Liberator's Tips for High-Cost Assistive Technology (AT) Applications

These suggestions are based on feedback from clinicians and have not been provided by the NDIA. When applying for funding, please refer to the NDIS website for the most up to date information. It may be advisable to contact the AAC user's NDIS representatives to check what documentation they require.

General tips for writing AT applications

Know your audience

- The person reading the AT application may not be a speech pathologist or allied health professional. Your writing should be aimed at someone who does not have allied health knowledge.
- Avoid using jargon, acronyms, or abbreviations. If they are being used be sure to specify them.
- Where possible, give specific examples of successes or challenges that demonstrate the AAC user's strengths and needs, giving the reader a clear picture of why the prescribed AT is reasonable and necessary.
- It is important to remember that the NDIS is an insurance model funding scheme so different language and terminology is required. This means that you may need to deviate from a strengths-based approach and focus on the impacts of disability including activity limitations and participation restrictions. Please ensure you prepare the AAC user and their support network for this.

Be evidence based

- Refer to specific data collected during the trial. If you used the Data Logging feature on the trial device, you can upload and analyse the data through Realize Language. Reports from Realize Language can be included as appendices to the AT application. Visit our website for more information on the Realize Language tool.
- Make sure you trial the device across environments. Consider environments in which the AAC user is limited in their participation due to communication barriers. Specify these environments and note progress observed in each.
- Refer to research or articles throughout that support the request for proposed AT. A useful document for this is the AT References for SGDs and Communication.

Use NDIS terms

- Describe the AAC user's permanent impairment(s) and need for AT in relation to limitations to their participation in activities. Note the consequent impact on the AAC user's engagement in daily, community and where appropriate, economic life. Note the impact on the AAC user's participation if they are unable to access appropriate AT.
- Read and specifically address the content prompts provided in each section of the AT template.

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Be familiar with the Reasonable and Necessary Supports (Section 34 of the NDIS Act 2013)

- For a request to be approved by the NDIS it must meet ALL of the criteria outlined in the National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013, Section 34.
- Refer to the Reasonable and Necessary supports throughout the AT application and use the terms outlined, e.g., "represents value for money", "supports social/economic participation", "increases independence", "support is effective and aligned with current good practice".

Be familiar with the AT risk levels & the Assistive Technology and Consumables Code

- Know what level of risk the AT being requested fits under. This will assist in determining the evidence that advisor characteristics and type of assessment required (see Assistive technology product risk table).
- Know what support item is being requested and refer specifically to it, e.g., dynamic display dialogue unit, eye gaze system, keyguard (see below).

Support Item in AT and Consumables Code Guide	Support Item Ref No.	Description in AT and Consumables Code Guide	Example
Software and Related Items to Add Advanced Communication Functionality to Computer/ Tablet/ Smartphone	05_222102111 _0124_1_2	Software to convert a tablet or computer device to a communication device.	Communication apps and systems, e.g., LAMP WFL, Unity, WordPower
Communication – Face to Face - Electronic	05_221315811 _0124_1_2	Electronic communication device with customisable and changing screens which allows a highly customised voice output generation and may include multiple input methods (Speech Generating Devices/Visual Technology/ Communication Devices).	Accent 800/1000/1400 Liberator Rugged 8/10 NovaChat 8/10
Complex Electronic Access Method Using Eye or EMG/neural Control.	05_241327891 _0124_1_2	Hardware and software that directs or selects inputs by visual gaze or neural/neuromuscular action to activate a computer or face to face communication device.	Accent 1000 with Look Accent 1400 with Look 2 Accent 1000/1400 with NuPoint
Communication and Information – Computer interfaces	05_221300111 _0103_1_2	Includes keyboards, trackballs, text to speech and other peripherals and tools (Reading/Writing/Input/Output Items).	Keyguard Touchguide

Source: Assistive Technology, Home Modifications and Consumables Code Guide 2022-23 (PDF 1MB), accessed through the NDIS website *https://www.ndis.gov.au/providers/pricing-arrangements/pricing-arrangements-archive*.

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Tips for filling out the General Assistive Technology Assessment Template (High-Cost AT)

Be sure to check you are using the latest version of the form.

