

Improving AT Access for People with Developmental Disabilities



Building & Sustaining an AT Access Infrastructure

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Acknowledgements

✓ Key Collaborators

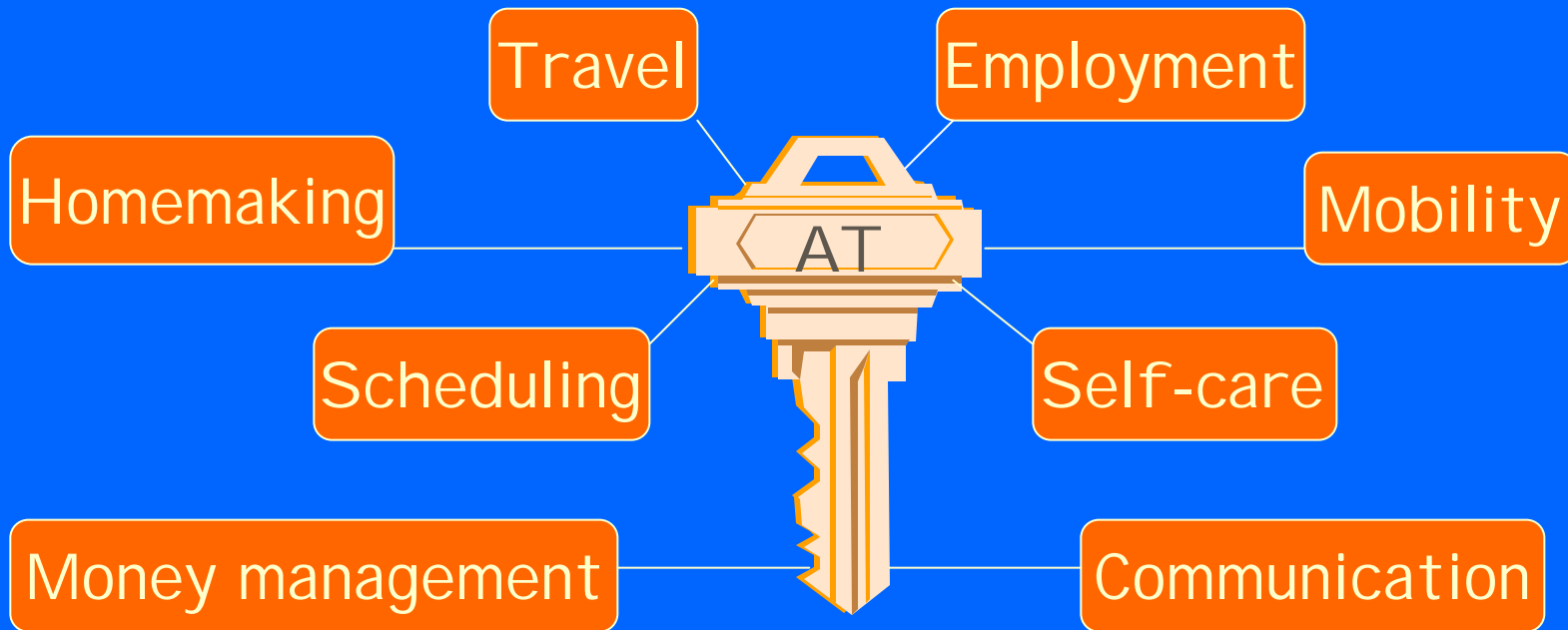
- Joe Keyes, Director of Professional Services, DE Division of Developmental Disabilities Services
- Dawn Stewart, Director of Therapy Services, Stockley Center

✓ Key Funding Sources

- ✓ AT Act of 1998 (NI DRR)
- ✓ Real Choice Systems Change Grant (CMS)
- ✓ Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council

Assistive Technology Is Key To...

Independent and safe community living



Is AT getting to everyone who
might benefit from it?

A thick, horizontal yellow brushstroke with a textured, painterly appearance, extending across the width of the slide below the question.

NO!

