

Road Map #1: Individuals with Independent Communication

(Individuals who have the ability to communicate about any topic in any context with any partner; this means they have reliable communication and can spell well enough to communicate about novel topics. They may use pre-programmed vocabulary and/or other speed enhancement techniques in addition to spelling.)

Step #1: Referral (Self or other)

Key: R = Resources from the accompanying resource list.

Step #2: Functional Assessment

Interview individual to determine:

R 1,4, 11, 12, 14, 15 33, 34

- ❖ What does this individual want from this assessment/intervention?
At what level of the ICF does the client want your assistance: the impairment, activity limitations or participation restrictions?
- ❖ What are the current symbolic and non-symbolic communication methods?
- ❖ Which methods work well/poorly with which partners in what contexts?

Determine these aspects of underlying speech/language impairment:

R 1,4,5,6, B1, B2

- ❖ Nature of impairment (through report or actual assessment)
- ❖ History of treatment; efficacy of further treatment
- ❖ History & efficacy of speech supplementation techniques

Ask yourself whether you/your team are the right professionals to assist:

- ❖ Knowledgeable about this impairment and its interventions? R: 1,2,4,5,7
- ❖ Familiar with integrating high and low technology?
- ❖ Familiar with AAC system features to address new technology?

Step #3: Identifying Potential Options

R B1, B2

Treatment of the underlying impairment

R25

- ❖ Speech intervention (e.g. dysarthria, palatal lift)
- ❖ Medical treatment (e.g. drugs, surgery)

Modifying the environment

- ❖ Changing jobs (e.g. if dysarthria is progressing)
- ❖ Hearing aid for spouse (if speech too quiet)

Alternative communication or assistive technology options

A features-based approach is essential for identifying appropriate technology options. The team must already understand AAC features in depth.

- ❖ Speech amplifier (e.g. if speech too quiet) R15, 26, 27
- ❖ Speech supplementation (e.g. alphabet board)
- ❖ Augmentative communication device or strategy

Step #4: Deciding among the options

Note: An independent communicator is the one who decides among the options that we might identify and offer with info on the pros and cons.

- ❖ Intervention only?
- ❖ Intervention plus modifying the environment?
- ❖ High tech AAC? Low tech only? In combination with other options?

Step #5: Treatment and/or Acquisition of Equipment

Step #6: Customization

R B1, B2

- ❖ Speed enhancement techniques including pre-programmed vocabulary
- ❖ Mounting and other access issues

Step #7: Outcome Measurement & Re-Assessment