

## **Guidance for commissioning local AAC services and equipment**

### **Target audience**

Health and Wellbeing Boards  
CCG, Education and Social Care Commissioners  
Health Watch representatives  
Therapy Service Managers  
SEN Service leads  
Special school head teachers  
Local AAC professionals / services  
Local professionals supporting children and adults who need / use AAC  
Families, children and adults who need / use AAC  
Specialised AAC Services

### **What is AAC?**

The term Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) covers a huge range of techniques that support or replace spoken communication. These include gesture, signing, symbols, communication boards and books, as well as powered and computerised devices such as voice output communication aids (VOCAs). The idea behind AAC is to use the person's abilities, whatever they are, to compensate for their difficulties and to make communication as quick, simple and effective as possible when speech is impaired. Enabling people to communicate improves their quality of life. It offers people new opportunities in their family life, education, social life, friendships and employment, and helps to increase their independence.

### **Who uses AAC?**

Some children and adults find communication difficult because they have little or no clear speech. There are many reasons why this might be the case including a congenital disability such as cerebral palsy, learning disability, autism or an acquired disability such as Motor Neurone Disease, stroke or brain damage following an injury.

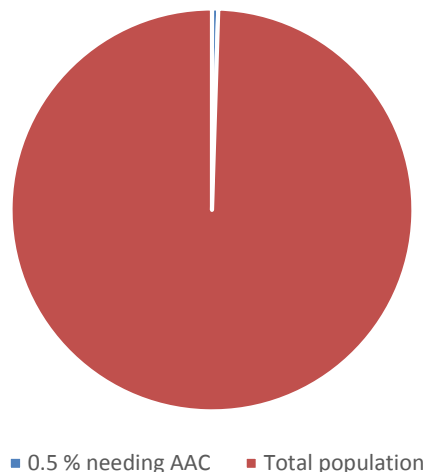
### **Commissioning AAC services**

There is a history of challenges relating to funding for AAC services and equipment for children and adults who need / use AAC, which has led to the commissioning of "specialised" and "local" AAC services, which has also been described as the AAC 'Hub and Spoke' model.

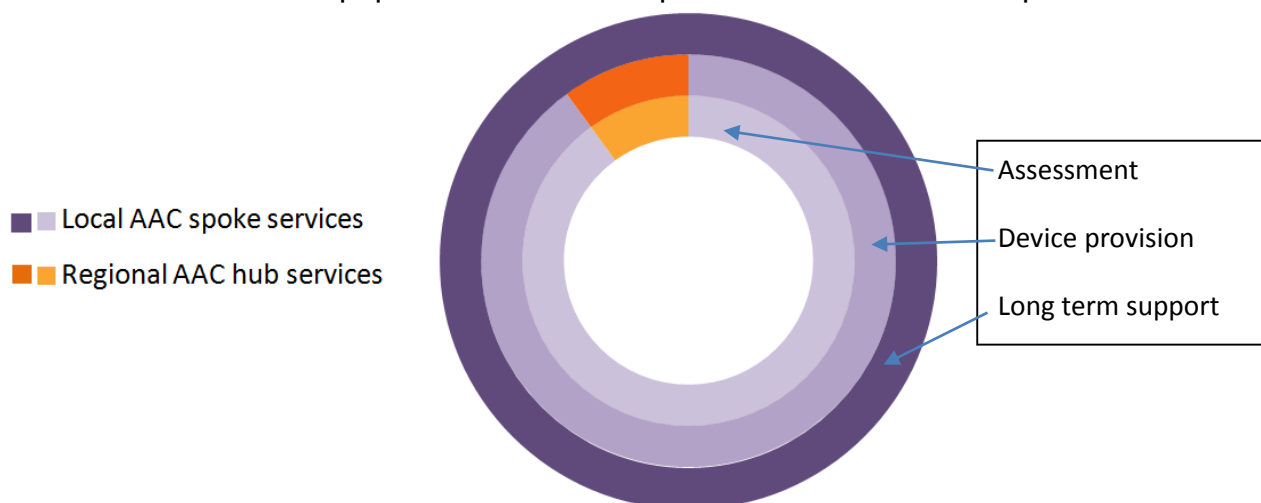
Specialised AAC Services are now funded directly by NHS England and will provide assessment, review and equipment for those with the most complex communication needs who are likely to require a high tech powered communication aid. This is likely to equate to approx.0.05% of the population. However, 0.5% of the population will be children and adults who need AAC and who will need to be supported by local AAC services, which will be commissioned by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), education and social care commissioners and overseen by Health and Wellbeing Boards that have been established in every Local Authority in England.

