insurance for services.

- **Can you afford a \$300 AAC assessment with Unified Community Connections (UC2)?**



Mary Ruth is very difficult to understand - but she sure has A LOT to say. Now she has a small wearable NOVA Chat 5 communication device, and she is so happy that she can make people understand her with the push of a button. Here she is announcing herself before going into the men's room to clean it - one of her job duties.

- ✓ If **NO**, you **CANNOT** afford the assessment fee, consult with the AT Department for options.
- ✓ If **YES**, complete [The Arc Baltimore Referral Form](#) and send with a copy of medical insurance cards front and back. *CCS Please see private pay documentation guidelines on PAGE 12 for required Person Centered Plan (PCP) documentation.
- ✓ You will receive an assessment report detailing what AT device(s) and service(s) you need. **If the device will be funded through Medical Insurance, the clinician will assist you with applying for funding.**
- **Do you need a device that will NOT be funded through medical insurance?**
 - ✓ Apply to [The IMAGE Center](#) for funding of needed AT and training. IMAGE will require contribution toward AT based on income and eligibility.
 - ✓ Consult with AT Lead on training vendor and costs prior to submitting IMAGE application.
 - ✓ See document [IMAGE Application](#) on Arc Public. Make sure you request funding for required training and setup - # of hours should be outlined in the assessment report. UC2 provides this at \$80/hour.
 - ✓ **If IMAGE denies request**, consult with AT Lead for support with DDA request.

#4. Activities of Daily Living (ex. eating), Environmental Control, Computer Access, Reminders/Staying on Schedule, Home Safety



Don is not always motivated to wake up and shower for the day. With the talking alarm clock, he hears his girlfriend's voice waking him up every morning, reminding him to wake up and shower so he looks his best for his love! The clock also reminds him to take his medications, and complete household chores.

- Can you afford a \$300 AT assessment to determine what you need?
 - ✓ If NO, consult with AT Lead for options.
- If YES, complete [The Arc Baltimore Referral Form](#) and send. *CCS Please see private pay documentation guidelines on PAGE 12 for required Person Centered Plan (PCP) documentation.
 - ✓ You will receive an assessment report detailing what AT device(s) and service(s) you need.
- Have you already had an assessment/know what you need?

- ✓ Apply to [The IMAGE Center](#) for funding of needed AT and training. IMAGE will require contribution toward AT based on income and eligibility.
- ✓ Consult with AT Lead on training vendor and costs prior to submitting IMAGE application.
- ✓ See document [IMAGE Application](#) on Arc Public. Make sure you request funding for required training and setup - # of hours should be outlined in the assessment report. UC2 provides this service at \$80/hour.
- ✓ If IMAGE denies request, consult with AT Lead for support with DDA request.



Larry listens to a book on tape with his free book player from MD Library for Blind and Physically Handicapped.

#5. Reading (large print, books on tape, braille)

- ✓ Check out the [Maryland Library for Blind and Physically Handicapped](#) and complete the [application](#).

#6. I don't know, I would like to learn more about AT.

- ✓ Contact [Maryland Technology Assistance Program](#) to tour their AT Library. They can schedule individual or group tours for anyone - supported individuals, staff, and families!

Contact Denise Shuler at 410-554-9230.

2301 Argonne Drive, Rm T-17

Baltimore, Maryland 21218

Toll Free Voice: 1-800-832-4827

Voice: 410-554-9230

TTY: 1-866-881-7488

✓ Come to [The Arc Baltimore's Annual AT Fair](#) in May! Sign up for our [Reaching Families e-newsletter](#) to receive event info.

✓ Consult with The Arc Baltimore's AT Lead

Assistive Technology Lead Contact:

Outreach and Family Services

assistivetech@thearcbaltimore.org

410-296-2272x5319

Person Centered Plan (PCP) Documentation

1. GOALS

- ✓ First, state the goal and then describe what AT devices and/or services are needed to achieve the outcome.
 - Ex. Joe will complete his daily job tasks more independently.
 - Joe will have an AT assessment to determine what kind of AT device would be beneficial for him.
 - Joe will use his assistive technology daily in order to complete tasks 100% of the time.
- ✓ Define who on the team will do what and by when
 - Ex. will CCS/service coordinator complete application/referral, Arc staff, or family
- ✓ Define whether the person can afford and that the team agrees, or state that funding assistance is needed.

2. PRIVATE PAY GUIDELINES

If an individual can afford to pay for an AT service (such as assessment or training) or an AT device (such as iPad or communication device), it must be documented in the IP that the individual and their team are in agreement with their choice to private pay for AT. **DDA requires this be documented in the IP because AT is a DDA waived service.**

At the time of the IP, the cost of the device and additional services needed (such as training) may not be known if the person has not had an assessment yet. It can be noted as: **“the individual and their team are in agreement with the choice to private pay for needed AT services and/or devices.”** If the person cannot afford a device or services recommended as a result of assessment, consult with the AT department.

3. DDA FUNDING REQUESTS

If it is determined that an individual cannot afford a needed AT assessment and they are not eligible for services through other entities, the team should start the Modified Request For Service Change process to request one time only funding for an assessment. The AT Lead can provide some supporting documentation and guidance on the request.

General Description of AT Assessment for DDA Funding Requests: *The individual is in need of an Assistive Technology (AT) assessment to identify equipment that can be used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities which may also support increased community inclusion. Through the AT assessment, the individual’s functional skills and needs related to desired outcomes will be evaluated. The individual will have the opportunity to trial devices with features that best fit the needs of the person. The assessment report will provide recommendations on device(s) and relevant services such as configuration and training.*

APPENDIX: FORMS AND ADDITIONAL INFO

1. Maryland Relay Application and Authorization for Medical Release Information Form
2. DORS Eligibility Criteria & Locations
3. DORS Application and Release of Information Form
4. DORS Vendor of AT Services Info Sheet
5. IMAGE Center Application
6. The Arc Baltimore AT Referral Form
7. Maryland Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped Application
8. Discontinuation/Refusal of Assistive Technology Form