Delaware's Experience

- ✓ Precipitating Factor:
 - QA visit to community residence –
AT available but not used
- ✓ Two studies examined the causes
- ✓ Ongoing efforts to improve AT access and use

Study #1

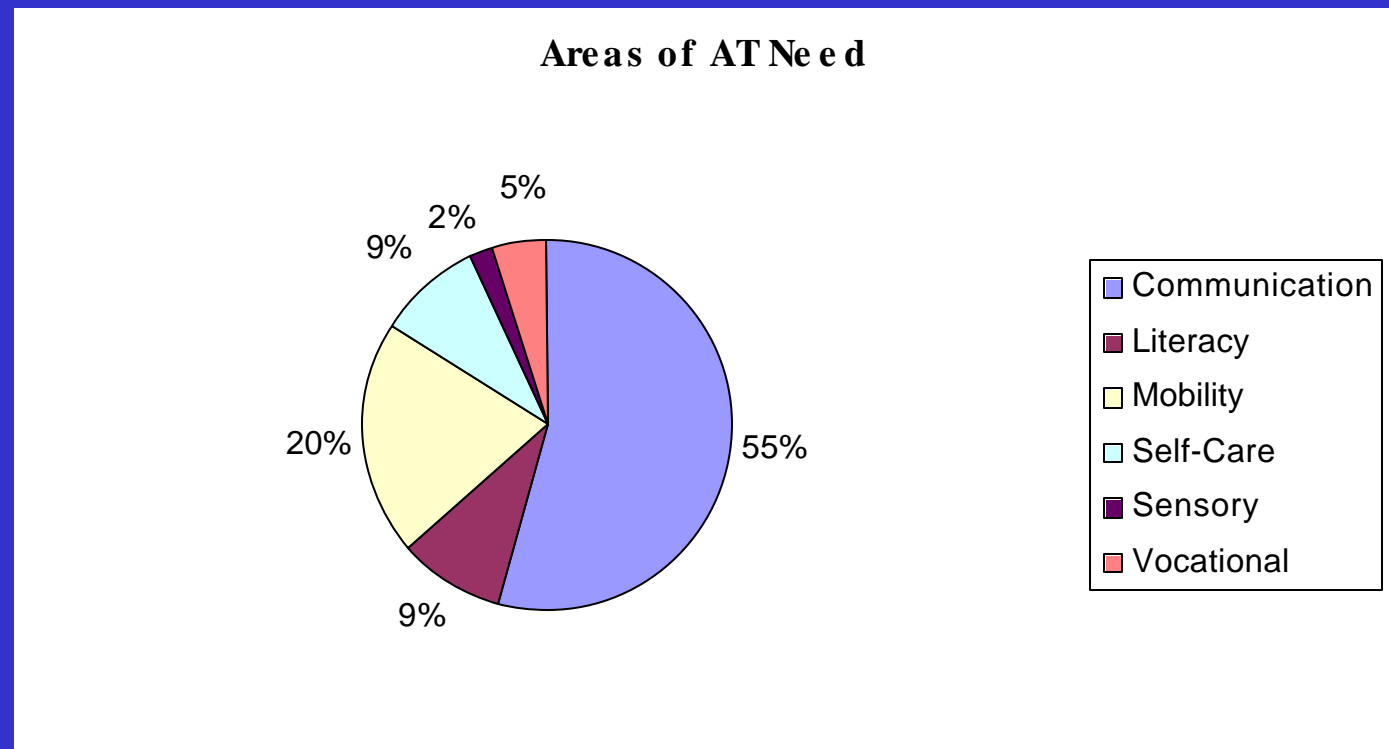
- ✓ Representative sample of Division of Mental Retardation caseload (N=50)
- ✓ AT needs screened ⇒ 80% referred for further evaluation
 - Evaluation driven by screening results
 - Consumer, family, & provider involvement
 - Up to 4 disciplines involved
 - Average cost of evaluation = \$360

Study #1 Results

- ✓ Projected cost for addressing needs = \$2,300 per person (n=34)
- ✓ Costs averaged across entire sample = \$1,550 per person
- ✓ Estimates included devices and services to meet immediate needs only

Study #1 Results

- ✓ 68% of study population had an **immediate need** for AT devices and services



Study #2

- ✓ Study #1 participants followed for 15 months to:
 - examine the extent to which their needs were met
 - identify elements that either facilitated or hampered AT access