Local AAC services will also be required to provide ongoing support for those individuals who have been referred to specialised AAC services.

% population needing AAC



% AAC population who need specialised and local AAC provision



### The remit of a local AAC service

A local AAC service would provide:

- an expertise in low-tech and non-specialised AAC strategies and techniques<sup>1</sup>
- a multi-disciplinary team, which typically includes S&LTs, OTs, education professionals and Assistive Technologists
- an assessment and loan bank of AAC equipment and resources which would enable the local team to:
  - carry out pre-referral assessment of AAC skills and provide comprehensive referral information to the specialised service

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions/augmentative-and-alternative-communication-%28aac%29.aspx>

- provide low or light tech (direct access, text based or simple symbol based) solutions to clients, either for trial during assessment or for long term provision
- training of the team around an individual being provided with AAC
- ongoing support for individuals referred to the specialised service, with responsibility for re-referral if and when appropriate
- local awareness raising of the need for and benefits of AAC interventions within local health, social care and education services and settings
- support in establishing and reviewing local funding arrangements between health, social care and education commissioners
- the management of the local AAC care pathway for children and adults with less complex needs and make appropriate referrals to specialised AAC and other relevant services and coordinate the support required
  
- monitoring and recording of outcome measures, reviewing the impact of individual care plans and analysing and reporting data in relation to the local AAC population to commissioners at local and regional levels as required

Training will continue to be a shared responsibility or will be the responsibility of both specialist and local services for those who meet the specialised AAC service eligibility criteria

### **The need for a local AAC budget**

In addition to commissioning a local AAC service, a jointly commissioned budget is required in order to:

- enable professionals within existing local health, education and social care services to deliver local AAC services as defined above
- access professional development opportunities to develop and maintain the required level of expertise
- provide and maintain assessment equipment and resources for the local AAC service
- provide and maintain AAC equipment and resources for those children and adults who do not meet the eligibility criteria for referral to specialised AAC services
- access short term loans of higher cost equipment for assessment

### **SEND Code of Practice and AAC**

There are specific references within the SEND Code of Practice 2014 to joint commissioning of AAC services and the inclusion of local AAC provision within the Local Offer. There is a specific requirement for specialised AAC services commissioned by NHS England to support the establishment, training and development of local AAC services.

## The remit of specialised AAC services

Specialised AAC services have been commissioned by NHS England in ten specialised commissioning regions across England. For further details of these services, see Appendix 1.

The role of specialised services is:

- To provide equitable national specialist AAC services across the country for children and adults with complex communication needs
- To provide appropriate powered communication aids as a long term loan to clients for as long as the client needs and effectively uses the device.
- To maintain a loan bank of powered communication aids for assessment, trial and long term loan
- To provide specialist AAC advice and information and training to individuals, families and professionals involved in the delivery of local AAC services
- To support the establishment, training and development of local AAC services.

## The criteria for referral to a specialised AAC service

- An individual who would access a specialist AAC service would have the following:
- a severe/complex communication difficulty associated with a range of physical, cognitive, learning, or sensory deficits
- a clear discrepancy between their level of understanding and ability to speak.

In addition, an individual *must*:

- be able to understand the purpose of a communication aid;
- have developed beyond cause and effect understanding;

and may:

- have experience of using low tech AAC which is insufficient to enable them to realise their communicative potential.

**Exclusion criteria** would be:

- preverbal communication skills;
- not having achieved cause and effect understanding;
- have impaired cognitive abilities that would prevent the user from retaining information on how to use equipment.

## Prioritisation criteria

- Priority will be given to referrals received for assessments / reviews / QA of patients' resident within the specialised commissioning region of the service
- Priority will also be given to patients with a rapidly degenerative condition, e.g. MND and efforts will be made to ensure these patients are assessed and / or provided with equipment as soon as is practically possible.

- Priority will be given to patients who have communication aid equipment currently but that has ceased to be functional or is significantly unreliable, in order to meet their communication needs.
- Priority will be given to patients facing a transition to a new sector / school / college / workplace environment or currently in rehabilitation provision.
- Priority will be given to patients who are at risk of developing significant psychological / challenging behaviour as a consequence of their inability to communicate without a communication aid.

