

# AAC Resources for Local Services

## Start your AAC journey in 12 simple steps

This resource has been developed to support clinicians working in local services. This document will support you to increase knowledge and skills regarding Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) in your area and gives ideas of where to look for information and activities to try.

### Find out about your role in AAC assessment and AAC equipment provision

1. Read our [local AAC services specification](#) resource and the [referral criteria](#) for our service. You can also [contact us](#) if you would like to discuss a specific case or seek general advice.
2. Familiarise yourself with the recent changes to service provision by looking at our [Key Documents on AAC](#). Of particular note, the [AAC Commissioning Guidance Document](#) highlights the role of local services and their CCG's with regards to AAC assessment, provision and funding.
3. Use [IPAACKS](#) to evaluate your AAC knowledge and skills and identify any learning needs.

### Try out and evaluate AAC resources and equipment that you may provide through your service

4. Find and have a go with the paper and power based AAC resources available in your service. Try different access options such as partner assisted scanning, customising an AAC resource and practicing using AAC with a colleague. We have a range of [how to videos](#) and a resource about [paper based AAC](#) which could be used to guide you.
5. Go through our [local services resource pack](#) to look at what other equipment might be appropriate in a local service loan bank. Book on a [Communication Matters roadshow](#) and [contact suppliers](#) to ask about trials, demonstrations and evaluations software/apps.

---

## Investigate the theoretical underpinnings of AAC and AAC assessment

6. Investigate theoretical models to support the AAC assessment and decision-making process. We would initially suggest: Money & Thurman's (1994) **Means Reasons and Opportunities** model; Janice Light and David McNaughton's (2014) **Communicative Competence** model and Sarah Blackstone's **Social Networks Inventory**.
7. Familiarise yourself with formal and online tools to support the assessment of AAC. For further details, attend one of our **training events**, read our **local resource pack** and refer to the list of resources and information provided at the bottom of this resource.
8. Sign up to **Communication Access UK**, Communication Access UK is an initiative developed in partnership by charities and organisations that share a vision to improve the lives of people with communication difficulties. This could be completed individually for your own learning or as a team to receive accreditation as a communication accessible organisation.
9. Sign up to our regular training and **join our mailing list** for training updates. Become an **Elklan** AAC trainer for your area (we run regular courses).
10. Investigate other training opportunities: the **Communication Matters Annual Conference**, roadshows and other events; training by specific AAC suppliers and training advertised in the RCSLT bulletin.

## Learn from others

11. Share knowledge with colleagues in your service and nearby services. This could be through shadowing, joint working, cascading information from training or setting up a peer case discussion group.
12. Join in with AAC networking and CPD activities:
  - Join an **AAC clinical excellence network**.
  - Start up or attending AAC peer supervision with your colleagues or with colleagues in neighbouring areas (**contact us** to be put in touch with others nearby).
  - Join **Communication Matters** and read the CM and AAC journal.
  - Join the Communication Matters AAC forum email list.
  - Get on twitter- try #augcomm or #AAC.
  - Follow news from services and suppliers.
  - Start up or join a local journal club.

And finally - keep up to date with our service by **subscribing to our email newsletter**, **read and subscribe to our blog** or follow us on twitter (<https://twitter.com/BarnsleyAT>).

---

## Further Resources and Information

Please note the information below is not an exhaustive list but suggestions to guide further reading.

### AAC Suppliers:

[www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/suppliers](http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/suppliers)

### Key websites

<a href="http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk">www.communicationmatters.org.uk</a>	Lots of information and resources available. The <b>other ways of speaking booklet</b> provides information regarding AAC, help and support.
<a href="http://praacticalaac.org">http://praacticalaac.org</a>	A useful blog where professionals share information about AAC assessment, implementation strategies, share resources and discuss topics of interest.
<a href="http://www.callscotland.org.uk/home">www.callscotland.org.uk/home</a>	Training and information available. See <b>downloads</b> on the website for useful resources. <b>Introduction to AAC modules</b> available online.
<a href="http://acecentre.org.uk">http://acecentre.org.uk</a>	AAC information and resources. See the <b>Getting started with AAC books</b> for useful advice and resources.
<a href="https://aacmanmet.wordpress.com/">https://aacmanmet.wordpress.com/</a>	2 free e-learning modules to increase knowledge and awareness regarding AAC assessment and intervention.
<a href="https://communication-access.co.uk/">https://communication-access.co.uk/</a>	Communication Access UK is an initiative developed in partnership by charities and organisations that share a vision to improve the lives of people with communication difficulties.

## **Key books**

**Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication.** By Von Tetzchner (2000) Whurr Publishers.

**Communication builders for AAC. Information about the assessment and use of low and high tech communication aids.** By Andrea Kirton, Henrietta McLachlan and Liz Elks (2013). Elklan.

Light, J.C. (1989). **Toward a definition of communicative competence for individuals using augmentative and alternative communication systems.** *Augmentative and Alternative Communication*, 5,4, 137-144.

**Communicative Competence for Individuals Who Use AAC.** By Janice Light (2003). Brookes, Paul H. Publishing Company.

**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).

**Assistive Technology: Matching Device and Consumer for Successful Rehabilitation.** By Marcia J. Scherer (2001). American Psychological Association.

**The Efficacy of Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Toward Evidence-Based Practice.** By Ralph Schlosser (2003). Academic Press.

**Handbook of Augmentative and Alternative Communication.** By Sharon Glennen and Denise C. Decoste (1996). Singular Publishing Group Ltd.

**Social Networks: A Communication Inventory for Individuals with Complex Communication Needs and their Communication Partners.** Written by Sarah Blackstone and Mary Hunt Berg (2012). Attainment Company

**Augmentative and Alternative Communications Perspectives Volume 4: Assistive Technology: Principles and Applications for Communication Disorders and Special Education.** Bradford, GBR: Emerald Insight By Wendt, O., & Lloyd, L. L. (Eds.). (2011).

**The Silent Partner? Language, Interaction and Aided Communication.** By Smith, M and Janice Murray (2016). Jr-press.