



Assistive Technology Companion Guide to the Transition Health Care Check List: Health Care Skills Needed for Independence

The Pennsylvania Department of Health Southwest Regional staff and their community partners recognized a gap in health services for youth with special health care needs. When these youth leave school, they transition from having different or no insurance coverage, from seeing pediatric specialists to searching for adult medical specialists, and from good coverage for medications to having to understand new systems for obtaining medicines. Working with the State Transition Team, agencies, and families, the ***Transition Health Care Check List*** was created to guide youth, families, and professionals during this time of change.

This ***Assistive Technology Companion Guide to the Transition Health Care Check List*** was developed by Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT), a program of the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, to draw attention to the ways that assistive technology (AT) can help transitioning students perform the tasks that have been identified as health care skills needed for independence. The *Companion Guide* corresponds to Section I. Health Care: Skills Needed for Independence on pages 5-8 of the Checklist

An **assistive technology device** is defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act as “any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability (except a medical device that is surgically implanted). **Assistive technology services** means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device, including an evaluation of the child's AT needs; customization or adaptation of a device; training for the child or child's family in the use of the device; or training for professionals (e.g. teachers or classroom aides) who provide services to the child.

Opportunities for considering AT in the Guide are indicated by the symbol . These are just some of the possibilities of AT devices and services for students

with disabilities; many more solutions may be possible to meet the transitioning student's needs. Additional text added to the original *Check List* is indicated by italics.

For more information about assistive technology, funding for AT devices and services, and the resources and activities of Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology, a program of the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, contact PIAT at ATinfo@temple.edu, toll-free (in-state; voice) 800-204-PIAT (7428) or (in-state; TTY) 866-268-0579. PIAT operates Pennsylvania's Assistive Technology Lending Library, a resource for short-term equipment loans (ATlend@temple.edu) and Pennsylvania's Telecommunication Device Distribution Program (TDDP@temple.edu).

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A. Communication

- Knows communication methods


- Verbal—how often are they understood by others

If an individual's speech is unintelligible to unfamiliar listeners, augmentative and alternative (AAC) communication services should be sought during transition (if not already provided). These may include devices, or sign language or other strategies.

- Signs/Reads Lips—knows how to arrange for interpreters



Knows how to arrange for Computer Assisted Real-Time Transcription (CART)

-  Devices—knows how to care for, gets routine maintenance and uses communication aids such as speech generating devices or communication boards independently (see the “AT Skill Inventory”); has back-up systems for “high tech” devices in case of device break-down.

- Written



Has low-tech devices that assist in grasping and holding a pen or pencil, or electronic devices for note-taking.

- If non-verbal, has a support person who is familiar with the individual's methods of communication

- Knows when, why and how to sign name



Uses a name “stamp” to “sign” name




Uses signature guides to assist in locating the space where a signature belongs (on checks; credit card slips)


- Knows how to communicate by phone/TTY/TTD
Knows how to obtain lower-cost phone service through Lifeline and Link-up (if eligible)





There are many telecommunications devices and approaches for individuals with communication disabilities in speech or hearing.


Transitioning students may find skills in one or more of the following areas important for accessing telecommunications:


 Knows how to use relevant relay service (IP relay; video relay; speech-to-speech relay; “conventional” relay; voice carryover; hearing carryover)

 Uses a phone with amplification

 Uses a phone with large keys


 Uses a speaker phone (for speech output device users)


 Uses a hands-free headset (if difficulty holding the receiver)


 Knows where to get and/or who will pay for adapted phones (e.g. Pennsylvania Telecommunication Device Distribution Program)

B. Vision/Hearing


Corrective lenses


 Knows who provides services (evaluation, training) and how/when to get a new prescription for corrective lenses, and who will pay


 Uses eye glasses or contact lenses independently


 Knows about (or knows how to find out about) other devices for magnification, including lighting, screen magnifiers, screen readers; knows who will pay