Part 2 – Assessment of participant needs

2.1 Background - General

Refer to the Participation Model/International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) within this section. Discuss the following:

- Diagnosis and any coexisting conditions
- Relevant medical history
- Living situation and family/social supports
- Disability, particularly relating to the AAC communicator's ability to communicate and the impact this has on their participation in activities expected for their age
- Person-centred information including daily activities, recreational activities, interests, etc.
- Day-to-day activities and the environments these are in, e.g., preschool, school, day services, employment, local events, community access
- Specific levels of support required to complete tasks (include examples)
- Upcoming life transitions (transition to/from school, to supported living arrangement)

2.2 Participant goals

List relevant goals from the AAC user's NDIS plan and for each goal, specify how AT will help the AAC user achieve that goal. You should also specify your speech pathology goals, remembering to ensure that goals are functional and focus on participation and independence. You may wish to use an assessment such as the Individually Prioritised Problem Assessment (IPPA) to support this.

2.3 Functional assessment

Specify functional limitations related to the AAC user's disability and summarise relevant assessments.

Functional limitation	Details
Physical	- Consider how the AAC communicator will access AT commenting on their fine motor skills (which could impact the size of screen, grid size, the need for a keyguard/touchguide or other alternative access), and gross motor skills (which could impact positioning, ability to carry device, the need for mounting systems). - List any current or future non-communication AT, e.g., mobility aids, seating requirements, self-care equipment. Listing these will assist in building a picture of the AAC communicator's physical needs.

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Sensory	• Discuss the AAC communicator's vision and hearing and comment on whether these may impact on device features including screen size, volume, positioning, auditory prompts, high-contrast symbols, etc. • Discuss the AAC communicator's sensory presentation and how this impacts their communication.
Communication	• Refer to speech pathology assessment findings which could include observations and formal assessments regarding receptive & expressive language, pragmatics, and speech. • Refer to specific assessment tools used to assess the AAC communicator's skills and choose appropriate AT. For example, IPPA, SETT, AAC Profile, Likert Rating Scales, Pragmatics Profile, etc. For more information about these assessments visit the Liberator website https://liberator.net.au/support/education/aac/assessment-evaluation • Focus on FUNCTION. How does your client communicate day to day? What are the barriers? Are they limited in the pragmatic functions they can express? • Outline what communicative functions the AAC communicator can and cannot meaningfully communicate and how the AAC communicator is currently expressing them. Make note of any that are non-symbolic or cannot be recognised by people easily. Include examples, e.g., *when XX wants help, she throws/hits item, screams, hits self/others…* • Detail any missed opportunities that are available for neurotypical peers/that are available for people who can self-regulate/that are available for individuals who do not have additional physical needs. Help the reader see the impact of your participant's communication difficulties on their independence and participation in their community. • Include examples of communication skills in more than just one environmental setting. • Provide examples of how unintelligibility impacts the individual's function and participation across different environments.
Cognitive	• Refer to any diagnoses and resulting categorisation such as mild, moderate, severe, or profound. You can also include important information from assessments/reports completed by other professionals. • Discuss skills/difficulties in areas which will impact the choice of vocabulary system for the AAC communicator, e.g., attention, working memory, literacy, symbol recognition, and categorisation.
Behavioural	• Highlight that behaviours of concern are a result of communication breakdown. Behaviour is communication.

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	• Provide the antecedent (trigger), resulting behaviour and perceived or actual consequences to the AAC communicator and those around them physically, emotionally, and socially.

2.4 Participant's weight & height

Make sure to include these details. They are relevant in terms of the appropriateness of the size & weight of the proposed AT for the AAC user.

2.5 Current AT use

Describe previous AAC history and how it did/did not meet the AAC user's communication needs. Highlight multi-model communication, and the range of communication tools that the AAC user will require for effective communication now and into the future. Include information on:

- the type of AT – information on model, age, history of repair and ongoing suitability
  - o If the AAC user does not have current AT, comment on how this is preventing them in achieving their goals.
  - o If the AAC user is using AT that is not aiding them in achieving their goals, comment on why, what the limitations are, list difficulties with current AT and justify the need to request additional AT. Consider unaided approaches such as Key Word Sign, low technology supports such as PODD books or the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS), single message switches and high technology options including dynamic devices (dedicated/non dedicated) as examples of current AT.
  - o If the AAC user is requesting a like for like replacement for current AT, include documentation provided from the supplier confirming that it is beyond repair/why it needs replacing, confirm existing use of the device and information to support no significant change in requiring the proposed AT.
- the level of independence or support the AAC user will need to use the AT
  - o Comment on the level of independence and support that the AAC user requires to use the current AT. Comment on any difference with the level of independence or support required for the proposed AT.
- how the AAC user's current AT will work together with the AT being assessed
  - o Consider and list the use of any AT that is not communication related including mobility aids, seating requirements, self care equipment. Listing these will assist in building a picture of the AAC user's physical needs.
- any changes needed to the AAC user's environment, transport, or other AT
  - o Comment on considerations if mounting of the proposed AT is required.

