

Communication Aids Policy and Administration Manual

Assistive Devices Program
Ministry of Health

ontario.ca/page/assistive-devices-program

Table of Amendments

This page will list all substantive changes to policies and procedures listed in the Manual.

Section	Change	Date
110	Added definitions of Physician and Nurse Practitioner	April 1, 2014
120	Added Nurse Practitioner	April 1, 2014
725	Updated process	April 1, 2014
115.02	Updated to align with the new Authorizer Agreement	October 1, 2014
200	Added information about warranties	October 1, 2014
500	Clarified equipment pool leasing policies	October 1, 2016

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Introduction

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Part 1: Introduction

100 Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this Manual is to present the policies and procedures for the funding of communication aids in one document. This Manual is intended to complement the Policies and Procedures Manual for the Assistive Devices Program (ADP Manual).

This Manual forms part of the agreement between the Ministry of Health and the Vendor, and the agreement between the Ministry of Health and the Authorizer. The Ministry reserves the right to revise this Manual.

100.01 Intended Target Audience

This Manual is intended to be used by:

- Authorizers and Vendors who have an agreement with the Assistive Devices Program (ADP) to provide Devices and services related to Communication Aids;
- The Centralized Equipment Pool for Communication Aids (CEP); and
- ADP designated Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) clinics.

105 Protecting Personal Health Information

Authorizers and Vendors must comply with all applicable privacy laws governing information regarding their Clients.

See the ADP Manual, Policy 700, Protection of Personal Information and Personal Health Information.

110 Definitions

Capitalized terms used in this Manual shall have the meaning associated with them as set out in the ADP Manual or such meanings as described below:

110.01 **AAC Clinic** means an ADP designated Augmentative and Alternative Communication Clinic. There are two types of AAC Clinics: General Level; and Expanded Level.

110.02 **AAC System** means an integrated group of components including the symbols, aids, strategies and techniques used by individuals to enhance communication. The ADP may fund communication aids that enhance or replace components of an individual's AAC system for face-to-face and/or written communication.

110.03 **Activities of Daily Living** mean those activities that are needed for basic self-care and required to function within the home, community, school, workplace and social environments.

Examples of activities required to function in the home may include:

- interacting with family members;
- menu/meal planning;

- composing shopping lists;
- instructing others regarding personal care.

Examples of activities required to function in the community may include:

- banking;
- shopping;
- scheduling and attending appointments;
- interacting with others in the park/playground.

Examples of activities required to function in the school may include:

- interacting with teachers and students;
- completing homework assignments;
- participating in play/extracurricular activities.

Examples of activities required to function in the workplace may include:

- attending meetings;
- writing letters/reports;
- preparing for and participating in interviews;
- interacting with others.

Examples of activities required to function in social environments may include:

- participating in activities at church;
- dining at restaurants;
- attending parties and clubs.

- 110.04 **Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)** means the methods of communication that can be used to add to the usual methods of speech and writing when these methods are impaired. AAC includes unaided systems, such as signing and gestures as well as aided techniques ranging from picture charts to the most sophisticated computer technology. AAC can be a way to help someone understand and as a means of expression.
- 110.05 **Centralized Equipment Pool and CEP** means the persons or entity selected by the Ministry to operate the Centralized Equipment Pool for Communication Aids.
- 110.06 **Manual** means this Communication Aids Policy and Administration Manual.
- 110.07 **Nurse Practitioner** means a professional who holds a valid certificate of registration from the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) as a Registered Nurse in the Extended Class and is entitled to practise in Ontario.
- 110.08 **Physician** means a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario who is qualified to practise medicine in Ontario under the *Medicine Act*, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 30 or any successor legislation thereto.
- 110.09 **Product Manuals** means the listings and approved prices in the Communication Aids Product Manual - Clinics and the Communication Aids Product Manual - Individual Authorizers.

For more definitions, see the ADP Manual, Policy 110, Definitions.

115 Roles and Responsibilities

In the process of confirming eligibility for funding assistance, the Applicant/Client, the Authorizer, Vendor of Devices for purchase and the CEP (offering Devices for lease) each have specific roles, certain rights and responsibilities. Additional information may be found in the ADP Manual, the Authorizer Agreement and the Vendor Agreement.

115.01 Roles and Responsibilities of the Applicant or Client

- Is responsible for arranging an assessment with an Authorizer and providing the necessary and accurate information to the Authorizer.
- Will make an informed decision including, but not limited to, whether or not to proceed with an Application Form, based on the accurate information provided from the Authorizer and the Vendor during the assessment and the ADP application process.
- Provides the necessary and accurate information on the Application Form, Section 1 – “Applicant's Biographical Information”.
- Should carefully review all the information on the Application Form, including Section 3 – “Applicant's Consent and Signature” prior to signing this section.
- Has the right to seek a second opinion if the individual disagrees with the Authorizer’s assessment of their communication aids needs.
- Is responsible for paying the Client portion (25 percent) of the Approved Price of the Authorized Device directly to the Vendor or paying the CEP the annual fee to lease the Authorized Device.

