

## What is Assistive Technology?

AT means using up-to-date technologies to provide powerful tools to compensate for limitations, moving on in life and returning to valued roles and occupations. AT builds on an individual's goals to enable participation, self reliance, communication, education, employment and play. AT is possible through specialized clinical practice, advances in microprocessors and materials, emphasis on universal design, and rehabilitation engineering research and development. AT enables powered mobility through the use of alternate controls, adaptive computer access for written and spoken communication, remote control of the environment and modifications to the home and workplace.

Disability creates a major life change. AT creates an important resource for adapting and learning to compensate for the limitations that disability can bring. It is a tool for completing tasks in new ways and learning new strategies for accomplishing goals. AT brings new options such as:

- Pressure management and postural control
- Ultra lightweight and power wheelchairs with specialized controls and seating options
- Adaptive access to computers for employment, education and personal management
- Alternative and augmentative communication devices
- Electronic aids to daily living (EADLs) and home and workplace modifications



## Scheduling an Appointment

Individuals who wish to schedule an appointment should first request a referral for an assistive technology or wheelchair seating and mobility evaluation from their primary care physician or specialist in physical medicine and rehabilitation, or neurology, orthopedics, etc. Clients of vocational rehabilitation agencies can also be served through Frazier Rehab's Assistive Technology Program.

For an appointment or for more information about our program, call (502) 582-7660.



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# Assistive Technology Program



## Assistive Technology Program

The Frazier Rehab Institute Assistive Technology Program uses technology to enable rehabilitation from spinal cord injury, movement disorders, brain injury and other neurological, orthopaedic and developmental diagnoses. Our interdisciplinary, client-centered approach provides individualized assistive technology (AT) evaluation, documentation of need, and services to support learning and integration of AT into every life for clients and their families.

AT makes an important contribution to adaptive human performance across the lifespan, in order to maximize full participation in everyday life.



## Program Features

The AT Program is staffed by an interdisciplinary group of occupational, physical and speech therapists with skills in AT.

Because of the pace of innovation in the field of assistive technology and rehab engineering, program staff are specialized and focused on maintaining up-to-date knowledge and skills in this new area of rehabilitation care. The staff is committed to continuing education and active in RESNA, the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America, the association of professionals using AT. Staff is pledged to work with certified rehabilitation technology suppliers and uphold the RESNA Code of Ethics.

The Frazier AT Program works in collaboration with the Frazier Rehab Spinal Cord Medicine program, the Kentucky Spinal Cord Injury Research Center and the University of Louisville's Speed School of Engineering and its newly developed Certificate in Rehab Engineering and Assistive Technology.

## Mobility and Seating

The new options in wheeled mobility call for experienced occupational and physical therapy clinicians who can evaluate physical needs and match product features to your social, postural, orthopaedic, neurological and developmental needs. Since wheelchairs now enable mobility in all kinds of environments, a broad set of variables need to be considered in order to maximize function and comfort and prevent secondary disability. Our clear and powerful documentation and collaboration with referring physicians helps to maximize financial assistance in paying for mobility devices.

## Adaptive Computer Access

Computers are now essential in everyday life. They are required in education and employment and are increasingly important in shopping, access to services and local government, personal banking, e-mail, web, video communication and other aspects of daily life

management. Adaptations can compensate for paralysis, in-coordination, limited motor control and range of motion, learning disabilities and visual impairments. The AT Program works with state vocational rehabilitation agencies, which are important funders of the technologies and services that enable return to or preparation for employment.

## Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) Devices

Following stroke or brain injury, individuals may lose the ability to speak. Some developmental disabilities affect development of spoken language or understandable speech. New technologies combine microcomputer support for storing and retrieving language and digital speech for vocal output. Following evaluation and selection of the correct device, training for clients and their families helps them use this alternative form of communication to restore full participation in daily life.

## Electronic Aids to Daily Living (EADLs)

The same technologies that support "home automation" can be used to give control to individuals with limited motor abilities. EADLs can create remote control of entertainment, home security, telephone, light and temperature systems. Individuals are evaluated for the optimal control interface and their personal preferences for controlling their environment through simple devices, power wheelchair, computer or stand-alone devices.

## Home and Workplace Modification

Sometimes success with AT is as simple as removing barriers or widening doors. Greater independence, reduced effort, and efficiency can result from an environmental assessment. AT Program staff can identify the need for ramps, door openers, changes in the height of work surfaces, simple bathroom modifications, features of office chairs or the placement of computer components. Changing these aspects of the built-in environment, AT contributes to improved quality of life and prevention of secondary disabilities.