PART 3 – Recommendations and evidence of clinical/practical reasoning

3.1 Details of the recommendation AT solution

Generate a quote directly from the Liberator website, www.liberator.net.au/products/get-a-quote. Include the proposed AT in addition to any accessories required, (e.g., keyguard, screen protector, carry strap, bag, etc).

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3.2 Included mainstream items

Liberator's dedicated communication devices are not designed for the mainstream market. Go to section 3.3.

3.3 AT trial

3.3.1 AT trial outcome

The NDIS expects valid and reliable outcome measures are used for AT trials. Complete the table in this section for the proposed AT. Details regarding other options considered/trialled is to be completed in section 3.4 Evaluation of other options.

If requesting, for example eye gaze technology, discussion must be included to demonstrate that other access methods (direct access assisted by a keyguard, switching, and head pointing) are not appropriate.

Location(s) of trial	List all environments in which the trial device was used e.g. home, clinic room, playground, library, bowling, etc. Note where different communication partners were involved in different locations.
Duration of trial	Include dates of the trial.

Trial details and outcomes measured	Explain the evidence for the recommended option as the most suitable/ appropriate solution which will facilitate achievement of the AAC user's goals, compared to other options trialled.
	
	• Include clear goals for the AT trial and evidence of the AAC communicator's progress in achieving them. We recommend using Janice Light's AAC Competencies and the Goal Attainment Scale (GAS) Tracker to structure and report on goals. Include the tracker in this section or as an appendix and interpret the results. We recommend having approximately three goals for a trial and ensuring at least one of those goals is operational/strategic.
	• Discuss communication competences, for example:
	   ○ Operational competence
	     ▪ *XX began to carry the device with them between rooms in their home.*
	     ▪ *XX used the CLEAR button and HOME button appropriately when hitting a button by mistake.*
	   ○ Strategic competence
	     ▪ *XX began to look to the device to communicate. For example…*
	     ▪ *XX was observed to experience success using the device with both familiar and unfamiliar communication partners. For example…*
	     ▪ *XX navigated LAMP WFL to locate frequently used vocabulary including food items, and motivating activities including games.*
	   ○ Social/functional/linguistic competence
	     ▪ *XX answered yes/no questions with the device.*
	     ▪ *XX directed communication partners with the device ("come") rather than pulling or hitting them.*

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- *XX made choices when presented with a desired and undesired option.*
- *XX requested items ("want") with the device.*
- *XX used some descriptors, e.g., "hot".*

- Discuss functional outcomes which may include the use of the IPPA (Individually Prioritised Problem Assessment) to indicate how the recommended AT made a positive difference, as well as discussion of:
  - How goals and outcomes link back to the AAC communicator's NDIS goals.
  - The functional impact the device had on the AAC communicator's participation in daily activities and interests, and how it will support participation in school/ home/ day programs/ community. Discuss observations with AT compared to without AT.
  - The functional impact the device had on the AAC communicator's independence, giving clear examples of activities or interactions that were previously difficult for the AAC communicator to engage in and how the AT allowed them to increase their independence in these interactions during the trial.
  - Environments, times of day and activities that the device will be used in. For most AAC communicators, this would be continuously throughout the day as it is their method of communication, e.g. *The device will be used across environments throughout the day as it is the individual's voice.*
  - Justification from various forms of data collected across environments, and with different communication partners, e.g., trial diary, GAS goal tracker, rating scales, self-rating forms, tables/graphs/figures from Realize Language with Data Logging, etc.
- Discuss the AAC Communicator's response to the device and system, including:
  - The AAC communicator's own assessment about the effectiveness of the recommended AT (where possible).
  - The AAC communicator's engagement and motivation to use the trialled system.
  - Any features of the device and system that helped the AAC communicator to use it, e.g. *The Vocabulary Builder option was active when XX was using the device. This helped XX to learn the sequences for words more efficiently.*
  - Any changes in behaviour, particularly if part of the AAC communicator's profile includes challenging behaviours relating to communication difficulties.
  - If there was a decrease in support required from communication partners for the AAC communicator to engage in particular activities.
- Comment on the support required during the trial. For example, the level of prompting required by communication partners, giving focus to the changes in

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	support required by the speech pathologist/ parent/ support worker for the AAC communicator to engage in tasks and activities. • Identify any barriers that affected the trial outcomes, e.g., client illness, technical difficulties, school disruption.

