What is the purpose of this report?
The Specialist Speech and Language Therapist will organize review meetings with the parents/carers and educational setting. There may be one or more reviews. The reviews will focus on what is going well with the AAC device, what needs to improve and the progress on the goals set at the casework meeting. The trial may continue, complete or a new trial of equipment started at this point. Reviews will continue until the device is successful for the young person.

Training and Discharge from the Team
Training for the educational setting and parents/carers will be carried out by the AAC Technical Officer. The Specialist Speech and Language Therapist will discharge the young person from CAACAT and the young person may have a device on long-term loan from Cornwall Council if appropriate. Further training for the parents/carers and school setting may be advised by the Specialist Speech and Language Therapist. Ongoing support will be provided by the AAC Technical Officer and the young person’s Speech and Language Therapist, as required if the young person continues to meet the criteria for these services. Parents/Carers will be invited to review the equipment with the team every two years after the end of the trial.

Contact us
Email: aacsupport@cornwall.gov.uk

If you would like this information in another format please contact:
Cornwall Council, County Hall, Treyew Road
Truro TR1 3AY
Email: equality@cornwall.gov.uk
Telephone: 0300 1234 100
www.cornwall.gov.uk
Who are we?

We are an assessment service for young people up to the age of 18 who can assess for and provide suitable electronic communication aids on long-term loan.

The team consist of a specialist Speech and Language Therapist and two Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Technical Officers.

Jennifer Davies
Specialist Speech and Language Therapist
Cornwall NHS Foundation Trust

Julie Veal
AAC Technical Officer (West)
Cornwall Council

Laura Bagley
AAC Technical Officer (East)
Cornwall Council

What can the team provide?

- Assessment and identification of appropriate equipment or referral onto Specialist AAC Assessment for complex cases
- Trial and long-term loan of equipment
- Training and support for parents / carers and schools in supporting the young person with using the communication aid

Initial referral to the team

Initial referrals are made via the young person's Speech and Language Therapist who will be involved with the assessment at each stage. The Speech and Language Therapist must be able to demonstrate how the young person meets the criteria for referral. If the criteria is not met, the referral will not be accepted and advice will be given by the Specialist Speech and Language Therapist on why it was not accepted. Priority is given to referrals for young people who have been diagnosed with a degenerative condition.

Referral criteria

- A Communication Passport
- Comprehension level above expressive ability
- Understanding of cause and effect
- Intentional communication
- Turn-taking skills at a basic level or beyond
- At least one form of reliable movement eg hand, eye, foot
- Communication system in place and being used effectively across two or more settings eg communication books, signing, E-tran frame
- Experience of a speech output device eg Big Mack, GoTalk
- Firm commitment from parents / carers and educational setting to support the assessment and attend training

A referral may not be accepted without evidence of the young person meeting the criteria above.

What happens during an assessment?

The assessment may take place over several sessions at the young person's home and/or educational setting.

Casework Meeting

A casework meeting is held at the young person's educational setting. Young person (if appropriate), Parent/Carers, Speech and Language Therapist, School setting to attend. Other professionals may be invited. Videos of the young person communicating may be viewed at the meeting. An open discussion is held on the communication devices that could be trialled. Agreements will be made on what equipment to trial, how it is set up, and goals for the trial period. Example software may be shown at the meeting. Parents/Carers must attend the meeting for the trial to be agreed.

Equipment Trial

The AAC Technical Officer will order and purchase the agreed equipment. They will also programme the software as agreed at the casework meeting. Each device is set-up bespoke to each child so there may be some conversations between home, school and the Technical Officer so that the correct vocabulary can be added. The AAC Technical Officer will deliver the equipment and show the young person, parents/carers and school staff how it is used.