

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Service Delivery Model

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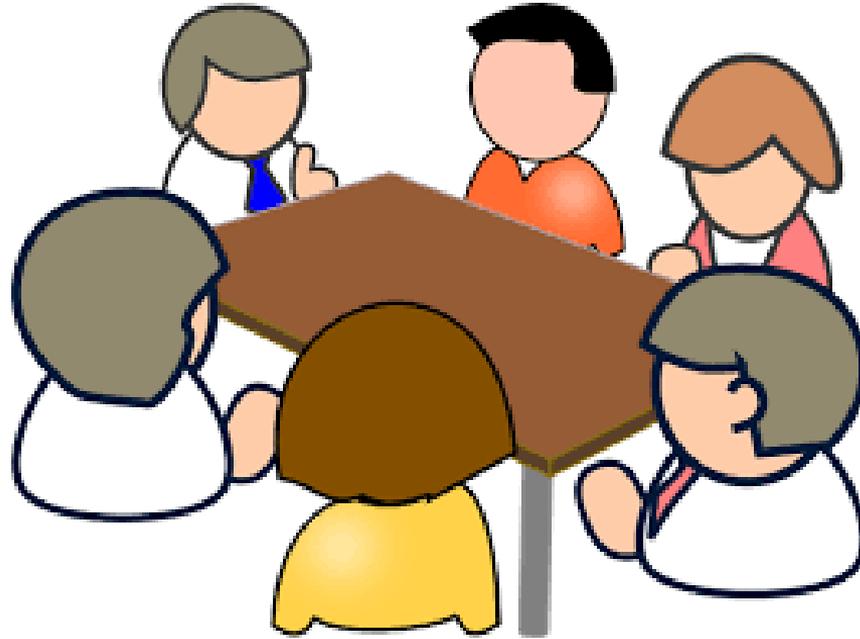
Where to start?



Hmmm... Where to Start...?



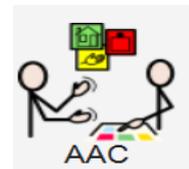
Identifying key people



What is AAC?

- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is the term used to describe various methods of communication that can 'add-on' to speech and are used to get around problems with ordinary speech.
- AAC includes simple systems such as pictures, gestures and pointing, as well as more complex techniques involving powerful computer technology, (Communication Matters).

• communicationmatters.org.uk



What are the contemporary issues?



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Accountable



Integrity



Empower



Respect



Excellence



Prevalence of need



Evidence based research is consistent:

- Approximately 0.5% or 50 in 10,000 of people in the UK population could benefit from a form of AAC
- With approximately 0.05% or 5 in 10,000 people requiring a powered communication system. (Communication Matters, 2013).
- However, the data needs to be reviewed and further research would give a more precise account of the need for AAC in the UK. (Enderby, *et al*, 2013).