3.3.2 AT features

It is recommended that you complete the SETT Tool Selection Framework (http://www.joyzabala.com) and include it in your AT application. Include the recommended AT device/system and multiple other devices/systems. This tool gives you a way to succinctly feature match all options considered.

- Demonstrate that cheaper alternatives are not appropriate or recommended. Feature matching data can be used here to highlight those cheaper options, (e.g., iPad) that do not meet the features required for the AAC user. For example, discuss that an iPad can be used for recreational activities which can result in challenging behaviours when switching to use as a communication tool. The AAC user's vocabulary on an iPad does not provide for communicating whilst enjoying a recreational activity (i.e. the individual is unable to comment on something in a YouTube video without access to a communication system.)
- If the AAC user has broken several tablets/electronic devices you should highlight this noting the need for a sturdier device. Reference Liberator's 3-year parts and labour warranty and compare with options for repairs for other trialled/considered but not recommended AT.
- Here is a list of features that you might consider.
  - Hardware
    - Battery life
    - Durability
    - Speakers
    - Dedicated or non dedicated
    - Warranty
    - Environmental control options
    - Computer access & social media integration
  - Software
    - Language representation (alphabet based, single meaning picture system, semantic compaction)
    - Vocabulary file (LAMP WFL Full, Unity 144, CoreScanner)
    - Navigation (category/page based, sequenced)
    - Number of cells/grid size
  - Access
    - Direct or indirect
    - Specify method of access if indirect

3.3.3 AT experience

If you are requesting 'like for like' replacement AT provide details of the current AT including make/model, features, age, AAC user's use & independence with the current AT, level of support required to use AT and reason for

replacement of AT. If you are requesting an upgraded Liberator device, be sure to include a supporting letter from the technicians at Liberator to justify why the current AT is no longer a suitable option.

If the AAC user has been using another speech generating device, or low technology AT option, provide details of this and justify the need for a new AT solution. Explicitly note how current AT is not allowing the AAC user to achieve their NDIS goals, develop independence, build meaningful relationships and how the current AT will not allow for growth in skills & reduction in support required from communication partners over time.

3.4 Evaluation of other options

This section adds to section 3.3.2, and it is advised that you refer to your SETT Tools Selection Framework to support your evaluation. List alternative AT solutions that were considered and/or trialled below. Justify why they were deemed unsuitable for the AAC user. If you have considered an option but not trialled it, explain why it was not trialled (especially for alternative access options). Ensure to also include any low technology options considered or trialled, using feature matching to highlight why these are unsuitable options for the AAC user.

For trialled options, refer to the table completed for the recommended option and structure similarly to include discussion of trial goals, AAC user's tolerance, functional outcomes.

Option 1: Considered/Trialled	If trialled, also detail the location of the trial and duration of the trial.
Reasons it is considered not suitable	- Summarise the details of the SETT Tool Selection Framework - Use similar structure to the recommended AT discussion in order to detail trial outcomes (GAS goals, AAC competencies), AAC user's tolerance (engagement, motivation, etc) and functional outcomes. - It is recommended that you use the same goals when trialling different options so refer to any other data you have collected. - Remember to identify the features required for your AAC user and whether these are present in the considered/trialled options. For example, '*the UNITY vocabulary was identified as a recommended AT feature. This vocabulary is not available on an iPad therefore this hardware was considered but not trialled.", "durability was identified as a key feature required for the recommended AT solution"*.
Estimated Cost	Provide cost with additional accessories including protective case, bag, carry strap, software, technical assistance/care, additional amplification, repairs, postage, etc.
Option 2: Considered/Trialled	As above
Reasons it is considered not suitable	As above
Estimated Cost	As above

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Option 3: Considered/Trialled	As above
Reasons it is considered not suitable	As above
Estimated Cost	As above

3.5 Evidence

3.5.1 Evidence for the recommended option as the most suitable and cost effective support

- Refer again to your feature matching (SETT Tool Selection Framework) for justification.
- Note the repairs & freight for any damage that is included in the comprehensive 3-year Liberator warranty. You may wish to list some of the specifications.