**Service specification: D01 S/b: “Complex Disability Equipment – Communication aids (Specialised AAC services) NHS England**

**Useful links**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Website address</b>
Up to date information on the latest developments on NHS England commissioning of specialised AAC services	<a href="http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/aac-commissioning-england">http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/aac-commissioning-england</a>
NHS England information about commissioning complex disability equipment services	<a href="http://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/specialised-services/npc-crg/group-d/d01/">http://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/specialised-services/npc-crg/group-d/d01/</a>
A very useful tool for understanding the AAC competency and skills base of your local workforce	<a href="http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions/augmentative-and-alternative-communication-%28aac%29.aspx">http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions/augmentative-and-alternative-communication-%28aac%29.aspx</a>
Information about AAC suppliers	<a href="http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/resources/aac-suppliers">http://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/page/resources/aac-suppliers</a>
An online searchable database of AAC resources and products	<a href="http://www.speechbubble.org.uk/">http://www.speechbubble.org.uk/</a>
Online resources to raise awareness about AAC	<a href="http://www.nowhearme.co.uk/">http://www.nowhearme.co.uk/</a>
An example of a local AAC service within the Local Offer	<a href="http://manchester.fsd.org.uk/kb5/manchester/fsd/service.page?record=RW5bjvB8Jlo">http://manchester.fsd.org.uk/kb5/manchester/fsd/service.page?record=RW5bjvB8Jlo</a>
Online database of communication aids communication software	<a href="http://www.speechbubble.org.uk/">http://www.speechbubble.org.uk/</a>
National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Assistive Technologies Enter the NOS prefix CHS140 into the search box	<a href="https://tools.skillsforhealth.org.uk/">https://tools.skillsforhealth.org.uk/</a>
Communication Consortium of voluntary sector organisations supporting children and young people with speech, language and communication needs	<a href="http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/redirect/localoffer/">http://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/redirect/localoffer/</a>

## Appendix 1

### Specialised AAC services and NHS specialised commissioning regions

Specialised commissioning region	Service name	Contact details
North West	<a href="#">ACE Centre (North West)</a> Based in: Oldham	Tel: 0161 358 0151 Contact: Lisa Farrand Email: <a href="mailto:lfarrand@acecentre.org.uk">lfarrand@acecentre.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.acecentre.org.uk">http://www.acecentre.org.uk</a>
North East	<a href="#">Regional Communication Aid Service</a> Based in: Newcastle upon Tyne	Tel: 0191 287 5240 Contact: Julie Ann Young (team secretary) Email: <a href="mailto:RCAS@ntw.nhs.uk">RCAS@ntw.nhs.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/sd.php?l=2&amp;d=9&amp;sm=35&amp;id=243">http://www.ntw.nhs.uk/sd.php?l=2&amp;d=9&amp;sm=35&amp;id=243</a>
Yorkshire and Humber	<a href="#">Barnsley Assistive Technology Service</a> Based in: Barnsley	Tel: 01226 432 159 Contact: Simon Judge Email: <a href="mailto:barnsley.at@nhs.net">barnsley.at@nhs.net</a> Website: <a href="http://www.barnsleyhospital.nhs.uk/at">http://www.barnsleyhospital.nhs.uk/at</a>
West Midlands	<a href="#">ACT (Access to Communication and Technology)</a> Based in: Birmingham	Tel: 0121 466 3050 Contact: Jacquie Atkinson Email: <a href="mailto:jacqueline.atkinson@bhamcommunity.nhs.uk">jacqueline.atkinson@bhamcommunity.nhs.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/about-us/clinical-services/specialist-services/r...">http://www.bhamcommunity.nhs.uk/about-us/clinical-services/specialist-services/r...</a>
East Midlands	<a href="#">Lincolnshire Adult's AAC Service</a> Based in: Lincoln	Tel: 01522 340 504 ext 201 Contact: Tony Swann Email: <a href="mailto:tony.swann@lincs-chs.nhs.uk">tony.swann@lincs-chs.nhs.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.lincolnshirecommunityhealthservices.nhs.uk/">http://www.lincolnshirecommunityhealthservices.nhs.uk/</a>
Wessex & Thames Valley	<a href="#">ACE Centre (Wessex &amp; Thames Valley)</a> Based in: Cassington	Tel: 01865 759800 Contact: Martin Fisher Email: <a href="mailto:mfisher@acecentre.org.uk">mfisher@acecentre.org.uk</a> Website: <a href="http://www.acecentre.org.uk">http://www.acecentre.org.uk</a>
East of England	<a href="#">TBC</a> Based in:	Tel: Contact: Email: Website:
South West	<a href="#">Bristol Communication Aid Service</a> Based in: Bristol	Tel: 0117 340 3946 Contact: Rose Hiles (office administrator) Email: <a href="mailto:cacadmin@nbt.nhs.uk">cacadmin@nbt.nhs.uk</a>

