

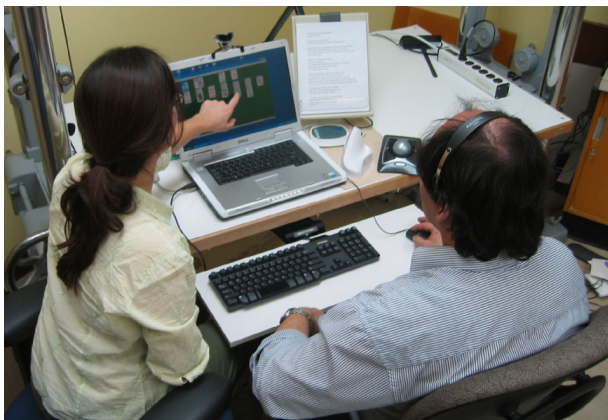
Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC)

831-2526

People who have difficulty speaking may benefit from augmentative or alternative communication methods. A speech-language pathologist will assess communication needs and an occupational therapist will assess physical access needs and recommend equipment to trial. The therapists will also provide training to clients and caregivers on the use of the equipment. A large variety of equipment is available for assessment and trial, including alphabet boards, eye gaze systems, speech generating devices, laptop computers with speech software, voice amplifiers and switches.

Computer Access

787-1757



Individuals with disabilities can use the latest high-tech devices, for both work and leisure, including computers, PDAs, cell phones, and video game systems. The Computer Access Clinic assists clients in finding ways to use these complex devices. A multidisciplinary team, including an Occupational Therapist and a Computer Engineer, work to identify issues and find solutions.

The service maintains a supply of adaptive keyboards, mice, software, and personal electronics. These are available for clients to use in the clinic, or to borrow for trial at home or work. If a commercially available device will not meet the client's needs, the staff can modify a device, create a new device, or create custom designed software.

AT Rental Program

831-2526

A variety of assistive devices including augmentative/alternative communication equipment, switches, environmental controls, and computer access equipment are available to rent through the AT Rental Program. Equipment may be rented at low monthly rates to clients on a short-term basis; long-term rentals may be negotiated in some situations. Rental fees are used to help maintain the program. A rent-to-own option is not available.

Assistive Technology

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

are offered out of Deer Lodge Centre and Health Sciences Centre. To obtain a referral form please call 831-2526

¹ Section 508 of the US Rehabilitation Act, 1973

Assistive Technology

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



“Assistive Technology (AT) is any piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially or off-the-shelf, modified or customized, that increases, maintains or improves the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.”¹



Winnipeg Regional
Health Authority
Caring for Health

Office régional de la
santé de Winnipeg
À l'écoute de notre santé

AT Products and Services:

- Provides clinical assessment and consultation for adult Manitobans with disabilities
- Provides training on the use of AT equipment
- Develops devices
- Is active in education and research

The AT multidisciplinary team works together on many referrals and projects. However, each area brings specific skills and expertise to find solutions for individuals. A brief description of each of the areas of Assistive Technology Products and Services is included below:

Electronics 787-2367

Computer-aided design techniques and microcontroller technology are used to design and construct equipment to help clients gain control over their environments. The Electronics Section staff can modify nurse call systems, apartment intercoms, door openers or locks. They also design environmental controls for accessing appliances such as the telephone, television, VCR, DVDs, lamps and others.

“Assistive Technology strives to maximize capabilities and opportunities for adults who are physically challenged due to injury or disease.”

Automotive 787-2370

Automotive Services can install a variety of modifications to a range of motorized vehicles to enable the driver to control the gas and brake pedals with their hands. A left-foot gas pedal allows the driver to use their left foot rather than their right. Special light-action controls and modified low-effort steering enables quadriplegic drivers to drive independently. Electronic modifications to a vehicle can put the dimmer, wipers, signals, and the horn within easy reach of the driver, while using hand controls.

An Occupational Therapist will assess a client's strength, range of motion, cognitive and perceptual skills before any vehicle modifications take place. This will ensure the changes made will work effectively and safely for the client.



Mechanical 787-2370

Staff members working in a modern, well-equipped machine shop are able to meet the most challenging of needs. Many devices that are not commercially available are custom designed and fabricated. Custom modifications to wheelchairs, scooters, keys, cutlery, appliances and transfer aids are just a few of the many everyday items that are adapted for use in the home. Computers, office and industrial equipment can also be modified for the workplace.

Wheelchair Controls 787-1757

The wheelchair program works to find solutions for people who are not able to drive their power wheelchairs with a regular joystick. A multidisciplinary team including an Occupational Therapist, the Electronics Department and Mechanical Services works with the client. Other healthcare professionals, vendors, and the Manitoba Wheelchair Program may also be consulted to find solutions that keep the client comfortable and mobile. After assessment, joystick modifications or alternative drive controls such as head control, chin control, sip and puff or other switch access methods may be recommended. Interventions can include commercially available components, as well as custom fabrication or modification to mounting hardware, lap trays, drive controls, seating systems, and switches. Wheelchairs can also be custom programmed to suit the individual client's needs.