Note: The ADP does not set an Approved Price for voice restoration and speaking valves. The Applicant or Client is responsible for paying 25 percent of the Vendor's price for voice restoration and speaking valves.

- After the Authorized Device is received from the Vendor, follows up with the Authorizer and/or Vendor as appropriate, regarding questions or difficulties with the Authorized Device.
- Obtains and provides quotations for repairs, as required.

115.02 **Roles and Responsibilities of the Authorizer**

- Is the gatekeeper to the Program and assumes the leadership role in the assessment process, confirmation of the Applicant's eligibility and completion of the Application Form in a timely manner.
- Will perform a thorough assessment to determine the Applicant's eligibility to apply for funding assistance, confirm the need for the communication aid, determine and authorize the appropriate communication aid to meet the Applicant's face-to-face and/or written communication needs.
- If an individual attends school, it is recommended that the Authorizer and the individual (and family, as appropriate) discuss the communication requirements with school teachers/other relevant persons as part of the assessment process. Such collaboration should help to ensure that the Authorized Device allows for application in a variety of settings.
- Is an essential resource for the Applicant regarding the different kinds of communication aids available to meet the Applicant's face-to-face and/or writing needs.

- Follows up with the Client, as required, after the Authorized Device has been provided by the Vendor to ensure that the Authorized Device meets the Client's communication needs.
- Must not submit an Application Form to the Program for an individual who does not meet the ADP eligibility criteria.
- Must continue to meet all conditions specified in the executed Authorizer Agreement and all applicable Manuals.

115.03 **Roles and Responsibilities of the Vendor – Purchase of Communication Aids**

- Orders and provides prompt delivery to the Applicant of the Authorized Device specified on the Application Form.
- Where the make and model of the Authorized Device is not required on the Application Form, the Vendor will work cooperatively with the Applicant and Authorizer to ensure the Applicant's choice of make and model of communication aid is appropriate to meet the Applicant's basic needs.
- Provides configuration/set-up of the Authorized Device as required and instructions for its proper and effective use, operation, care and maintenance.
- Collects from the Applicant 25 percent of the Approved Price of the Authorized Device, except for voice restoration and speaking valves where the ADP does not set an Approved Price. The Vendor collects from the Applicant, 25 percent of the Vendor's price for the voice restoration and speaking valves.

Note: Vendors may charge less than the Approved Price for the communication aid.

- Provides the Applicant with a fully itemized invoice for the communication aid purchase and copy of the manufacturer's warranty.
- Submits the Application Form to the Program for processing.
- Maintains current knowledge of communication aids for which the Vendor is authorized to sell and listed in the Product Manuals.
- Keeps an adequate stock of communication aids for which the Vendor is authorized to sell, honours manufacturer's warranties for the benefit of Clients and provides after-sale services such as repairs and maintenance services.
- Provides repair quotes, as necessary, to the Client and/or the ADP.
- Must continue to meet all conditions specified in their executed Vendor Agreement and the Manuals.

115.04 **Roles and Responsibilities of the AAC Clinic – Lease of Communication Aids**

- Orders from the CEP the equipment (Authorized Device(s)) for lease.
- Receives delivery of the equipment from the CEP.
- Configures the equipment and sets it up for the Applicant.
- Instructs the Applicant and facilitator on the proper and effective use, operation, care and maintenance of the equipment.
- Provides the Applicant with the CEP information brochure.
- Collects the lease fees for the first year from the Applicant/Agent/third party payers and provides it to the CEP.

- Monitors the Client's progress with the equipment to ensure that it is appropriate for their needs.
- Provides basic troubleshooting and minor repairs of the Client's equipment, where appropriate, and facilitates the repair of the equipment through the CEP, as required.

115.05 **Roles and Responsibilities of the Centralized Equipment Pool – Lease of Communication Aids**

- Receives the orders from the AAC Clinics for equipment (Authorized Device(s)) to be leased to ADP eligible Applicants.
- Fills the orders for the equipment and ships the equipment to the AAC Clinics.
- Notifies the AAC Clinics of the leasing fees for the equipment.
- Receives client payment from the AAC Clinics for the first year's lease fees for the equipment.
- Bills and collects from the Client/Agent/third party payer the equipment lease fees for subsequent years.
- Provides repair of leased equipment.
- Facilitates lease buy-outs of equipment and determines remaining cost.

120 Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Service Delivery Model

An Applicant who is applying for funding assistance towards communication aids must:

- See a Physician or Nurse Practitioner (first-time Applicants or Clients applying to the Program for funding assistance towards another communication aid as a result of change in medical condition) and
- Be assessed by an Authorizer and Purchase the Authorized Device from a Vendor (where applicable) or
- Lease the Authorized Device from the CEP (where applicable)

The AAC service delivery model consists of: Individual Authorizers; ADP designated General Level AAC Clinics; ADP designated Expanded Level AAC Clinics; Vendors; and the CEP.