	<p><a href="#">Dame Hannah Rogers Trust</a> Based in: Ivybridge</p>	<p>Website: <a href="http://www.nbt.nhs.uk/BCAS">http://www.nbt.nhs.uk/BCAS</a>          Tel: 01752 892 461          Contact: Adam Clark (administrator)          Email: <a href="mailto:adam.clark@discoverhannahs.org">adam.clark@discoverhannahs.org</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.discoverhannahs.org">http://www.discoverhannahs.org</a></p>
London	<p><a href="#">Compass Assistive and Rehabilitation Technology Service</a> Based in: London</p> <p><a href="#">Wolfson Neurodisability Team - Communication Service</a> Based in: London</p>	<p>Tel: 020 8780 4500 ext 5099          Contact: Gary Derwent          Email: <a href="mailto:compass@rhn.org.uk">compass@rhn.org.uk</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.rhn.org.uk/compass">http://www.rhn.org.uk/compass</a></p> <p>Tel: 020 7405 9200 ext 1144          Contact: Tom Griffiths          Email: <a href="mailto:tom.griffiths@gosh.nhs.uk">tom.griffiths@gosh.nhs.uk</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.gosh.nhs.uk/gosh/clinicalservices/Neurodisability/Homepage">http://www.gosh.nhs.uk/gosh/clinicalservices/Neurodisability/Homepage</a></p>
South East	<p><a href="#">Kent Adult Communication and Assistive Technology</a> Based in: Canterbury</p> <p><a href="#">Chailey Heritage Clinical Services</a> Based in: Lewes</p>	<p>Tel: 01227 864 083          Contact: Ladan Najafi          Email: <a href="mailto:acat.service@nhs.net">acat.service@nhs.net</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.ekhft.nhs.uk/acat">http://www.ekhft.nhs.uk/acat</a></p> <p>Tel: 01825 722 112          Contact: Dr Donna Cowan          Email: <a href="mailto:donna.cowan@nhs.net">donna.cowan@nhs.net</a>          Website: <a href="http://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/chailey">http://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/chailey</a></p>

## Appendix 2

### **Definition of communication aids**

Eligibility to access specialised AAC services and equipment provision is dependent upon the patient meeting the eligibility criteria as defined within the NHS England service specification D01 S/b.

Low Tech Communication Aids are those devices that do not require power to operate (e.g. paper based).

Communication Aids typically provided by local commissioning arrangements are mainstream and may be used for a limited range of communication production. Simple / text-based devices are often termed 'light tech' and generally include some or all of the following features: they are used to produce a relatively small number of utterances; are used to produce only single-concept utterances; have overlays or physical interfaces; are battery powered; use recorded speech. Non specialised devices also include those devices that require message formulation by spelling and through direct access with the device.

Communication Aids typically provided by specialised commissioning arrangements are those devices that are intended for use by an individual with a severe speech impairment to achieve an extensive range of expressive communication. These devices may also be referred to as 'high tech' and 'powered' communication aids. These devices tend to include some or all of the following features: use language packages within AAC software; allow for an extensive range of communication functions; use multiple pages of vocabulary and linguistic concepts which could not be replicated in other ways; use synthesised speech; mains powered or charged; based on a computer platform; require alternative access methods, e.g. using switches.

Communication aids provided by specialised commissioning arrangements may be based on mainstream technology such as tablet computers or more dedicated hardware. They will include specialist communication software (that takes a user's input and outputs synthesised speech), vocabularies or language systems loaded into the software and accessories (such as access methods, speakers etc.).



