

Selecting a Phone for Independence and Safety

Using phones can be a challenge for people with disabilities for many reasons such as frequently changing technology, access to information and physical and cognitive barriers.

To find the right phone solution and to introduce it successfully, you should consider:

- the users abilities
- where they are going to use the phone
- what they want to use the phone for

Also consider:

- trialling phones
- involving the user and their family in the process
- training in the use of the phone
- ensuring the equipment is kept in good working order



Accessible Landlines

Features:

Landline phones can come with a wide range of accessibility features that include:

- large buttons
- backlighting
- hearing aid compatibility
- adjustable volume
- speaker phone
- one touch dialing

Phones can also be switch-adapted to provide a more accessible method of use. Switches can be activated using any part of the body such as:

- lips
- head
- arms
- legs
- feet

Accessories:

A range of accessories are available for landline phones to make them more accessible including:

- picture or photo dialling adapters
- alerting devices
- cochlear implant adapters
- handset amplifiers
- hearing loop systems

TTY Phones:

Specialised phones known as TTY phones are available for people with hearing and speech impairment. These enable a conversation to be communicated over the phone in written text via the National Relay Service.

In Emergencies:

Some landline phones have the additional feature of a personal alarm button or environmental sensor that can be triggered in an emergency to summon help.

Accessible Mobile Phones

Features:

Some important features to consider when you are selecting a mobile phone are:

- speakerphone capability
- voice dialling
- speed dialling
- predictive text for faster text messaging
- voicemail
- large display
- GPS
- internet
- hearing aid compatibility



Accessories:

A range of accessories and adapters can make mobile phones more accessible, such as:

- switches
- headsets
- loop systems

Smart Phones:

Smart phones have the added feature of a touch screen. Some accessibility features include:

- screen readers
- speech to text
- apps

Apps have many benefits including supporting organisation and time management through calendars and reminders.

Services:

The Independent Living Centre provides an impartial information and advisory service to help you choose the right product for you.

Telecross

Daily phone call to people who live alone or who are at risk of sudden health deterioration.

Call: 1300 885 698

Mobile Accessibility Website

Provides a mobile phone search tool based on accessibility features.

www.gari.info

Telstra Disability Equipment Program

Rents eligible customers specialised equipment to access their standard telephone service.

Call: 1800 068 424

National Relay Service

Helps people with hearing loss or speech difficulties have conversations using a range of equipment and their relay service.

Call: 1300 555 727

Red Button Assure Connect Emergency Call Service

www.redbutton.com.au

The Australian Communication Exchange (ACE) offers a range of services including:

- the Captioned Telephone trial,
- Video Relay Service trial and
- Interpreting service.

Further Information:

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