3.5.2 Details of how recommended AT may assist participant to perform specific activities

- Discuss the benefits the proposed AT will provide to the AAC users daily activities and interests.
- Refer to the environments, times of day and activities that the device will be used in. For most device users, this would be continuously throughout the day as it is their method of communication. Continuously, multiple times a day, e.g. *Assistive technology for communication will be used across environments throughout the day as it is the individual's voice.* If you used the Data Logging feature during the trial, draw on the data captured to support use of the AT throughout the day, across environments, with different communication partners.
- Discuss the positive effect of having a communication system and how it will support participation in school/home/day program/community. Link this back to the AAC user's NDIS goals.
- Provide information about your client's participation in social activities and/or employment with and without the AT.

3.5.3 changes to other supports that may be required (reduction or addition)

- Note how the proposed AT will reduce the level of support required for daily activities. Be clear about these changes in terms of the impacts on the AAC user's independence, any behavioural changes/increased enjoyment observed during the trial, feedback from communication partner's and support staff.
- Draw a clear picture if the AT is likely to reduce informal support needs.

3.5.4 with regard to best practice, what evidence indicates the proposed AT will be/likely to be effective and beneficial for the participant

- Refer to the literature regarding best practice and possible outcomes for the AAC user (AT References for SGDs and Communication)
- Support for the requested technology should be strong. Consider existing research, your professional experience, the AAC user's experience with technology.
  - Refer to research for people with severe communication impairment and the requirement for AAC. Consult the Speech Pathology Australia position statement on AAC.
  - Search for disability specific research for your client. If your AAC user has a specific disability that has research on AAC (e.g., AAC and ASD), then include relevant information on how AAC has been found to support that population.

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3.6 Long term benefit

3.6.1 Describe the long-term benefits of the AT being assessed including anticipated life span and how it allows for accommodation of likely changes to the participant's circumstances, development or function

- Outline the AAC user's current life stage and any upcoming changes such as starting school, finishing school, beginning a work placement.
- Note that you have ensured to apply for a system with a robust vocabulary file and room for growth for support across the AAC user's lifespan as their needs and skills change.
- Consider any foreseeable changes to the AAC user's functional status such as development or deterioration of motor skills or sensory processes. Comment on these where necessary to discuss the need for AT which will allow alternate access methods now or in the future.
- The anticipated lifespan of a device is around 3 years due to the inordinate wear & tear exerted on AAC devices by users. You may wish to comment on some of the factors below where relevant to the AAC user, making it clear to the assessor that the life span of the device can be prolonged with appropriate care. If the AAC user is a particularly 'hard user', comment on this. Some example factors to consider may include:
    - Is the device subjected to massive, repetitive impact hits when an individual with cerebral palsy accesses the touchscreen through spasmodic movements?
    - Is the user autistic (level 3) and have limited expressive language resulting in physical violence (including throwing the device or smashing against a hard surface, or dropping) through communication frustration?
    - Is the device well-looked after by the user's family? Is it kept clean with batteries charged regularly as recommended (not allowed to decay over time, a minimal charge is always maintained, a deep charge is routinely applied)?
    - Is the device used by different users or across different environments like schools & respite houses as well as the home? (entailing many different supporters handling & charging the device)
    - Is Windows shutdown regularly overnight & updates always applied? (if applicable)

3.6.2 Describe how the AT will impact functional status, independence, outcomes over the long term and potentially reduce the cost of funded supports in the long term

- Comment on the possible improvements in function such as communication, independent living skills, cognition, socialising, accessing the community, making friends, wellbeing, decreasing behaviours of concern, reducing carer stress.
- Comment on the future reduction in speech therapy due to the increase in communication skills.
- Comment on the future reduction in behaviour support due to reduced communication frustration.

3.7 Risk assessment

3.7.1 Potential risks/risk mitigation strategies

3.7.2 lower risk options considered

- Comment on 'lower cost' options considered and the implications of time without a device on the AAC user.
- Comment on durability of other options and risk of breakage.

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- Comment again on 3 year parts & labour warranty of Liberator devices allowing for repairs to be done efficiently within 24-48 hours and compare with impacts of time without a device for the AAC user if repairing other AT options.