### Appendix 3

#### Local AAC service case studies

<b>North and North East Lincs Communication Aids Referral Team (CART)</b>
<p><b>Aims and objectives of service</b> C.A.R.T. is a multidisciplinary team working to support the assessment and provision of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) for any age group, regardless of condition, across North and North East Lincolnshire.</p>
<p><b>Service description/care pathway</b> C.A.R.T. is made up of Speech and Language Therapists, Teaching Assistants, Special Needs Teachers and Technical Support from services and schools across North and North East Lincolnshire. The C.A.R.T Pathway is a set of protocols to be followed from the initial referral process to the provision of the equipment. This service is jointly commissioned by health and education commissioners from across the geographical region</p>
<p><b>Population covered</b> C.A.R.T. supports the following groups: Children with learning disabilities, adults with degenerative diagnosis, adults with learning disabilities, adults and children with physical disabilities, adults with acquired brain injuries, adults with head and neck cancer, adults post stroke, adults and children with a combination of difficulties who live in North or North East Lincolnshire</p>
<p><b>Any acceptance and exclusion criteria and thresholds</b> C.A.R.T. accepts referrals that have been approved by their steering group, which comprises of health and education commissioners, head teachers and service leads from across the two authorities.</p>
<p><b>Interdependence with other services/providers</b> C.A.R.T. works closely with the local community equipment service, wheelchair service and ACE Centre/Barnsley AT service for professional development and support for referrals of individuals with more complex needs</p>

<b>Liverpool Communication, Augmentative, Assistive Technology (CAAT)Team</b>
<p><b>Aims and objectives of service</b> The CAAT team provides services for children and young people who require technology to support their communication in schools across Liverpool.</p>
<p><b>Service description/care pathway</b> The CAAT Team comprises of health and education professionals from special schools across Liverpool and the service has a coordinator based in Springwood Heath School. Referrals are received via Liverpool schools or health professionals and assessment support is agreed and delivered by identified members of the CAAT team. Any equipment recommendations are then purchased from an equipment budget that is jointly funded by children's services and the CCG.</p>
<p><b>Population covered</b> The CAAT service is available to any children or young people meeting their eligibility criteria and in early years or full time education in Liverpool</p>
<p><b>Any acceptance and exclusion criteria and thresholds</b> The CAAT service uses the following eligibility criteria:</p>

Children who have complex communication needs.  
 Children who have physical difficulties that are a barrier to their communication.  
 Children who struggle to communicate their basic needs.  
 Children who have thoughts and ideas but no way to express them.  
 Children who experience frustration when not able to communicate what they want, when they want to.  
 Their development of speech is significantly delayed or unlikely to develop.  
 Children who need to use pictures or symbols to support their communication.  
 Formalising communication intent.

**Interdependence with other services/providers**

The CAAT service works closely with ACE Centre and seeks support appropriate to the needs of the individual child / young person

**Gloucestershire AAC (paediatric) Service**

**Aims and Objectives of Service**

Gloucestershire AAC Service is a multidisciplinary team of professionals working to support the assessment and provision of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) for children and young people 0-25 years.

**Service Description / Care Pathway**

Gloucestershire AAC Service is managed by The Advisory Teaching Service and consists of an AAC Tutor, Educational Psychologist, and Lead Advisory Teacher. The service offers a graduated assessment approach and works closely with Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, and school staff involved with each individual case.

There is a firm commitment to involve learners and their parents/cares and families at all levels of the process.

The Gloucestershire AAC Care Pathway is a set of protocols to be followed in line with the guidelines issued by The Advisory Teaching Service. The pathway shows progression from the initial referral to the provision of equipment.

The care pathway is jointly agreed and commissioned by Health, Education and Social Care commissioners from across the geographical region

**Population Covered**

The AAC provision relate to the arrangements for children and young adults up to age 25 who are the commissioning responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council (GCC) and NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

**Acceptance and Exclusion Criteria**

Gloucestershire AAC Service accepts referrals from the Speech and Language Therapy Service and Gloucestershire Schools and from professionals from the Special Educational Needs and Disability Team.

New referrals will be screened and discussed and by the AAC Team.

Acceptance of a referral is the first step in the assessment process. It will not always be appropriate for all children and young people with communication difficulties to be in receipt of a voice output communication aid.

**Exclusion Criteria:** children and young people/ young adults up to age 25 who are not the commissioning responsibility of GCC or Gloucestershire CCG are **not** covered by these arrangements. This exclusion applies to those children and young people placed in Gloucestershire by other Local Authorities.

Also excluded are people aged over 25.

