

Capitalizing On Alternative Funding Sources For Purchasing Communication Devices (Parent/Advocate Session)

Date February 10, 2010; 9:45 am to 1:45 pm; \$67 Members/\$79 non-Members

Target Audience

This workshop is targeted at families and their advocates who may be unaware they can use, and may prefer to use, public funds, Medicaid, and/or private insurance to fund AAC devices.

Description of Experience

While schools, through IDEA, are a funding source for communication devices for children in school, they are not the only funding source. Similarly, for students in transition as well as adults in need of AAC, DORS is not the only funding source, either. Some families may be unaware that they can own the device outright (and would actually prefer it if they move frequently or their child is about to transition out of K-12 services). With parental permission, school-based speech therapists can write letters of recommendation to private insurance companies and to Medicaid to obtain these devices. In addition, Medicaid, Medicare, TriCare and Private Insurance will all fund devices (sometimes at 100%). While this process used to be time intensive, device manufacturers have streamlined the process by providing templates and other resources.

This workshop will introduce families to the process and many benefits of using third party funds to acquire AAC devices. Topics reviewed will be:

- Funding timeline
- Multiple benefits of device ownership
 - Maryland Medicaid requirements/restrictions
 - Federal (Medicare) requirements to assist attendees in the understanding of what the state guidelines are based on
 - Importance of multiple device trials
 - Who covers what and how much.

Detailed information on appropriate evaluation process as well as the family, advocates and service coordination roles in the funding process will be presented. Lastly, examples of acceptable and questionable letters of recommendation will be presented in order to heighten attendees' awareness of crucial pitfalls.

Learning Objectives

- Identify a range of funding sources, as well as their respective criteria and eligibility requirements for funding
- Discuss the appropriate evaluation process, essential parties to involve, and the time line from submission to receipt
- Understand the varying perspectives on who is responsible for funding.
- Discuss the reason for not including details of educational need in the Letter of Medical Necessity.

Presented by Diana Jurist