3.7.3 Potential risks if this AT not provided

Discuss potential risks and functional impact for the AAC user if this AT is not provided. For example, *"without access to appropriate AT, _____ demonstrates behaviours including … resulting in injuries to himself, etc* and/or *without access to appropriate AT, _____ is unable to successfully communicate and express his wants and needs, instead relying on supports to interpret communication and provide for him at all times."*

3.7.4 compliance with relevant AT standards

Yes. All Liberator AAC devices comply with the requirements of the applicable ACMA Standards made under the Radiocommunications Act 1992 and the Telecommunications Act 1997. Liberator is a Responsible Supplier registered with the Australian Communications & Media Authority (ACMA) to affix the RCM (Regulatory Compliance Mark) to all its relevant products.

3.8 Behaviours of concern

3.8.1 Describe any behaviours of concern that may impact safety in relation to the use of this AT

- Discuss behaviour linked to communication difficulties. You can use research in addition to providing examples of behaviour and frustration that the AAC user may demonstrate without access to a comprehensive AT solution.
- Discuss the proposed AT assisting to achieve any behavioural based NDIS goals.
- If the AAC user has a Behaviour Support Plan, make sure to attach this as an appendix.

3.8.2 Could the use of this AT constitute restrictive practice?

- No, the use of a communication device is not a restrictive practice.
- Preventing someone from communicating is a restrictive practice.

3.9 Reasonable expectations of care

- Comment on how the AAC user's family, teachers, support workers, communication partners were able to contribute to the trial.
- Note your collaborative goal setting for trial and resources used (e.g., roles & responsibilities) to ensure that all involved were comfortable with the support required to trial & implement the proposed AT.
- You can include specific feedback from communication partners here.

3.10 Other potential funding sources

- Note if any other funding sources could be used to purchase this AT. This will not be the case for most applications.
- Discuss how the AT is directly related to the AAC user's disability and will be used across several environments (home/school/work/community) and therefore will not be funded by other services.
- Identify other funding sources if they were investigated (e.g., Department of Education, possible charities).

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PART 4 - AT implementation and monitoring

4.1 AT implementation

4.1.1 Support services required

	Detail	Quantity (hrs)
AT set-up & adjustment	• AT assessor to complete the set up and training for use of the AT. Goals will be set with the family and training provided at home (and at school/day program/etc) • AT supplier, Liberator provides 90 mins of set up support for <u>free</u>	
Participant/Carer training	• Speech pathology intervention for a 12 month period to implement the requested AT with AAC user at home/school/day program/community locations • Training for family/carers/teachers/support staff including setting goals, evaluation & monitoring • Eligible travel costs • Unlimited <u>free</u> telephone & email support from Liberator state consultant	30 5 10 0
Ongoing re-assessment & review	The allocated speech pathologist will re-assess the use of the device using the AAC Profile/other outcome measurement tool in 12 months' time	5
Total	Total therapy funding required to implement the proposed AT	50 hours @ $193.99 = $9,699.50

4.1.2 Provide information on how you will measure outcomes, when you will measure outcomes and detail how often and who will review achievements

- Comment on how you will measure the client outcomes once the proposed AT is funded (e.g., continuing outcome measures including Goal Attainment Scale goals, Canadian Occupational Performance Measure)
- Discuss regular analysis using Realize Language feature on the device
- Discuss regular re-assessment using formal tools (e.g., AAC profile)
- Discuss any informal measure you use in practice (e.g., staff interview, regular planning meetings, stakeholder meetings, etc)

4.2 Repairs and maintenance

Repairs and Maintenance (estimated annual cost)	Nothing, provided the device is under warranty. When outside warranty, an allowance of $1,500 per annum should be included in a plan or budget to cover most contingencies. Liberator devices come with a full 3 year parts & labour warranty, including any physical damage even if caused by wilful violence, or liquid ingress, or dust/dirt/sand ingress. The cost of replacement batteries as

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	required during the entire warranty period is also included. Finally, freight to & from Liberator's electronic workshop in Adelaide where all repairs are made, is free via a special Express Australia Post service.
Short term loan/hire device required	Firstly, many faults are fixed during either a phone call or a remote Team Viewer enabled examination of the device. Liberator is sufficiently staffed to allow such calls to be handled immediately in a live, responsive manner. Any devices that need to be shipped free of charge via Express Australia Post to Adelaide for physical repair are turned around within 24-48 hours. Thus, there is scant need for loan devices being supplied in the interim. However, if for whatever reason there is an exceptional need then Liberator will do its utmost to supply a loan device.