Note: All AAC Clinics and the CEP are registered as communication aids Vendors and may therefore also assume the Vendor role where applicable.

Individual Authorizers

Applicants with clinical issues whose face-to-face communication or writing needs are straightforward and can be addressed with the communication aids listed in the Product Manual - Individual Authorizers, should be seen by a local ADP Individual Authorizer who is a Speech-Language Pathologist (for face-to-face communication) or Occupational Therapist (for written communication).

General AAC Service

Applicants with complex clinical issues that require communication aids listed in the Product Manual - Clinics and those who can access the communication aid directly, or Applicants in need of a trans-disciplinary approach, can be referred to an ADP designated general level AAC Clinic.

Expanded AAC Service

Applicants with highly complex clinical issues who require the technology listed in the Product Manual - Clinics and those who require access technology to operate their communication aid must be referred to an ADP designated expanded level AAC Clinic.

Devices Covered



Part 2: Devices Covered

200 Devices Covered

Communication aids approved for ADP funding are listed in the Product Manuals. They are:

1. Communication Aids – Product Manual – Clinics
2. Communication Aids – Product Manual – Individual Authorizers

In order to list devices with the Program, the manufacturer/distributor responsible for the product in the Ontario market must warranty the product for a minimum period of time from the date the Device is delivered to the Client.

For all generic communication aids funded by the Program, the Vendor may only provide Devices that have a minimum warranty period from the date that the Device is delivered to the Client.

Communication Aid	Minimum Warranty
communication display boards	6 months
computers systems quick messaging devices integrated systems keyboards mounting systems for devices mounting systems for access hardware mouse alternatives simple non-computerized pointers speech generating devices (SGDs) SGD access hardware switches writing aid access hardware wheelchair accessories for communication aids voice amplifiers	1 year
carrying cases for SGDs and writing aids electrolarynges wheelchair control units for communication aids	2 years
key guards for SGDs or writing aids	3 years

Note: The warranty periods do not apply to software, supplies, Clients leasing equipment from the CEP, Clients who are buying-out their leased equipment from the CEP, and Applicants purchasing equipment from non-registered vendors, where permitted. Applicants purchasing equipment from non-registered vendors, where permitted, should inform themselves of the equipment warranty period prior to purchasing the equipment.

205 Communication Aids

- electrolarynges
- voice amplifiers

- voice restoration and speaking valves
- quick messaging devices
- speech generating devices SGDs/VOCAs
- display-making software
- key guards for SGDs/VOCAs
- carrying cases for SGDs/VOCAs
- communication display boards
- SGD/VOCA software
- SGD/VOCA access hardware
- simple writing aidskey guards for simple writing aids
- carrying cases for simple writing aids
- computer systems
- key guards for writing aids
- carrying cases for writing aids
- adaptive word processing software
- writing aid access software
- writing aid access hardware
- simple non-computerized pointers
- keyboards, switches
- mounting systems for Devices
- mounting systems for access hardware
- wheelchair accessories for communication aids
- wheelchair control unit for communication aids
- integrated systems

215 Items Not Funded by ADP

- devices used for one purpose such as school, work, sports, recreation or social activities
- devices used intermittently or used as a backup
- devices purchased from suppliers that are located out-of-province
- devices that are not listed in the Product Manuals
- devices that are purchased before they are authorized
- Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)
- used Devices, unless provided by the CEP
- extended warranties/service plans
- writing aids used for instructional (computer-aided learning) or therapeutic purposes

215 Repairs/Batteries

The ADP does not provide funding towards the cost of repairs, maintenance and/or batteries for any Device.

See Part 5 of this Manual for policies specific to the Centralized Equipment Pool for Communication Aids.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria for Communication Aids

3

Part 3: Applicant Eligibility Criteria for Communication Aids

300 Basic Communication Aids Requirements

The Applicant must meet the eligibility criteria for Program benefits. See ADP Manual: Policy 300, Eligibility Criteria for Program Benefits.

The Applicant must have a long-term physical disability and require an augmentative or alternative communication aid for their own personal use to enhance or replace oral and/or written communication to perform common everyday tasks/Activities of Daily Living in a variety of settings, for six (6) months or longer.

Funding is provided for the communication aid(s) that meets the Applicant's basic face-to-face and/or written communication needs as determined through an assessment performed by the ADP individual Authorizer or AAC team at the AAC Clinic, taking into consideration the environments where the Applicant normally functions.

305 Individual Identified Ineligible by the Authorizer

An Application for Funding Communication Aids form must not be submitted to the Program if, after assessing the communication

requirements of the Applicant, the Authorizer confirms that individual does not meet the ADP eligibility criteria.

310 Applicant Identified as Ineligible by ADP

An Applicant may be deemed ineligible if the criteria for their access to the Program are not met or where information supplied in connection with an Application Form is insufficient, incomplete and/or inaccurate.

In cases of denial, the Applicant and the Vendor will be advised of the reason.