Study #2 Results

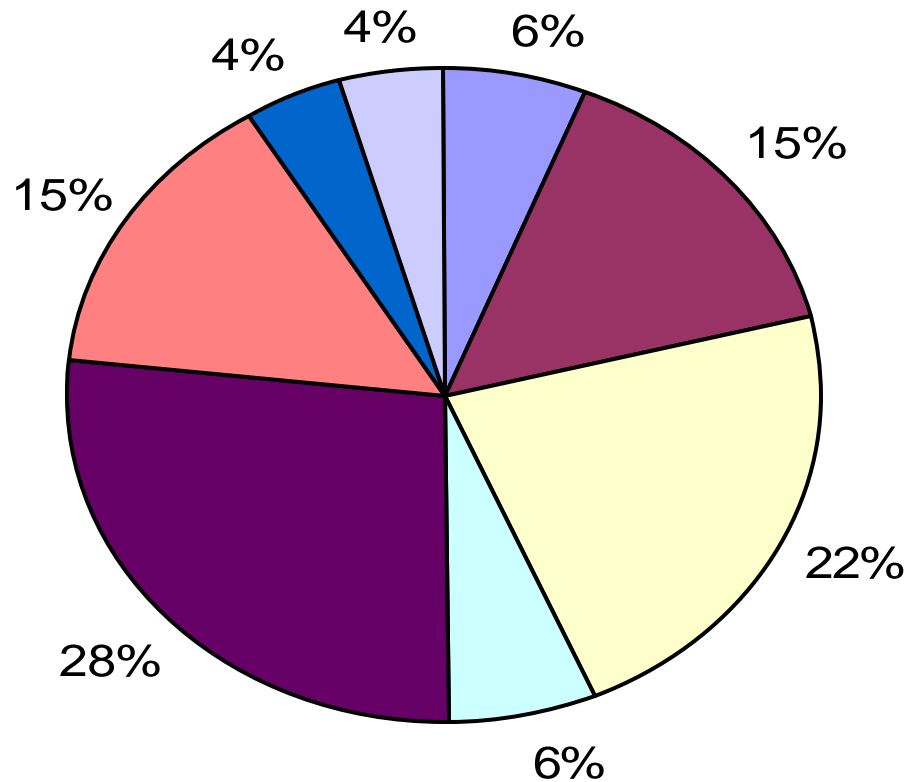
- ✓ 74% of those who needed AT had at least some of their device/service needs met
- ✓ 91% continued to have unmet needs

Study #2 Results

- ✓ Contrary to popular belief, lack of funding resources was not the primary barrier.
- ✓ Confusion about how to **access** that funding was the problem.

Study #2 Results

Funding Sources



- Personal/Family Funds
- Medicaid
- Private Insurance
- Medicare/Medicaid
- School
- Equipment Lending Libraries
- Stockley Center
- Special Populations

Study #2 Results

- ✓ Those residing in the state institution (Stockley Center) enjoyed much better AT access than those living in the community because of Stockley's investment in:
 - staff development (skill & attitudes)
 - an equipment inventory
 - the development of policies/procedures streamlining AT access

Study #2 Results

Those with a successful AT outcome had the benefit of an advocate concerned with timely and appropriate acquisition of devices/services.

Study #2 Conclusion

- ✓ Delaware's MR/DD system would benefit from an AT access infrastructure with:
 - qualified providers
 - technology availability
 - coordination
 - responsive and consistent policies and practices
 - enabling attitudes