**Interdependence with Other Services Providers**

Gloucestershire AAC Service works closely with: -

- Bristol Communication Aid Service (BCAS) for support and referrals of children and young people with more complex needs.
- South West regional AAC special interest group (SIG) meeting.
- AAC SIG meeting held in Oxford

Attendance at national Conferences

**Cornwall AAC Assessment Team (CAACAT)**

**Aims and Objectives of Service**

CAACAT is a multidisciplinary team of a SaLT (NHS) and AAC Technical Officer (Council) working to support the assessment and provision of high tech communication aids for children up to the age of 18 across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

**Service Description / Care Pathway**

CAACAT is made up of a Speech and Language Therapist (1 day per week) and an AAC Technical Officer (3 days). There is strict criteria to access the assessment team and the team has support from the local SaLT. We have access to the local OT but no specialist knowledge. This service is jointly commissioned by Cornwall Foundation NHS Trust and Cornwall Council

**Population Covered**

All Children within Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

**Acceptance and Exclusion Criteria**

**Exclusion Criteria:**

All referrals made via local Salt. Must meet criteria for acceptance. Degenerative conditions are prioritised.

**Interdependence with Other Services Providers**

CAACAT works closely with the wheelchair service and Dame Hannah hub for professional development and support for referrals of individuals with more complex needs

**Gloucester AAC (adult) service**

**Aims and Objectives of Service**

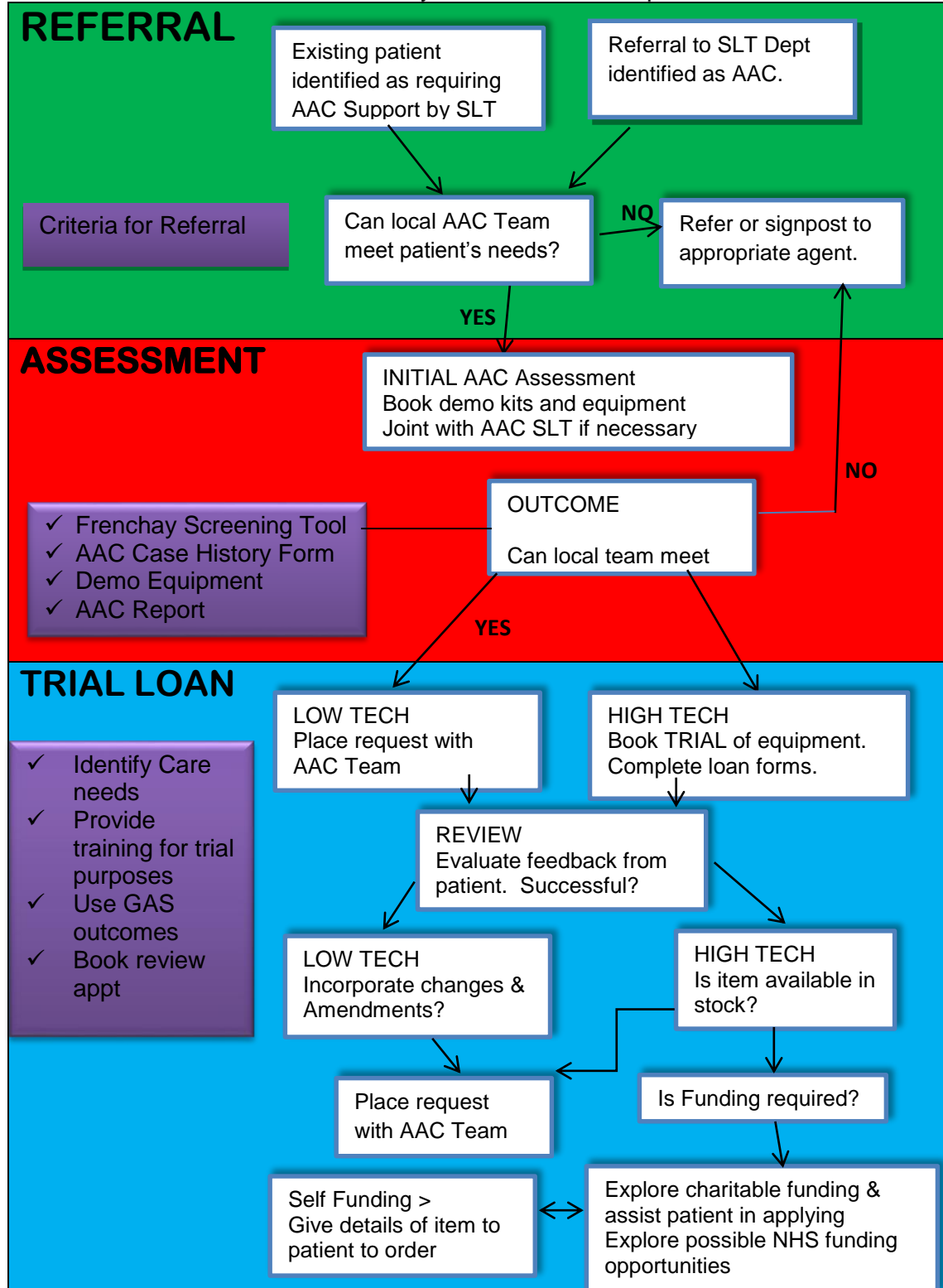
The AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) service aims to provide advice, support, training, assessment and recommendations in relation to the communication aid needs of patients referred to the service. It also aims to, where possible, issue and support the implementation of appropriate augmentative and alternative communication equipment.

