Technology at the Forefront in Washington State

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Figuring Out What People Want and How Best to Deliver It

**Several different Pilot Projects:**

- Working with people living in Adult Family Homes, or with their family.
- Working with people served by a residential services agency

All with funding through the Washington Developmental Disabilities Administration, sent to the Developmental Disabilities Council, to the Arc of Washington State, and contracted for technical assistance

- Working with people served through an alternative residential services agency
- Working with people served through a traditional residential services agency in rural Central Washington
Rural and Urban

We had large cities such as people living in Seattle and Bellevue.
We had medium cities such as people living in Olympia.
We had people living in a small rural location in the middle of the state: Sunnyside.
Great staff willing to learn in all locations.

Lessons Learned from Rural/Urban presence:
For the most part, less turnover of staff in the rural location. More worry for safety and seeing it as their caregiver job to be with people and doing for people in the rural location.
Ability for staff to be trained moving forward is a concern. Who will do this?
Choice in wireless carriers/internet providers less in rural communities.
How do we jump to fewer caregiver hours when independence is gained? How is staff paid for remote assistance?
Working with Individuals Living in Adult Family Homes, Residential Program or Family Home

Person Centered Approach to Finding Out Who People Are and What They Want and Need

Purchasing Equipment and apps. Equipment belonged to people not organizations.

Training People plus their staff on using and setting up the Equipment

Generally started with a handheld device such as an iPad

In some cases, we had to work to get wireless internet set up and available.

People learned to use devices to be more independent in things such as shopping, communicating with others outside the house, planning activities, and productivity at work

**Lessons Learned:**

Working with staff to allow the equipment to be with the person all the time or regularly, not kept in the closet

People want to be in contact with others, people want to make more choices, and people want to communicate. It takes time.
Working With People in a Standard Community Residential Agency

People living in a house in the community with 24 hour support

Acquired handheld devices and apps. Equipment belonged to people not agencies

Acquired smart home technology such as Amazon Alexa, smart switches, smart light bulbs, Ring video door bells, Next Carbon Monoxide and Smoke detectors

Acquired motion detected soap dispenser and water faucet

Worked to train staff on all shifts at the house

Directions, codes, passcodes kept in secure but ready location. Notebook created for staff.

**Lessons learned:**

Turnover is high, so training staff is ongoing. The notebook of information was essential. Residential program moving to get agency personnel to train new staff

Keeping equipment ready, charged, located, and more can be an issue. Adding charging, updating, and ongoing learning goals for equipment in people’s program plans was essential.
Working with People Living Without staff present all hours

Work to increase the amount of time they could be alone. Concerns around safety, cooking, and communicating with staff and family outside of the home.

Acquire handheld equipment and apps.

Acquire smart home equipment such as Alexa to allow for voice texts and calls to family

Nest carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, Ring video doorbells, smart switches, unique and individualized ways to set alarms for people and wake people up.

Is this a good place to consider cameras? What about around the stove? Or will Skype and Facetime work?
Pre and Post Survey Results

There was significant positive changes in many areas. Of particular significance: dealing with emergencies, grocery shopping, communication, and ability to be left home alone.

Dealing with emergencies changed as a result of people learning to text and facetime, Echo Dots, and the installation of Nest Smart Carbon Monoxide and Smoke detectors and Ring Video Doorbells.

Grocery shopping independence increased using picture grocery shopping lists, google lists, and research on the computer.

The ability to be left home alone increased as a result of “dealing with emergencies” technologies, and people’s increased ability to contact others outside of the home and their general increase in communication.
Technology as a Theme At 2018 Statewide Conference for Providers of Services, Individuals, and Families

Introduce all kinds of devices and services to attendees

Hands on opportunities

Technology woven throughout the conference:

- “Click Forward! Refresh, Connect, Evolve” with a focus on technology and its use in our workplaces, homes, and communities.
Individual Technology Trainings and Technical Assistance to:

Employment Providers
Residential Providers
Individuals
Families
Teachers
Advocacy by People for People

Thank You
Arc of WA State
SAIL
People First
Washington Developmental Disabilities Council
And more!
Working in Partnership with Agencies

WATAP our state Assistive Technology ACT program
Northwest Access Fund (loans and an Individual Development Account or IDA for technology)
SLPs

Other localized providers

Workshops on features and accessibility at local Apple Stores
Workshops by invitation on the Microsoft Campus
Assistive Tech Partners

OUTSIDE OF WA DDA
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

DVR's Assistive Technology and Assessment Practitioner (ATAP) is responsible for merging assistive technology into the rehabilitation process ensuring individuals with disabilities achieve their employment goals by providing guidance and technical assistance on accessibility, job modifications, accommodations and technology

Have Statewide Assistive Tech Specialists to Support Counselors.
Northwest Access Fund
Individual Development Account (IDA)

“We provide funding to people with disabilities in Washington & Oregon to purchase assistive technology and achieve greater independence”
WATAP: Washington Assistive Technology Act Program
ABLE Accounts

“Achieving a Better Life Experience”, or ABLE Accounts are saving tools for qualified individuals with disabilities to save money

"secure funding for disability-related expenses that will supplement, but not supplant, benefits provided through private insurance, Medicaid, SSI, the beneficiary's employment and other sources.”
Which expenses are allowed by ABLE accounts?
"qualified disability expense" is any expense related to the person as a result of living a life with disabilities.

These may include education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology, personal support services, health care expenses, financial management services and other expenses which help improve health, independence, and/or quality of life.

Do I have to wait for my state to establish a program before opening an account?
Regardless of where you might live and whether or not your state has decided to establish an ABLE program, you are free to enroll in any state’s program provided that the program is accepting out of state residents.
Info from WA DDA Funding Changes and More!
Community First Choice: Current use of adaptive technology

- Increase independence and decrease reliance on personal care services
- Annual allotment: $550/year

Examples: iPads, apps, automatic shut-off stoves, one touch push buttons, bidets, medication reminder systems, adaptive eating utensils
Home and Community Based Services Waivers: Current use of adaptive technology

• Support of full integration into the community
• Available as a service on the
  • Individual and Family Services (IFS) Waiver
  • Children's Intensive In-home Behavior Supports (CIIBS) Waiver

Examples: communication technology, switches, smart watches, adaptive equipment
Roads to Community Living: Current use of adaptive technology

- “Money Follows the Person” grant
- Assists individuals to transition from an institutional/facility-based setting into the community

Examples: iPad and other communication technologies, adaptive equipment, and other technologies
**PASRR: Current use of adaptive technology**

- For people who need nursing facility care, to maintain or increase independence and connections to community.

*Examples: iPads with communication software, tactile symbol systems, switches, resident-specific technology training for staff assistive devices to allow independence in activities of daily living.*
Assistive Technology

*The future of Assistive Technology at DDA?*

**Utilization:**
- More People using Technology!

**Knowledge:**
- Know the new stuff that is coming out!

**Person Centeredness:**
- People living the lives they want to live
- Increased independence

**Creativity**
- The system fosters a **creative approach** to accessing technologies
- Think outside the box!
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