4.2.1 Provide details for when maintenance & servicing will be done for AT to remain in good working order and what warranty period apply to this AT

Liberator provides advice as to Windows shutdown & update procedures & battery maintenance best practice. Programming issues, software navigation & basic device operation are dealt with by Liberator State Consultants. Any technical issues, hardware or software, should be directed to Liberator's Technical Workshop in Adelaide by telephoning 08 8211 7766.

See above (4.2.) for warranty details, but on all its voice output AAC devices & accessories, Liberator delivers a comprehensive 3 year warranty, which covers all parts & labour, physical damage, batteries & any freight costs involved.

4.2.2 Who will coordinate set up maintenance/repair arrangements for the AT solution?

Often a AAC user's family will arrange directly with Liberator for a repair, having verified that there is a physical problem rather than a software issue. Yet sometimes the organiser will be a speech pathologist, respite carer of teacher. Any party merely has to telephone Liberator HQ in Adelaide & the process will commence. If necessary, a Return Authorisation Number will be given & the client asked to fill out a simple repair return form. Details to access a free freight return system using Australian Express Post will at that time be provided.

4.3 AT provision

4.3.1 Anticipated time frame from approval to provision

Liberator has the recommended AT in stock. Once approval of funding is received, the AAC user/AAC user's family/carer can contact Liberator directly to provide funding approval details and the device can be dispatched immediately.

4.3.2 Is the participant at risk while waiting for the AT?

- Comment on the risk that what AAC user & communication partners have learnt during trial will need to be relearned if waiting too long for NDIS approval.
- If challenging behaviours are present, detail the risk in terms of damage/injury as long as AAC user is without appropriate AT.

4.3.3 Is a short-term option necessary?

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- Discuss the lack of loan options and the lack of cheaper alternatives to justify why it is important for the AAC user to be able to access an appropriate communication solution as soon as possible.

4.4 Participant agreement

4.4.1 Is the participant/nominee in agreement with this AT request?

The AAC user and/or nominee should be in agreeance with the AT application.

4.4.2 Has a copy of the assessment been given to the participant?

Ensure a copy of the AT application is provided to the AAC user/nominee.

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Useful websites and resources

Liberator website
- Find a consultant https://liberator.net.au/liberator/team-liberator
- Events https://liberator.net.au/training/events
- Resources https://liberator.net.au/support/resources
- NDIS funding https://liberator.net.au/support/funding/ndis
- Generate a quote https://liberator.net.au/products/get-a-quote

NDIS website
- NDIS Operational Guidelines: https://www.ndis.gov.au/about-us/operational-guidelines
- NDIS Act 2013, section 34 regarding Reasonable and Necessary Supports http://www6.austlii.edu.au/cgi-bin/viewdoc/au/legis/cth/consol_act/ndisa2013341/s34.html
- Reasonable and Necessary Supports document -Internal PREVIEW until 12 April- Reasonable and Necessary Supports.pdf
- Reasonable and Necessary Supports - Is the support something we would expect your informal supports to provide? https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/how-ndis-supports-work-menu/reasonable-and-necessary-supports/how-we-work-out-if-support-meets-funding-criteria/does-support-meet-reasonable-and-necessary-criteria/support-something-we-would-expect-your-informal-supports-provide
- Assistive Technology (AT) Operational Guidelines (OG) https://ourguidelines.ndis.gov.au/supports-you-can-access-menu/equipment-and-technology/assistive-technology
- AT Operational Guidelines document OG Assistive Technology 20231220.docx

Other websites
- Summer Foundation: 'Getting the language right' – guide to writing reports for the NDIS https://www.summerfoundation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/getting-the-language-right-web.pdf
- Valid: '10 Steps to Excellent NDIS Therapy Reports' – guide to writing reports for the NDIS: https://www.valid.org.au/sites/default/files/10-steps-to-excellent-National-Disability-Insurance-Scheme-NDIS-therapy-reports-v1.pdf

References
- Light, J., & McNaughton, D. (2014). *Communicative competence for individuals who require augmentative and alternative communication: A new definition for a new era of communication?*. Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 30(1), 1-18.

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