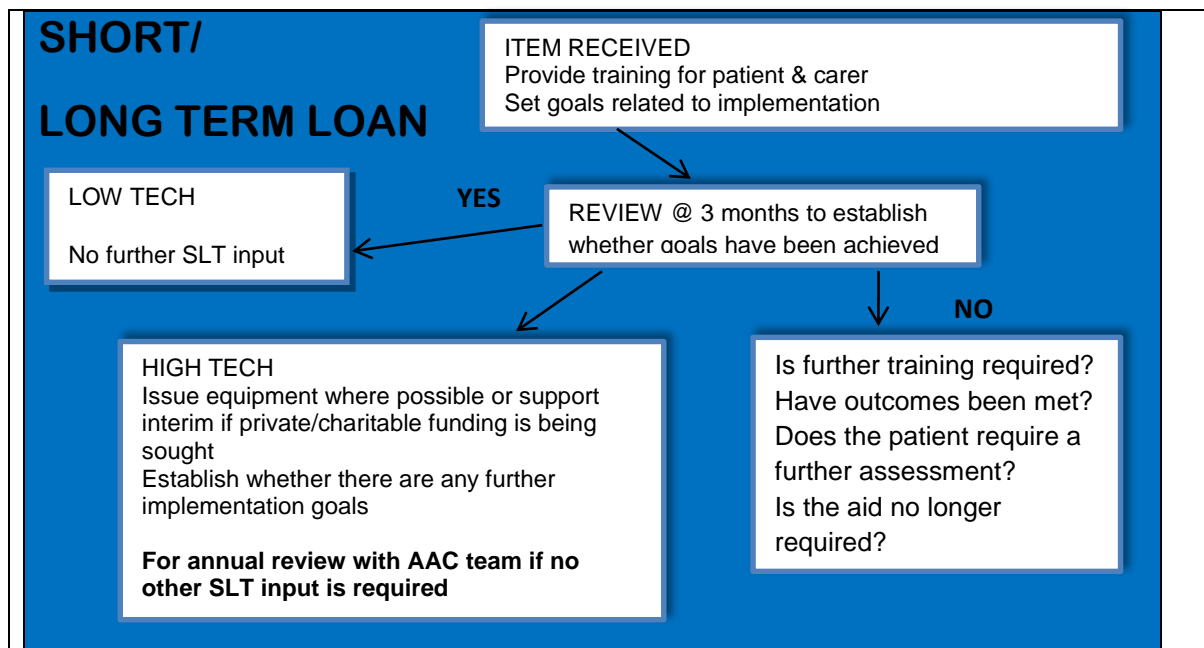
Objectives:

- To continue to offer an excellent level of service for patients with AAC requirements in line with national service standards (Communication Matters 2012)
- To increase access to appropriate AAC
- To increase the awareness of AAC amongst health care professionals and members of the public in Gloucestershire
- To increase specialised knowledge of AAC devices, their capabilities and relevant research in the field of AAC
- To monitor the clinical effectiveness of the service
- To increase use of issued AAC devices to a range of functional situations

## Service Description / Care Pathway

The team consists of a Lead AAC Speech & Language Therapist (Band 7), a specialist SLT (Band 6) and SLT Assistant for the purpose of assessing and advising low tech and certain high tech augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems. The service is provided to people with acquired speech & Language difficulties who are residents within Gloucestershire and have a Gloucestershire GP. Out of county referrals are accepted.