Hearing devices

 Knows who provides service (e.g. evaluation), how/when to get equipment repaired, and who will pay

 Uses hearing devices independently


 Knows about other assistive technologies for hearing (e.g. assistive listening devices)

 Asks for accommodations for Vision/Hearing as needed


C. Self Awareness

Knows who is involved with decision making and who to trust

Knows name, address, telephone number, and who else may have this information


 *Using communication device, can tell an unfamiliar person this information*

Knows height, weight, and birth date


 *Using communication device, can tell an unfamiliar person this information*

 Carries personal I.D. when leaving home


Knows where their social security card and birth certificate are and when to use them

 *Using communication device, can tell an unfamiliar person this information*

Knows present medical condition and past medical history


 *Using communication device, can tell an unfamiliar person this information*

Has received training in and understands human sexuality


 *For augmentative communication device users, the user has access to programmed vocabulary related to sexuality*

Understands who can help

Knows health emergency telephone numbers


 *Using communication device, can tell an unfamiliar person this information; using PDA (e.g. a "Palm Pilot") can retrieve emergency telephone numbers*

Knows how to dial emergency numbers

 *Uses a phone with pre-programmed "auto dial" emergency numbers*

D. Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and Safety

Understands Hot and Cold

 *Faucets are clearly marked with colors, symbols, or text to differentiate temperature*

- Knows how to use and read different types of thermometers



Knows where to get and how to use a “talking” thermometer

- Can treat minor cuts, scrapes, burns
- Knows how to use household chemicals properly and does not mix them
- Knows how to protect themselves by wearing gloves and safety glasses
- Can read labels or knows who to ask



Uses Braille “tags” as appropriate



Uses a bar code reader on coded prescription bottles or other items



Uses CCTV in order to read labels

- Understands the proper use of matches
- Has emergency, fire, and disaster plans made



Accessible evacuation slides or special evacuation wheelchairs are in place; everyone knows how to use them

- Responds appropriately to fire alarms/knows fire exits—knows meeting place



Fire alarms in all of the individual’s environments provide detectable signals, e.g. flashing strobe lights for an individual who is deaf




- Has a fire extinguisher and smoke detector and knows how to use and maintain correctly




Has smoke detectors with perceivable signals (e.g. flashing lights and vibration if deaf/blind)


E. Transportation


- Knows who can provide transportation and how to make arrangements. *Knows availability of and how to apply for paratransit or shared ride programs*

-  Knows about equipment needed
 -  *Knows about adaptations for driving (zero-effort steering; hand controls; lift and ramp-equipped vehicles) and how to obtain an evaluation, lessons, etc.*
 -  *Knows about adaptations needed to be a passenger in a private vehicle or on public transportation (including how wheelchair can be stowed or “tied down” for safe riding in a car or on the train)*


-  Knows about funding or saving money to purchase a vehicle, needed adaptations or services


- Knows how to apply for PENNDOT’s accessible parking placard

- Understands safety aspects of walking
 -  *Uses GPS system*


 -  *Uses sonar cane*

F. Nutrition

- Understands and can deal safely with food allergies
 -  *Using communication device, can tell an unfamiliar person information about food allergies*

- Understands specialized diets, foods, and medical follow up
- Understands healthy food choices
- Understands funding and budgeting for the purchase of food
 -  *Uses large key calculator and picture “shopping cards” when developing a shopping list prior to going to the supermarket*

G. Fitness

- Understands the benefits of a health and fitness program
- Participates in physical activity with modifications as needed
 -  *Knows community resources that are accessible, e.g. which facilities have a swimming pool with a lift or ramp, or how to find out this information*



Knows about community resources that have “adaptive sports” programs such as rowing, biking, skiing, or diving, or how to find out this information



Uses specialized equipment for physical activity, e.g. hand cycle

- Knows and understands the dangers of drugs, alcohol and abusive behaviors
- Knows where and how to get help to maintain a healthy lifestyle