Confirmation of Eligibility Criteria for Devices Required

4

Part 4: Confirmation of Eligibility for Devices Required

400 Applicant Eligibility for Face-to-Face Communication Aids

Applicants must have a long-term physical disability that requires an augmentative or alternative communication aid to enhance or replace face-to-face (verbal) communication required to perform Activities of Daily Living for a period of (6) six months or longer. **For examples of Activities of Daily Living see this Manual, Policy 110, Definitions.**

The face-to-face communication aid authorized by the Authorizer must be a cost-effective solution for meeting the Applicant's face-to-face communication needs.

405 Applicant Eligibility for Writing Aids

Applicants must have a long-term physical disability that precludes written communication without the use of specialized equipment.

Applicants must require an augmentative or alternative communication aid to enhance or replace written output required to perform Activities of Daily Living for a period of six (6) months or longer.

The interpretation of personal written communication includes a person's regular and ongoing needs to independently perform writing related tasks.

Applicants must be able to generate basic ideas independently using a formal symbolic representational system.

Applicants must be able to communicate basic ideas using a formal symbolic representational system independently and spontaneously.

Applicants must have a demonstrated ability to self-generate text or there must be a demonstrated need and potential to transfer ideas to written form.

Note: Applies to young, severely physically challenged children at the kindergarten level or younger who can recognize letters, and communicate basic ideas.

The symbol system used for written communication cannot be adequately generated through conventional pen and paper to meet one's Activities of Daily Living using traditional or non-traditional orthography.

Through the assessment process, the need for the writing system must be documented by stating specifically what written tasks need to be accomplished, how often those tasks must be performed and how the writing aid will improve quantity, quality, legibility, sustainability and/or rate of output.

The writing aid authorized by the Authorizer must be a cost-effective solution for meeting the Applicant's writing needs.

The type of writing aid is based on considerations of physical disability, and personal writing needs in the environment(s) in which the individual ordinarily functions.

410 Applicant Eligibility for an Integrated System

An integrated system is primarily a face-to-face communication aid (SGD/VOCA) with the additional capability for writing.

An integrated system can be authorized when it provides a unique and necessary access method not found in any other face-to-face or writing aid listed in the Product Manuals.

When an integrated system is authorized for an Applicant, the individual is not eligible for funding towards any other face-to-face communication aid or writing aid, unless otherwise specified. **Refer to this Manual, Policy 600, Number of Devices Funded and Funding Periods.**

415 Facilitator

To ensure effective use of Authorized Devices, a facilitator (support person) in the Client's environment is important. Where possible, a facilitator should be identified and involved in the ongoing support of the user and their Device(s). The facilitator may be a family member, trained volunteer, group home counsellor, neighbour or friend.

Centralized Equipment Pool for Communication Aids

5

Part 5: Centralized Equipment Pool for Communication Aids

500 The Centralized Equipment Pool

The Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP) offers communication equipment (Devices) for lease, as part of the ADP AAC service delivery model in Ontario. It provides timely, cost effective, distribution and support for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) technologies to eligible clients and ensures that costly equipment is maintained and reused/recycled.

The CEP provides loan equipment to Authorizers and AAC training and support to clinicians.

505 Leasing Criteria for Face-to-Face Communication Aids

Leasing of a face-to-face communication aid is appropriate when one of the following conditions exists:

A high technology Speech Generating Device (SGD) is required to achieve maximum functional communication;

or

The Applicant's communication needs are not, in the best judgment of the AAC team, considered to be stable for at least one (1) year from the time of

the assessment. This may be the case for those individuals who have changing medical conditions or are diagnosed with a degenerative disorder.

510 Leasing Criteria for Writing Aids

Writing aids are appropriate for lease if the medical prognosis suggests that a Client's condition will change within one (1) year and hence the technology supporting their ability to write may change as well. If the Client has a known physical deteriorating condition, equipment is offered for lease.

or

The writing system requires specialized access through hardware and/or software, and therefore mandates the specialized support, maintenance and follow-up of the assessment or leasing system.

or

The Client uses a symbol system other than standard orthography, which requires specialized support.

515 Leasing Criteria for Integrated Systems

Leasing of an integrated system is appropriate when the individual uses the same system for face-to-face communication as well as for writing. The writing system requires specialized access through hardware and/or software, and therefore mandates the specialized support, maintenance and follow-up of the assessment or leasing system.

520 Preliminary Lease

When a Client begins to lease their equipment through the CEP, the individual begins with a preliminary lease. The purpose of the preliminary lease is to confirm that the equipment prescribed at the time of the clinical assessment is in fact meeting the Client's needs by providing the individual an opportunity to use the equipment in the environment(s) in which the individual typically functions. During this time period, the team at the AAC Clinic, the Client and facilitator work together. If changes to the communication aid (system) are required, then it is done during this period. If no change is required, then the preliminary lease is converted to a regular lease.

Clients are responsible for the lease fees.

