Remote Support Technologies: Promoting Independence, Self-determination, and Quality of Life

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“For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.”

- IBM, 1991; p. 2
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Ohioans with DD and their families
Under the Technology First Executive Order, the department will work with county boards of developmental disabilities to ensure technology is considered as part of all service and support plans for people with disabilities. The executive order is **not a technology-only policy** but aims to help people learn more about **how to use technology to improve their quality of life and how they can experience more independence and personal freedom.**
"Assistive technology" (AT) means an interactive electronic item, device, product system, or engineered solution, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that addresses an individual's needs and outcomes identified in the individual service plan and that is for the direct benefit of the individual in maintaining or improving independence, functional capabilities, vocational skills, community involvement, or physical skills. Assistive technology has three distinct components: (1) AT Consultation, (2) AT Equipment, and (3) AT Support.
"Remote support" means the provision of supports by staff of an agency provider at a remote location who are engaged with an individual through equipment with the capability for live two-way communication. Equipment used to meet this requirement shall include one or more of the following components: (a) Motion sensing system; (b) Radio frequency identification; (c) Live video feed; (d) Live audio feed; (e) Web-based monitoring system; or (f) Another device that facilitates live two-way communication.
839 people on HCBS waivers in Ohio using this service.

40,000 people on HCBS waivers in Ohio
“Supportive Technologies”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z7VxEhwibtI (3:40)
Remote Support Services
(Remote Monitoring)

477 people on HCBS waivers in Ohio using this service.

40,000 people on HCBS waivers in Ohio
Across the U.S.

- Remote support is different in every state.
  - Does your state offer something like remote support / remote monitoring (not AT)?
  - How many people use this service?
  - What were difficulties accessing/using service?
We completed this survey about remote support services/remote monitoring across the US between:

5/30/2018 – 2/20/2019 (9 months)
Remote support is different in every state

Across the U.S.

# of states

Years

# of states
We completed this survey about *remote support services/remote monitoring* across the US between:

5/30/2018 – 2/20/2019 (9 months)

We asked about the number of people in each state who were enrolled in remote support services.
# of Remote Support Users

Across the U.S.

- MT: 24
- SD: 65
- MO: 115
- Other states with varying numbers of users

Legend:
- 300 - 500
- 100 - 300
- 20-100
- 1 - 20 users
- Yes - but numbers low
- No remote support service offered
- NO RESPONSE
How is remote support paid for (18 states)?

- 15 of 18 states use DD waiver funding.
- 2 of 18 states use only county or state dollars.
- 1 of 18 states did not respond to this question.
Across the U.S.

Of the 31 States that reported that they DO NOT offer remote support services:

- 26 states have no current plan to ADD remote support as a HCBS service.

- 5 remaining states plan to add remote support services:
  - 3 => sometime in 2019.
  - 1 => sometime before 2022.
  - 1 => Yes, but… no definitive timeline.
• Remote support is different in every state
Lessons Learned
Some of the Challenges

• Perception that remote support services were costly.
• Confusion around waiver rule.
• Privacy concerns / fears re: technologies
• Lack of awareness / not knowing what remote support services are.
Costs/perception of costs:
- Cost requirements
- Inhibitive low caps
- Remote support services save money in Ohio
  - Starting with over-night staffing (on sight-on call)
  - Reduction in support costs of ~ $15,000/person
Lessons Learned

Some of the Challenges

• Privacy concerns?? => Individuals reported experiencing MORE privacy with remote support services AND reported a GREATER sense of independence.

• Difficulty/confusion about waiver rule.
  – Service & Support Coordinators/Case Managers who lack knowledge about / experience with remote support services => are not likely to bring it up or recommend.

• Misconceptions about “ideal” candidates.
  – In Ohio, there are misconceptions about challenging behaviors being a barrier to using remote support services.
Remote Support Technologies and Behavioral Health

Adult woman
Age: 51 years old (white)
Dx: ID (mild range)
Living arrangement: Lives alone in 1-bedroom apartment.
Employment: Has been previously employed
- difficulty keeping jobs => gets fired.
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Dx: Asthma, Allergies, COPD, Morbid Obesity, Diabetes, Sleep Apnea, Hypertension, Arthritis, Overactive Bladder, Scoliosis, Genital Herpes.
Remote Support Technologies and Behavioral Health

Case Illustration

Adult woman
Age: 51 years old (white)
Dx: ID (mild range)
Living arrangement: Lives alone in 1-bedroom apartment.
Employment: Has been previously employed
  - difficulty keeping jobs => gets fired.
Staffing: 1:1 (24/7 – in 2013)
Behavior support plan: Yes (since 2013 – with restrictions)
Remote supports: October 2016 (2.5 years)
  - door sensors, two-way video communication, video camera on exits.
Behavior Support Plan:
- Sexually inappropriate behavior
- Threat/attempts to self-harm
- Aggression to others
- Disrespectful behavior
- Unsafe cigarette use
- Unsafe use of telephone
- Refusing to do her chores
Remote Support Technologies and Behavioral Health

Case Illustration

Target Behaviors with Staffing 2018-2019

Increase in overnight Remote Support hours

Unsafe Cigarette Use
Inappropriate Phone Use
Aggressive/Disrespectful Behavior
Refusing Chores
Remote Support Technologies and Behavioral Health

Case Illustration

Incidents Reported During Remote Monitoring Hours 2018-2019

- Unsafe Cigarette Use
- Inappropriate Phone Use
- Aggressive/Disrespectful Behavior
- Refusing Chores
- Other
Technology Items Added (2018)

Do you need any of these additional services?

- Remote Support Technology (this includes...).
- Assistive Technology (technology that is used to make...).

... Do you use any of the following?

- Desktop/Laptop computer
- iPad or tablet
- Cell phone or smart phone
- Smart speaker/home assistant (e.g., Alexa...)
- Programmable thermostat/light switch...
- ...
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