HIGH-TECH AAC

(AUGMENTATIVE AND ALTERNATIVE COMMUNICATION)
DEDICATED SPEECH GENERATING DEVICES

AAC stands for **Augmentative and Alternative Communication** and includes methods to communicate (other than speaking) your needs and wants, share experiences, and participate in social conversation.

IMAGINE

Do you, or someone you know:

Have difficulty being understood due to a communication disability?

Wish it was easier to get your message across?

Need tools to express more in-depth messages withspeech output?

Want help to find and be trained in using a high-techAAC device that fits your needs?

SEEK

To find out more, you can…

Phone **LifeTec on 1300 543 383** to discuss communication options with a health professional.

Schedule an assessment here: https://lifetec.org.au/our-services/referrals/

Use the National Equipment Database at **www.ilcaustralia.org.au** for more information on communication software and devices.

Speak to your Speech Pathologist.

CHOOSE

What can I choose from?
Speech-generating devices are devices that speak a message out loud when you choose it by using symbols, pictures or by writing it. There are many systems or devices with different software and features. It is recommended you trial at least two different options with a Speech Pathologist before choosing the best option for your needs.

'Dedicated' devices are built solely for communication.

'Mainstream' devices are available for anyone to buy and are not made only for AAC (e.g. iPads with AAC apps). For more information on mainstream devices used for AAC, please see our *'High-Tech AAC – Mainstream Devices'* factsheet.

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Some AAC devices can include features like different ways to access computers (or to access emails or Facebook) and ways to control your home environment (e.g. turning on/off T.V., lights, etc.). Dedicated devices can be tailored to meet your needs. There are various software's (i.e. programs or apps) and devices with different features available. Symbols, written words, or photos can be used to represent different words and meanings.

Static Display Devices	These devices use printed pages with symbols (overlays) which are manually added into the device. Each symbol is held in its own cell, with a voice message recorded for each cell. When a cell (symbol) is pressed, the device produces the voice message. These may be good for people who have difficulty moving through pages on a dynamic display (see below), want multiple communication tools, or are still learning basic choice making.
Dynamic Display Devices	Dynamic display devices contain multiple pages giving you access to many different messages or words. Photos, symbols, and/or written words can be used to represent the words you want to use. The display is 'dynamic' because selecting some items can make the device show a new page. Pressing a symbol, photo or word can make the device read it aloud with a voice stored on the device.
Spelling-based Devices	Speech is generated through spelling words via a keyboard. This is known as 'text-to-speech' and involves the person typing the words or sentence/s they want to communicate. This is then produced as a spoken message by the device. The device may be a physical keyboard or one on a screen. These devices help people with reading and writing skills to say what they want, They have different features including word prediction and phrase storage.
Alternative Access Devices	Alternative options can help if you find it difficult to access a keyboard or display screen with your fingers or hand. These options include: switches, joysticks, alternative mouse access (e.g. head mouse), styluses or pointers (e.g. mouth pointer), and eye gaze technology.

☜ **LIVE**

Once you have chosen the speech generating device that best meets your communication needs, LifeTec Speech Pathologists can provide support to achieve maximum success, including:

- Applications for funding of devices
- Assistance with set up and customisation of your speech generating device
- Education and training for you and your communication partners in using the device
- Low-tech AAC supports to use alongside your high-tech speech generating device
- Identification of things that make successful communication difficult and help to find ways to reduce the difficulty