525 Changes to Leases

For Devices that cost \$500 or more (that is, the original purchase cost of the Device is \$500 or more), the Authorizer is required to complete a new Application Form and submit it to the Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP). Ensure to write the claim number for the original lease on the new Application Form and state the nature of the change, e.g. lease addition, lease replacement, etc. This is for cross-reference purposes to ensure that ADP's records are up-to-date.

It is important to check the appropriate box in the "Reason for Application" section of the new Application Form, and the appropriate box in the "Replacement Communication Aid(s) Required Due To" section. If not self-explanatory, provide a written explanation for the change. This is not a special authorization request, but a record of explanation for the change.

Note: ADP does not provide funding for upgrades or backups and therefore will not accept any leases or lease changes for these reasons.

530 Lease Buy-out

If agreed by the Client/Agent and AAC Clinic, a lease may be transformed into a purchase.

If no system modifications have been required for a period of five (5) years, the leased equipment transfers to client ownership. Clients may see a final billing (buyout) as a result of equipment add-ons to the primary device leased less than five (5) years. The billing/buyout will list equipment at a depreciated cost calculated by the number of outstanding months remaining in the lease.

If no system modifications have been required or are expected to be necessary before five years, then the Client is given the option to purchase the system. Clients will be offered their leased equipment at a depreciated rate as determined by the CEP. The Client makes their payment to the CEP.

ADP determines the annual lease rate and maximum amount that CEP may bill a client.

535 Annual Maintenance and Administration (M/A) Fees

AAC Clinics may submit to the ADP for maintenance and administration fees annually. The fees are based on the number of Clients with active leases

from October 1 to September 30 and calculated by the number of active leasing Clients on the CEP clinic caseload. Clinics are notified each year by the Program about submitting and processing the maintenance and administration fees.

Device Eligibility



Part 6: Device Eligibility

600 Number of Devices Funded and Funding Periods

For eligible Applicants, funding will be provided for one Device per function. Funding is not provided for duplicate Devices or two Devices having the same essential function.

Exceptions

If required, a quick messaging device or communication board may be authorized in addition to a "high tech" SGD/VOCA or an integrated system.

If required, a voice amplifier or an electrolarynx may be authorized in addition to voice restoration & speaking valves.

If required, one simple switch and one highly complex switch may be authorized.

Designated Funding Periods

The designated funding period identifies how long the communication aid should, in most cases, remain in good repair under normal use. The Program does not automatically provide funding towards a replacement communication aid at the end of the designated funding period.

The following are the designated funding periods.

Equipment Type - Individual Authorizers	Designated Funding Period in Years
electrolarynges	3
voice amplifiers	3
voice restoration & speaking valves	3
quick messaging device	3
simple speech generating device- SGD/VOCA	5
display making software	5
key guards for simple SGD/VOCA	5
carrying cases for simple SGD/VO	5
simple writing aids	5
key guards for simple writing aids	5
carrying cases for simple writing aids	5
simple non-computerized pointers	1
simple switches	1
simple mounting systems for Device	3
simple mounting systems for access hardware	3

Equipment Type – Clinics	Designated Funding Period in Years
communication display boards	0.5
speech generating device (SGD/VOCA	5
key guards for SGD/VOCA	5
carrying cases for SGD/VOCA	5
SGD/VOCA software	5
SGD/VOCA access hardware	5
integrated systems	5
writing aids – stationary computers	5
writing aids – portable computers	5
key guards for writing aids	5
carrying cases for writing aids	5
adaptive word processing software	5

Equipment Type – Clinics	Designated Funding Period in Years
writing aid access software	5
writing aid access software – mouse	5
writing aid access software – keyboard and mouse	5
writing aid access hardware	5
keyboards	5
mouse alternatives	5
non-computerized pointers	1
switches	1
mounting systems for Devices	3
mounting systems for access hardware	3
wheelchair accessories for communication aids	5
wheelchair control units (communication aids)	5
set-up	5
shipping and handling	5

605 Requests for a Replacement Device

The Program may provide funding during or following the designated funding period for a new communication aid under certain circumstances.

Refer to Policies and Procedures Manual for the Assistive Devices Program, Policy 220, Replacement of Funded Devices.

Funding and Payment



Part 7: Funding and Payment

700 Policies

No payment of an approved Device shall be made to anyone other than a Vendor, unless otherwise specified. Lists of Vendors in specific geographic areas can be obtained from the ADP website.

705 Funding Amount for ADP Clients

For eligible Clients, the ADP will pay 75 percent (75%) of the Approved Price for the communication aids listed in the Product Manuals, except for voice restoration & speaking valves, where the ADP pays 75 percent (75%) of the Vendor's price up to a maximum contribution.

Vendors may not charge the Client more than the ADP price for the Authorized Device. Vendors invoice the ADP for 75 percent of the Approved Price, with the exception of voice restoration & speaking valves where the Vendor invoices the ADP for 75 percent of the Vendor's price up to a maximum contribution. Invoices will not be paid where the cost of the Authorized Device exceeds the Approved Price.