**Population Covered**

A countywide service but out of county referrals from Worcestershire and Herefordshire are accepted.

**Acceptance and Exclusion Criteria**

**Exclusion Criteria:**

People being referred to the service should:

- be over 18 years (referrals relating to transitional adults of 16 years or older will be considered at the managers discretion)
- be registered with a GP
- have a communication difficulty

Referrals are received in the SLT department via telephone 0300 4228105/ 0300 4224120 or email([speechandlanguagetherapyadults@glos.nhs.uk](mailto:speechandlanguagetherapyadults@glos.nhs.uk) )

The Speech and Language Therapy service operates an open referral system, allowing professionals, carers and patients to refer into the service.

Referrals may also be made within the team by therapists requiring specialist support or advice.

The service will not accept referrals of people known to other speech and language therapy services

**Interdependence with Other Services Providers**

Bristol Communication Aids Service (BCAS)

Locality therapists

Industry representatives

<p><b>Leeds Communication Aid Service (CAS)</b></p>
<p><b>Aims and Objectives of Service:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess clients referred for high tech and complex AAC support</li> <li>• Provide generic and individualised AAC training and support to clients and other stakeholders (e.g., families, carers, education providers, adult and paediatric SLTs and health teams)</li> <li>• Provide and maintain a loan bank of high and light tech communication aids</li> <li>• To be a resource of specialist AAC knowledge</li> </ul>
<p><b>Service Description / Care Pathway:</b> AAC service for adults and paediatrics in Leeds; focused on high tech and complex AAC systems. This service sits within the Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust Children’s SLT Service, which is commissioned by the CCG. Equipment is provided on long term loan and is owned and maintained by the service. Most referrals come from the local SLT supporting the client, although the referral system is open. The local SLT can loan equipment from the CAS loan bank at the point of referral, providing they are able to support its implementation. CAS will follow up on these once the client reaches the top of the waiting list. Input from the service is provided at a range of different intensities in order to be responsive to the client’s needs. Currently the staffing levels are: 0.8 Band 7 AAC Highly Specialist SLT, 0.2 + 0.5(bank) Band 6 AAC Specialist SLTs, 0.5 Band 5 Senior Specialist Technical Instructor, 0.7 Band 4 Technician within the core CAS team. The team is currently undergoing a restructure as part of the wider Children’s SLT Service, so this configuration may be subject to change.</p>
<p><b>Population Covered:</b> Adults and paediatrics with a Leeds GP or Consultant, or in full time statutory education in Leeds.</p>
<p><b>Acceptance and Exclusion Criteria</b></p> <p><b>Exclusion Criteria:</b> All referrals for adults and children within the Leeds area requiring high tech or complex AAC assessment will be accepted.</p>
<p><b>Interdependence with Other Services Providers:</b> Links with the other branches of the Children’s SLT Service, Adult Speech and Swallowing Team (SLT), Adult Acute and Outpatient SLT Service, Learning Disability SLT Service, MND Team, the ICAN Service (OT, Physio), the SILCs (Specialist Inclusive Learning Centres) and physical disability resourced mainstream schools, Physical Disability &amp; Medical Team (Local Authority), Leeds Wheelchair Services, communication aid suppliers and Barnsley Assistive Technology team.</p>

<p><b>Sheffield Adult AAC Service</b></p>
<p><b>Aims and Objectives of Service:</b> to assess, support and source AAC equipment for people with communication difficulties. The service offers training to staff and families supporting AAC implementation.</p>
<p><b>Service Description / Care Pathway:</b> AAC service for Adults in Sheffield. This service is commissioned by health and is part of the wider speech therapy team. The team has an AAC specialist speech and language therapists who works closely with the wider speech therapy team. Funding for communication aids is applied for through health.</p>
<p><b>Population Covered:</b> Sheffield adults (post statutory education)</p>
<p><b>Acceptance and Exclusion Criteria</b></p>

**Exclusion Criteria:** All adults within the Sheffield area requiring AAC assessment or support will be accepted.

**Interdependence with Other Services Providers:** Links with Adult SLT Service, Adult OT Service, Medical Physics, Paediatric AAC Service, Barnsley Assistive Technology team.