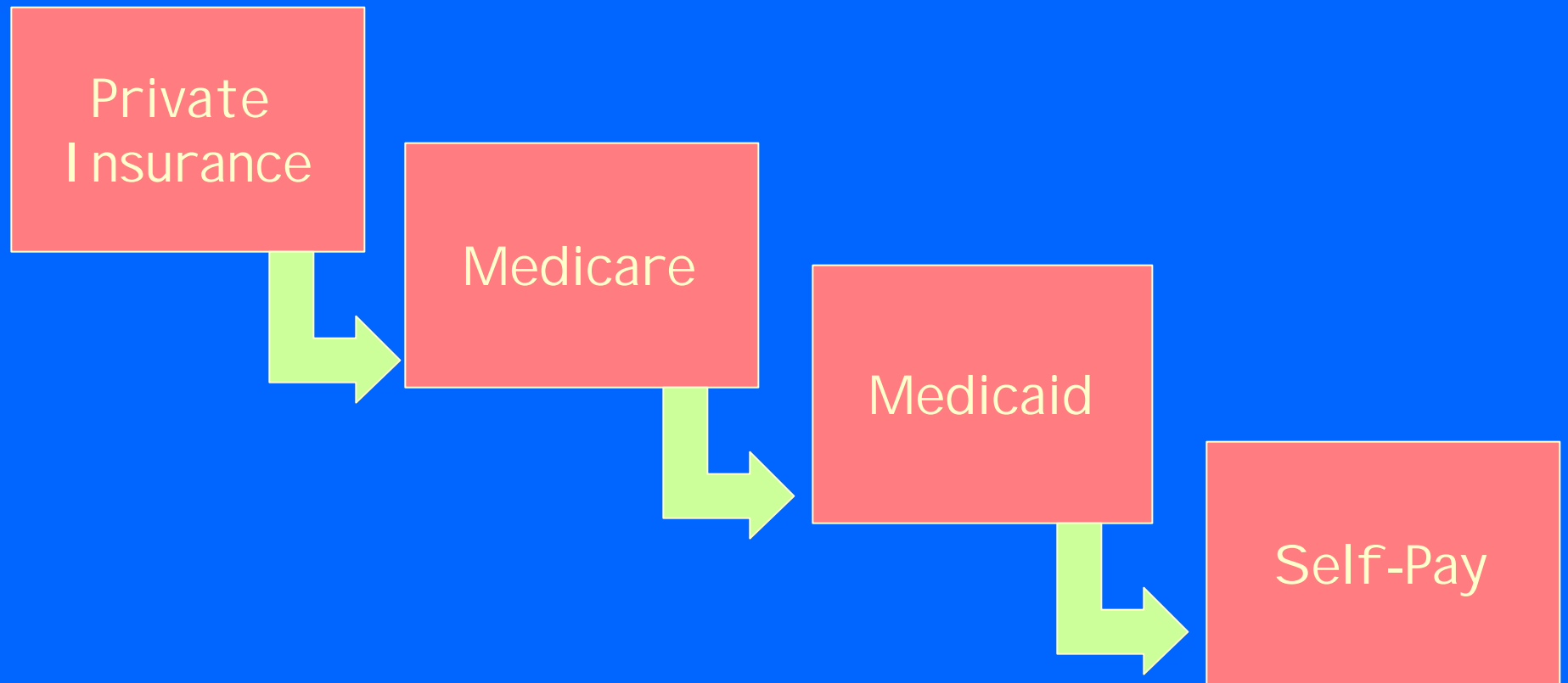
Steps in the Right Direction

- ✓ Clarification of policies related to AT access
- ✓ *Comprehensive Guide to AT Resources for DDDS Clients in Delaware*
- ✓ Intensive AT training for case managers
- ✓ Incorporation of AT screenings into annual planning process
- ✓ Establishment of AT Recycling Center

Policy Clarification

- ✓ Process – who, what, when, & how
- ✓ Funding streams – what, for whom, under what circumstances
- ✓ Payment cascade

Payment Cascade



Gaps in Support Remain

- ✓ Private insurance more limited than Medicaid
- ✓ DE MR/DD waiver made more restrictive
- ✓ Natural families lack support
- ✓ Medicaid doesn't cover key areas of AT
 - Home mods, vehicle mods, sensory aids, ECUs

Comprehensive Resource Guide



✓ Contents

- Guide to Funding Resources
- Guide to Service Providers

✓ Format

- Very large notebook
- Website with search capabilities

AT Curriculum

- ✓ 12 modules spanning 3 months
- ✓ Familiarization with broad spectrum of AT, home mods, & vehicle mods
 - Key considerations
 - Funding & policy issues
- ✓ Active and experiential learning
- ✓ Mentored case management

Curriculum Modules

- Overview
- Identifying AT Needs
- Positioning & Mobility I
- Positioning & Mobility II
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Overview
- Language Facilitation through AAC
- Tools for Sensory Enhancement
- AT for Learning, Working & Playing
- Home Modifications
- Low & High Tech Tools for Activities of Daily Living
- Accessing AT: Funding & Policy Perspectives
- Summative Experience

AT "Screening" Tool

- ✓ Addresses wide range of domains
- ✓ Mechanism for systematic consideration of AT
- ✓ Catalyst for team deliberations
- ✓ Documentation of functioning
- ✓ Helpful in transition planning

Priority Area	Activities	Independent/Adequate		Partially Independent		Dependent		Not Applicable
		No AT	W/ AT	No AT	W/ AT	No AT	W/ AT	
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS								
Personal Transportation								
	•gets in and out safely							
	•uses vehicle safety mechanism (e.g., harness, seat belt, tie-down system, carseat)							
	•places/stores mobility device in vehicle							
	•drives							
Comments/Concerns:								

Priority Area	Activities	Independent/Adequate		Partially Independent		Dependent		Not Applicable
		No AT	W/ AT	No AT	W/ AT	No AT	W/ AT	
Positioning & Mobility								
	•sits							
	•is mobile in bed							
	•transfers							
	•stands							
	•stands for prolonged periods							
	•walks on flat surface							
	•walks on uneven surface							
	•walks on incline/stairs							
	•is mobile in wheelchair							
	•changes position as needed							

Equipment Recycling

- ✓ DATI's Equipment Exchange program
 - Additional functionality when "web-ized"
- ✓ DDDS Center established to take in unused equipment

In The Works...



- ✓ Formalized process for AT follow-up
- ✓ Equipment tracking database
- ✓ More systematic reclamation of unused equipment
- ✓ AT support infrastructure

For more information...



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RESNA Technical Assistance Project

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