The Vendor may charge less than the Approved Price for the Authorized Device. Should the Vendor charge less than the Approved Price for the Authorized Device, then the Vendor must adjust both the ADP portion (75 percent) and the Client portion (25 percent) accordingly.

710 Funding for Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS) Benefits Recipients

Co-payment for Clients receiving social assistance benefits:

- Ontario Works (OW)
- Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)
- Assistance to Children with Severe Disabilities (ACSD)

For Clients receiving social assistance benefits through OW, ODSP or ACSD as of the date reviewed and approved by an Authorizer, ADP will pay 100 percent (100%) of the ADP Approved Price for Devices listed in the Product Manual, except voice restoration & speaking valves. For voice restoration & speaking valves ADP will pay 100 percent (100%) of the vendor's price up to a maximum contribution.

715 Delivery of Device

The Vendor will provide the Authorized Device together with a fully itemized invoice to the Client, advise the Client regarding the warranty and after- purchase services offered, and provide a copy of the manufacturer's warranty and user manual for the Device.

720 Expiry Date of the Application for Funding Communication Aids

The Application Form is considered current and valid for one (1) year from the Authorizer assessment date.

Note: The expiry date will not be extended. After the expiry date, a new assessment must be completed and a new Application Form must be submitted to the Program.

725 Use of Non-Registered Vendors

Applicants purchasing computers or voice restoration & speaking valves may choose to use a Vendor or any Ontario supplier.

Applicants purchasing high technology equipment (Communication Aids Product Manual – Clinics) may choose to use any Ontario supplier, if there is no Vendor in the Applicant's community (within 100 km).

When purchasing from a supplier in Ontario that is not registered with the ADP, the Applicant is required to:

- Pay the supplier for the full cost of the purchase. The cost of the communication aid cannot be more than the ADP price listed on the Product Manual.

Note: The ADP does not set an Approved Price for voice restoration and speaking valves.

- Provide the completed Application for Funding Communication Aids to:

Ministry of Health
Assistive Devices Program
5700 Yonge St. 7th floor Toronto,
ON, M2M 4K5

The application must be received by the Ministry of Health, Assistive Devices Program within one year from the Authorizer assessment date. Applications received after one year from the Authorizer assessment date are considered staled dated and will not be processed.

When the application has been processed, the Applicant will receive a letter with information about the status of the application and the number that must be used for invoicing purposes.

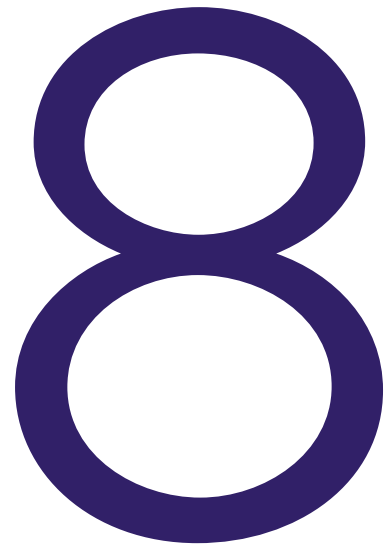
If the application is approved, the Applicant sends the fully itemized invoices together with a copy of the letter to:

Ministry of Health
Financial Management Branch, Program Payments
P.O. Box 48
49 Place D'Armes, 3rd Floor
Kingston, Ontario, K7L 5J3

Note: The invoices must indicate "paid in full".

The Ministry will then reimburse the Client directly for the eligible funding amount.

Invoicing Procedures



Part 8: Invoicing Procedures

800 Invoicing Details

Refer to the ADP Manual, Part 9, Invoice Processing and Payment.

805 ADP Processing Errors

In the event of an ADP processing error being identified following funding approval, the ADP will co-operate with the Authorizer, Vendor and Client to make any necessary corrections.

The Vendor must notify the ADP in writing, of the error(s) along with a request for the approval to be amended.

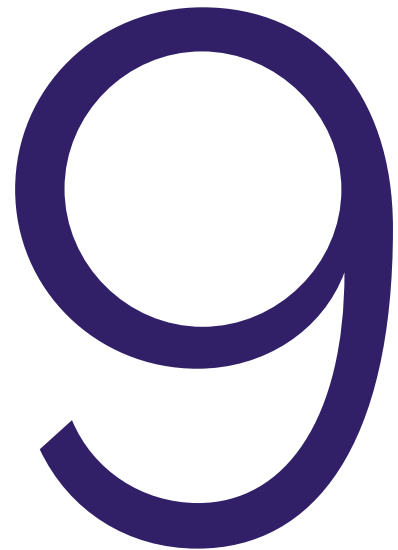
810 Authorizer Prescription Errors & Omissions

In the event of an application/invoice error and/or omission being identified following funding approval, the errors must be clearly corrected along with a request for the approval to be amended.

815 Client Refusal of Delivered Equipment

In the event of Client refusal either at the time of delivery or immediately thereafter, the ADP will co-operate with the Client, Authorizer and Vendor to resolve the situation.