H. Self Advocacy

- Knows how to stop and think and when to say “NO”
- Knows how to make contact with community advocacy organizations
- Is aware of Self Determination
- Can call and ask for information, materials, and booklets with needed modifications



Requests materials in needed formats, e.g. Braille; large print; accessible websites

- Has good communication with doctors and other professionals
(APPENDIX A)

I. Job Search Considerations

- Is able to discuss with employer conditions that require individualized accommodations



Has identified assistive technology accommodations that may help the individual perform essential job functions

- Has considered the pros and cons of full time and part time work and benefits offered
- Knows how to work with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) (APPENDIX M)
- Knows if the work place has people trained for medical emergencies until 911 arrives
- Can describe needs in case of emergency evacuation from workplace



Knows what devices may be necessary in order to evacuate, e.g. Evacu-Chair

- Has an Emergency Information Form (EIF) completed and given to all who will need this according to the directions on the form
www.aap.org/advocacy/eif.doc

J. Post-Secondary Considerations

- Is able to discuss conditions that require individualized accommodations



Has identified assistive technology accommodations that are needed for success in post-secondary setting such as accessible dormitory room, adapted alarms, electronic textbooks, assistive listening devices in classrooms, accessible websites for on-line registration; knows how to request them

- Has toured schools



Can describe and compare accessibility, accommodations and availability of AT at different post-secondary institutions

- Has considered the pros and cons of full time and part time enrollment and the effect on benefits offered
- Knows how to work with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
- Has worked with health services to plan for medical emergencies
- Has an Emergency Information Form (EIF) completed and given to all who will need this according to the directions on the form www.aap.org/advocacy/eif.doc
- Has met with the staff at the Office for Disability Services



Has arranged for needed AT prior to each semester; if not provided by the school, has discussed provision through OVR if eligible

- Knows rights and responsibilities

K. Managing Medical Information/Record Keeping

- Knows how to write down and follow recommendations of the doctor or dentist



Uses notetaker (e.g. BrailleNote; Palm) to write down doctor's or dentist's instructions

- Knows who can help fill out medical and dental forms



Has the AT needed to independently complete medical and dental forms, including insurance claims

- Has a way of keeping medical and dental records
- Immunizations/medical tests and results/summaries

L. Managing Appointments

- Keeps a calendar of doctor and dentist appointments



Knows how to make entries and set alarms for personal digital assistant (PDA)



Has large print appointment book

- Keeps a notebook of names, phone numbers and office hours



Knows how to make entries (include notations of office hours and directions to offices) and retrieve information from PDA

- Knows when to call and communicate when sick or hurt



Can use communication technologies to report when sick or hurt, e.g. communication device; adapted telephone

- Knows the difference between an emergency (go to hospital) and illness (call your doctor)

- Knows about making appointments for specialists, family planning, genetic counseling, hospital and laboratory tests

- Calls for referrals if needed



Can use communication technologies to call for referrals

M. Pharmacy

- Develops a working relationship with pharmacist
- Knows where to go and which prescription cards to show
- Understands “co-pay”
- Knows to ask the doctor or pharmacist for help

N. Medication

- Knows medication: name, purpose, side effects, restrictions, how to get filled
- Knows when and who to call for prescription refills
- Recognizes medication and when to take it



Uses medication reminder systems to adhere to complex medication regimens



Has AT to read pill bottle labels (e.g. CCTV, magnifier)

- Knows how your medications are to be taken (oral, sub-lingual, rectal, vaginal, topical, eye or ear drops/ointments, inhalants, injections)



Uses large print log to record blood sugar readings



Uses syringe filler with large print markings

- Opens “child resistant” caps or can ask for bottles that can be opened
- Fills daily/weekly pillbox



Uses medication organization and dispensing systems

- Knows how to purchase and properly use over-the-counter medication
- Knows who to call with questions or to get help

O. Equipment and Treatments

- Understands and uses remedial/prosthetic devices and equipment as prescribed



Knows about basic care of devices (charging power wheelchair or scooter, cleaning hearing aids and eyeglasses, etc.)