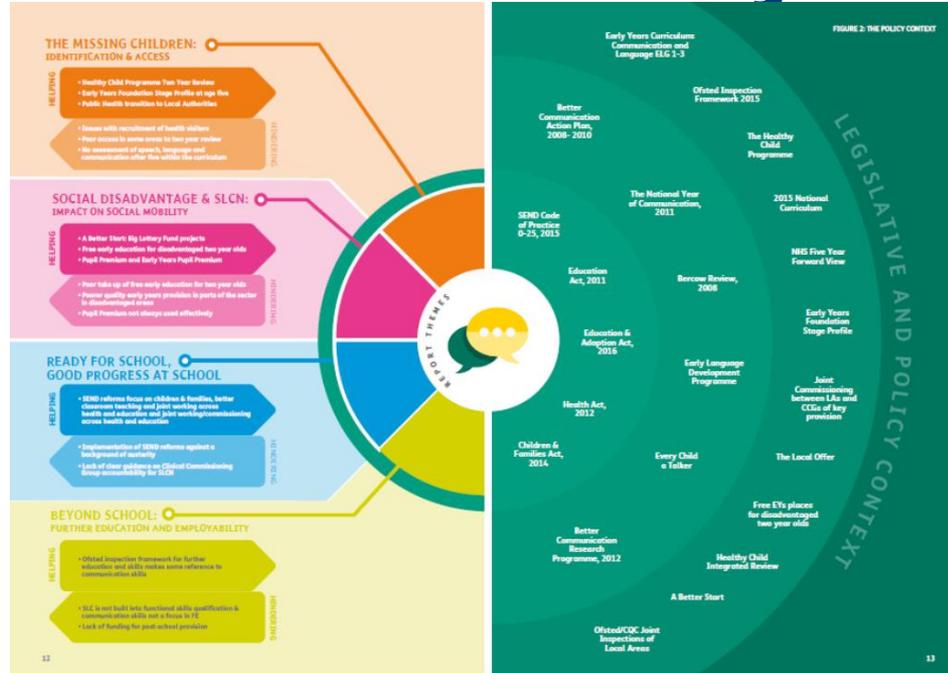


Why do we need to influence change?

- Early assessment and intervention for children and young people (CYP) who would benefit from using AAC.
- To provide equal opportunities for CYP who use AAC to communicate and participate in all aspects of their daily lives.
- To have a trained workforce with a Universal Level of skills and knowledge in the field of AAC.
- To have high aspirations and outcomes for CYP who use AAC.
- To reflect the fast changing pace of assistive technology and the role it plays in enabling communication.



Legislative & Policy Context



Talking about a Generation. The Communication Trust, 2017.

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Legislation and Policy Context / Drivers for changing AAC Policy:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice 0-25, 2015. Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP). *See section 3.9 and 4.32*
- Joint commissioning between LA and CCGs of key provision.
- Ofsted Inspection framework 2015 & Ofsted/ CQC Joint Inspections of local Areas.
- Children and families Act (2014)
- The Local Offer



Key AAC Documents



- AAC Services, Quality Standards for Commissioners (Communication Matters, September 2011)
- AAC Service Standards (Communication Matters, August 2012)
- Guidance for commissioning AAC services and equipment (NHS-E, March 2016)
- Gloucestershire Guidelines for AAC & The Local Offer (June 2018)



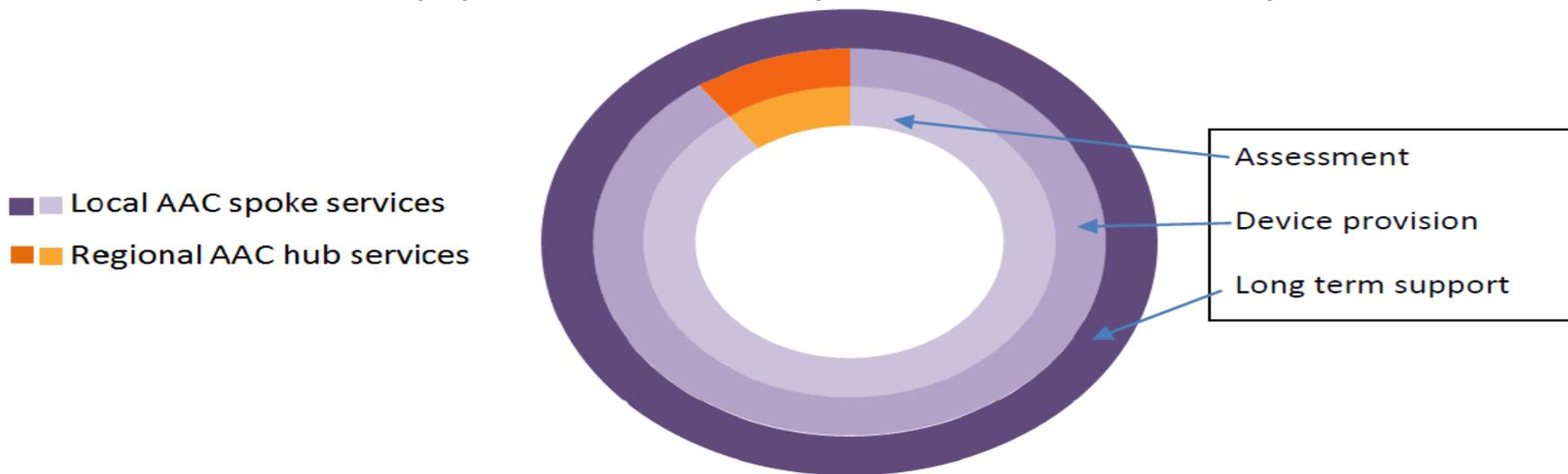
Local AAC Services, the 90:10 divide in equipment provision