Authorizers



Part 9: Authorizers

900 Authorizer Status

Speech-Language Pathologists and Occupational Therapists wishing to be registered with the Program for communication aids must be registered as Authorizers in the category.

905 Requirements for Registered Authorizer Status

905.01 Individual Authorizer (IA) - Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)

A Speech-Language Pathologist who holds a valid certificate of registration from the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO) and licensed to practice in Ontario, and has completed the IA Online Home Study Course and the one-day IA OT/SLP AAC Workshop administered by the Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP).

905.02 Individual Authorizer (IA) – Occupational Therapist (OT)

An Occupational Therapist who holds a valid certificate of registration from the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (COTO) and licensed to practice in Ontario, and has completed the IA Online Home Study Course and the one- day IA OT/SLP AAC Workshop administered by the Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP).

905.03 **Clinic Authorizer – Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)**

A Speech-Language Pathologist who holds a valid certificate of registration from the College of Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists of Ontario (CASLPO) and licensed to practice in Ontario, and has completed the IA Online Home Study Course and the one-day IA OT/SLP AAC Workshop administered by the Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP), and who is employed at an AAC Clinic.

905.04 **Clinic Authorizer – Occupational Therapist**

An Occupational Therapist who holds a valid certificate of registration from the College of Occupational Therapists of Ontario (COTO) and licensed to practice in Ontario, and has completed the IA Online Home Study Course and the one- day IA OT/SLP AAC Workshop administered by the Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP), and who is employed at an AAC Clinic.

910 **General Authorizer Policies**

Detailed information about Authorizer registration, policies and procedures, are found in the **ADP Manual, Part 4, General Authorizer and Vendor Policies and Part 5, Authorizers**.

915 **Individual Authorizers**

Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) registered as communication aids Authorizers and who work as Individual Authorizers may authorize face-to-face Communication Aids from the Product Manual - Individual Authorizers. They include:

- electrolarynges

- voice amplifiers
- voice restoration & speaking valves
- quick messaging devices
- display making software
- simple speech generating devices SGDs/VOCAs
- key guards for simple SGDs/VOCAs
- carrying cases for simple SGDs/VOCAs

Occupational Therapists (OTs) registered as Communication Aids Authorizers, and who work as Individual Authorizers may authorize writing aids from the Product Manual - Individual Authorizers. They include:

- simple writing aids
- key guards for simple writing aids
- carrying cases for simple writing aids
- simple non-computerized pointers
- simple switches
- simple mounting systems for Devices
- simple mounting systems for access hardware

920 General Level Clinic Authorizers

General Level Clinic Authorizers are Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) or Occupational Therapists (OTs) registered as communication aids Authorizers and who are part of a General Level AAC Service and work at ADP designated General Level Clinics.

General Level Clinic Authorizers may authorize the communication aids as noted above and all communication aids from the Product Manual – Clinics (e.g. Speech Generating Devices (SGDs) and word processing software) provided that the Client is accessing the communication aid(s) directly.

Exception: mounting systems – only off-the-shelf mounting may be authorized. Custom-fabricated mounting cannot be authorized.

Direct access is defined as pointing with a hand (upper extremity) or feet (lower extremity) or manual head pointer to activate the Device as is, with no adaptations.

Direct access includes:

- switch access to a single message Device
- adaptive word processing software (e.g. Clicker 4, Write OutLoud, CoWriter, Writing with Symbols, Kurzweil 3000 Learn Station (read-only version) and Qualiworld.)
- key guards
- plug and play keyboards and mice for writing (i.e. Intellikeys with standard overlays, off the shelf track ball)

Direct access is not:

- scanning (e.g. step, automatic, directional) (the Device may have the capability to scan. However, that feature of the Device is not required for the Client)
- scanning electronic head pointing
- electronic wheelchair control
- eye gaze technology
- speech recognition technology

- Morse code
- touch screens
- hardware modifications

925 Expanded Level Clinic Authorizers

Expanded Level Clinic Authorizers are Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) or Occupational Therapists (OTs) registered as communication aids Authorizers, who are part of an expanded Level AAC Service and work at ADP designated Expanded Level Clinics. They may authorize from amongst all communication aids in the Product Manual - Individual Authorizers and the Product Manual – Clinics.

Applicants who require alternative access hardware and software must be assessed at an ADP designated expanded level AAC Clinic.

Vendors

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Part 10: Vendors

1000 Vendor Status

Vendors wishing to submit a request for funding to the Ministry for communication aids must be registered as Vendors in the Device category.

Vendors applying for registration status must complete the Vendor Application package for communication aids and return it to the Program together with the required documentation/attachments.

Vendors applying for registration status must be established communication aids retailers and outline their training (including manufacturer training) and experience working with communication aids and communication aids users.

1005 Staffing Requirements for Vendors

All Vendors must employ individuals who:

- are knowledgeable about communication aids;
- have experience working with communication aids users; and
- can provide instruction/training on the use, care and maintenance of communications aids, and after-purchase care service such as troubleshooting and repairs.