Has operational competence in devices, including using and programming (or directing others to program) communication device; set-up computer access equipment; low vision aids, etc.

- Understands and can do their own treatments and therapies
- Knows who does their treatments and therapies and how often they occur
- Demonstrates responsibility for compliance
- Can arrange for equipment maintenance – both routine and emergency



Knows who and how to contact vendor for repair and maintenance



Knows whether or not a repair may be covered under warranty



Knows how to arrange for payment for routine and emergency maintenance



Knows how to arrange for a “loaner” when the equipment is “in the shop” (including Pennsylvania’s Assistive Technology Lending Library), or how to request a rental (and who will pay)



Knows consumer protections against devices that are “lemons” and how to get assistance [e.g. Disability Rights Network of Pennsylvania, 800-692-7443 (voice) or 877-375-7139 (TTY), www.drnpa.org]

APPENDIX N: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Visit Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT)

<http://disabilities.temple.edu> Click: Programs: Assistive Technology

800-204-7428 (voice) or 866-268-0579 (TTY); ATinfo@temple.edu

What is assistive technology (AT)

- Assistive technology (AT) means any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. AT includes DEVICES such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and reachers
- Assistive technology also includes the SERVICES you need to find and use the devices, including evaluation, customization, maintenance and repair, and training for you and the people who support you.
- Assistive technology devices can help you with activities related to work, school, and community living. Examples of AT devices include:
 - For work or school: Devices or software that enlarge and/or read print
 - For work or school: Keyboards with large keys and hands free "mice"
 - For community living (recreation): Special gloves and handles that allow you to participate in hunting, fishing, gardening, and other activities
 - For community living: Changes to your home or vehicle so you can get around

What are the resources for learning about and getting assistive technology

- Assistive technology may have been provided to you from your school
 - As you prepare to transition, you will need to know who owns the AT and whether or not you can take it with you
 - As you plan for transition, think about other AT you don't have now. Some insurances may pay for AT while you are still in school
- While you are still in school, your IEP team can help you identify the devices and you will need and help you to learn to use to use them.
 - Your school district may have staff who is knowledgeable about AT.
 - Your Intermediate Unit has at least one Assistive Technology Consultant
 - If you need AT for employment, contact your OVR counselor and consider including AT in your Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).
- At any age, Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT) can help you learn about, borrow, and try AT devices that might be helpful to you in education (including post-secondary education), employment, and/or community participation and independent living

What programs are available through PIAT?

- PIAT's programs are free and available throughout Pennsylvania
- **Information and referral:** Call 800-204-7428 (voice) or 866-268-0579 (TTY) or contact ATinfo@temple.edu. PIAT's can also work with you to identify vendors and service providers, locate used equipment, and learn about funding
 - **Device demonstrations and loans:** Call 800-204-7428 (voice) or 866-268-0579 (TTY) or contact ATdemo@temple.edu or ATlend@temple.edu. Our staff can assist you in making a decision about the AT that is right for you, through device demonstrations and equipment loans.

- **Recycled Equipment:** PIAT can help you locate resources for “previously owned” devices that are available either free or at a lower cost than buying new. The programs include "**classifieds**" such as PIAT's [Recycled and Exchanged Equipment Partnership Online Classifieds](#) ("REEP Classifieds") as well as "**recycling**" programs across the state that accept donated equipment, clean it and/or repair it, and provide it to a person with a disability in need of the device. Call 800-204-7428 (voice) or 866-268-0579 (TTY) or contact ATreuse@temple.edu
- **Free Adapted Telecommunication Devices:** Call 800-204-7428 (voice) or 866-268-0579 (TTY) or contact TDDP@temple.edu to learn more about Pennsylvania's Telecommunication Device Distribution Program. This program offers certain telephones and related assistive technologies at no cost, to eligible Pennsylvanians with disabilities age 6 or older.