- The national picture for AAC services has improved significantly for approximately 10% of people who require AAC (Guidance for Commissioning AAC service and Equipment, NHS-E, 2016).
- The provision for the remaining 90% of the population can be described as, '*varied and unclear*' (Jean Gross, CBE. 2010).
- The annual costs of affording AAC equipment for CYP is approximately £6.5 million p.a. (Gross 2010).
- If 10% of CYP were provided with AAC equipment and an **effective support package** the estimated benefit to the economy would be £310 million (Enderby *et al*, 2013).



Specialist & Local AAC Service Delivery (Hub and Spoke Model)

Local AAC services are required to meet the ongoing needs of all Children and Young People who require AAC.



AAC Local Service Provision of Equipment

Local AAC Team Commissioning; compared costs and numbers of referrals

Projected future costs, joint commissioning of equipment, (to be discussed)



NHS-England, 2015 – 2017

- Gloucestershire - Total costs of AAC equipment commissioned through the Hub/Specialised Services Pathway - £xxx,xxx.xx (adults and paediatrics)
- Total costs of CYP as a result of local AAC team referrals - £xxx,xxx.xx
 - 2015 – Present day, average cost of equipment £xxxxxx
 - Average cost 2105 - 16, £xxxxxx
 - Average cost 2016 - 17, £xxxxxx
 - Average cost 2017 - 18, £xxxxxx
- These figures include the costs of wheelchair mounting equipment.



Other Important Factors:

When commissioning a communication aid this is where the journey starts.

- Support – communication partners, families.
- Training – communication partners, families, key workers.
- Time – programming, planning, intervention, 1:1 work, making resources.
- Technical support



Risk & Research



Many CYP are unable to participate in their education due to their communication difficulties Evidence based research shows:

- Up to 90% of CYP with complex communication needs (CNN) become adults without functional literacy skills (Foley & Wolter, 2010).
- Less than 5% of individuals using AAC are employed (McNaughton & Bryen, 2002; 2007).
- 91% of adults with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) do not have access to AAC or a means of participating in activities in their daily lives (Stancliffe, *et al*, 2010).
- The majority of people with Complex Communication Needs have difficulty when dealing with health professionals in hospitals, and have limited access to medical information and are consequently at further risk of ill health (Blackstone, *et al*, 2015).



Future Challenges



- Maintaining the 10% - ongoing support
- Meeting the need of the 90%
- Technical support, managing equipment
- Geographical area – equitable service provision
- Assessment toolkit – up to date
- Identify a strategic lead for AAC
- Training
- Managing expectations



Feedback - NHS-E Specialist Service

- *‘The relationship between the regional AAC assessment service at Bristol and the service that Nicki Grey leads at a local level in Gloucester exemplifies the vision that NHS England had when drafting the national care pathway documents for AAC services’, (BCAS June 2018).*
- Single point of referral
- BCAS assessments are supported
- Ongoing support one assessment has been completed
- Appropriate re referrals
- Data collection



Teacher's comments

Amy's equipment has enabled her to access the social and academic world. It has given her a voice so she can be part of classroom discussions, just like the other children.'
(Class teacher K2).

Henry has been using his communication book more and more over the year, which has had a great impact on him and the people around him. He has been able to communicate more with adults and peers, which has alleviated some of his frustrations and it has helped him to really enjoy learning.
(Class teacher, K1).



Bercow: Ten Years On

‘ The most fundamental life skill for children is the ability to communicate. It directly impacts on their ability to learn, to develop friendships and on their life chances’ (John Bercow 2018).

Key changes since the original Bercow review in 2008

- Positive – A National Service Specification of AAC
- A Changing Landscape
- Significant changes in the use of technology.



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Pink flamingo, by H. age 7.

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