Vendors of high technology communication aids must employ individuals who, in addition to the above requirements, are:

- knowledgeable about specialized hardware and software;

- experienced in installing specialized communication hardware and software; and
- able to provide technical support to Clients.

1010 General Vendor Policies

Detailed information about Vendor registration and policies and procedures is found in the ADP Manual in the following areas:

- Part 4, General Authorizer and Vendor Policies;
- Part 6, Vendors;
- Part 7, Personal Health Information, and
- Part 9, Invoice Processing and Payment.

Note in Particular:

- i. Policy 405, Conflict of Interest
- ii. Policy 415, Advertising
- iii. Policy 420, Referrals
- iv. Policy 600, Applying for Registration – New Vendor
- v. Policy 601, Applying for Registration – Additional Vendor Location or Additional Category of Devices
- vi. Policy 602, Maintaining Registration as a Vendor
- vii. Policy 615, Relationships of Hospitals and Vendors
- viii. Policy 620, Vendors Sharing Proceeds with Long-Term Care Homes
- ix. Policy 640, Informing Persons of the Program

- x. Policy 660, Refusal to Supply for Safety Reasons
- xi. Policy 665, Warranties of Purchased Devices
- xii. Policy 670, Repairs of Purchased Devices
- xiii. Policy 700, Protection of Personal and Personal Health information
- xiv. Policy 905, Rebates

The ADP Manual is available at:

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/assistive-devices-program-health-care-professionals/policies-procedures-administration-and>

Listing New Communication Aids for Coverage

11

Part 11: Listing New Communication Aids for Coverage

1100 Listing New Communication Aids

A new communication aid must be listed by the Program on the Product Manual before it can be authorized by an Authorizer, sold by a Vendor or leased through the Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP).

The AAC Clinic will contact the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor if the AAC Clinic identifies a communication aid that fits within the mandate of the Program and the ADP Communication Aids category.

If the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor agrees to have the communication aid evaluated for funding consideration by the Program, then the AAC Clinic contacts the CEP. The CEP coordinates the evaluation process with the AAC Clinics and Equipment Evaluation Group (EEG).

The EEG first determines if the communication aid fits within the mandate of the Program and ADP Communication Aids category.

If the EEG determines that the communication aid does not fit within the current mandate of the Program and Communication Aids category, then the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor is notified in writing, that the product will not be evaluated.

Where a communication aid does fit within the mandate of the Program and Communication Aids category, the EEG Chair, in conjunction with the Program, will notify the CEP that the product can proceed to evaluation.

The CEP will request from the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor that a market-ready version of the communication aid be supplied for a specified period of time to the CEP for evaluation by two AAC Clinics.

Note: The EEG does not evaluate pre-production models of communication aids or demonstration packages. The communication aids must be commercially available at the time of the request for evaluation is made.

One evaluator from two AAC Clinics are then selected to evaluate the communication aid, checking for ease of use, performance, safety, durability, reliability, warranties, etc.

The communication aid used during the evaluation is then returned to the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor by the CEP at the manufacturer's, distributor's or Vendor's expense.

Two evaluations are documented in writing, as is the price and the Vendor.

The evaluations are reviewed at the next EEG meeting and a written recommendation regarding listing the communication aid is made to the Program.

Note: The EEG may request additional information about, or modifications to, the communication aid from the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor, pending a recommendation to the ADP.

The manufacturer, distributor or Vendor is provided with an evaluation summary, highlighting the results of the evaluation.

The EEG recommendations are reviewed by the Program and a decision is made regarding listing the communication aid in the Product Manual.

Note: The manufacturer is requested to provide the ADP with the manufacturer's cost to Vendor or the wholesale price for the communication aid.

When the Program approves the communication aid to be listed, an ADP code and the Approved Price are assigned. An ADP code is assigned for purchase and another ADP code is assigned for lease, where applicable.

The Program informs the CEP regarding the decision to list the communication aid and the CEP notifies the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor of the decision. Where the decision is made to list the communication aid, the CEP also provides the manufacturer, distributor or Vendor with the ADP code(s), Approved Price and effective date that the communication aid may be authorized by the Authorizers.

Contact Information

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Part 12: Contact Information

1200 Program Addresses

1200.01 Assistive Devices Program

Assistive Devices Program
Ministry of Health
5700 Yonge Street, 7th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M2M 4K5

Email: adp@ontario.ca

Telephone: Greater Toronto Area (416) 327-8804

Toll free: 1 (800) 268-6021

TTY: 1 (800) 387-5559

Fax: (416) 327-8192

Public Website:

<http://www.ontario.ca/page/assistive-devices-program>

Health Professionals Website:

<https://www.ontario.ca/document/assistive-devices-program-health-care-professionals>

1200.02 Financial Management Branch

Ministry of Health

Financial Management Branch, Program Payments Unit

P.O. Box 48

49 Place D'Armes, 3rd Floor

Kingston, Ontario K7L 5J3

Telephone: In Kingston (613) 548-6477

Toll free: 1 (800) 267-9458

Fax: (613) 547-1963