

Facts for Families: Assistive technology

‘Assistive Technology’ means products which can be used to help with daily living.

This covers very technical solutions like eye-gaze technology but also products like talking photo albums, touch lamps and medication dispensers.

It is also sometimes called Technology Enabled Care.



Our Guiding Principles

Minimising digital isolation:

Many of the people we support do not have much access to technology and the internet.

We want every person we support to be seen and treated as an equal citizen, with the same opportunities and right to safety as everyone else.

This includes reliable access to the internet and devices.

We do not want technology to replace great support:

Assistive technology, alongside great active support, may enable people to live better lives.

We want people to have ‘Just Enough Support’ (there’s a family factsheet about Just Enough Support, too) and following our ‘Activate’ support model.

We will focus on the support plan:

The right assistive technology for any person will be identified by looking at their particular needs and whether any of the Assistive Technology products could help them live a better life. This is captured within the ‘My Technology’ section of a support plan.

We will use products to help keep your family member safe – for example using epilepsy or falls sensors.

We aim to:

- Provide support for all the technology in place – for example, to ensure your loved one can stay safe online.
- Provide support in using products to maintain/increase communication skills and/or maintain/build friendships.
- Support people to use products that improve communication, health or lifelong learning, or which help your loved one be part of their community.
- Get specialist advice to help find new ways to improve the quality of your loved one's care and support.
- Support your loved one to have the right internet connection and speed for them.
- Help your loved one explore how to get online, thinking about both devices and broadband. This all starts with the 'My Technology' part of 'My Support Plan' and may vary depending on where your loved one lives. This will need to be continuously reviewed with your loved one. The Matrix on the next page lays out how this may differ dependent on your loved one's support arrangements.



What the 'My Technology' assessment means for your loved one

About your loved one	What we can offer
<p>Option 1:</p> <p>Your loved one's team is always present. There is an office where your loved one lives.</p> <p>'My Technology' plan says your relative needs quite a lot of support to get online and use a device.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We pay for the broadband • We are the main user but your loved one can use it if bandwidth is available. • We will support your loved one to find the right data package for the device if our data is not enough for your relative's requirements. • Where appropriate we can supply your loved one with a device to use.
<p>Option 2:</p> <p>Your loved one's team is always (24 hours day) present where your loved one lives. There isn't an office where your loved one lives.</p> <p>'My Technology' plan says your loved one is quite independent but needs some support to use technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We pay for the broadband • We are the main user but your loved one can use it if bandwidth is available. • We will support your loved one to find the right data package for the device if our data is not enough for your relative's requirements. • We may supply your loved one with a device or support your loved one to buy the best device for your relative's budget and needs.
<p>Option 3:</p> <p>Your loved one's team is usually (10-18 hours a day) present in your loved one's house. There isn't an office where your loved one lives.</p> <p>'My Technology' plan says your loved one is independent but needs some support to use technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your loved one pays for the broadband. • Your loved one is the main user but your loved one's team may ask to use your relative's connection when supporting your relative at home if our mobile data is weak. • We may support your loved one to find the right broadband supplier. • We may supply your loved one with a device or support your loved one to buy the best device for your relative's budget and needs.
<p>Option 4:</p> <p>Your loved one's team only visits for a few hours each week. There isn't an office where your loved one lives.</p> <p>'My Technology' plan says your relative is very independent and needs only a little support to use technology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your loved one pays for the broadband. • Your loved one is the main user but your loved one's team may ask to use your relative's connection when supporting your relative in their home if our mobile data is weak. • We may support your loved one to find the right broadband supplier. • We may support your loved one to buy the best device for your relative's budget and needs.



Identifying the right assistive technology

Your relative's support team should always be thinking about suitable assistive technology that may progress your loved one's support plan.

Dimensions has assistive technology specialists who are there to help, working in partnership with your relative's support team. We expect any new assistive technology to increase your loved one's independence and meet their Activate outcomes.

If you need additional help, contact the Assistive Technology project team via email: luke.joy-smith@dimensions-uk.org.

For more information contact:

Family Helpline – available 10am – 12pm,
Monday – Friday
Tel: 0300 303 9161
Email: family.helpline@dimensions-uk.org

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