

**Funding for AAC in England – background information**

Specialised Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) Services are now funded directly by NHS England.

They provide assessment, review and equipment for those with the most complex communication needs.

UK studies suggest the potential need for powered communication aids is between 150 and 500 individuals per million (Judge et al, 2017), whereas the need for wider AAC strategies is estimated at around 5,000 per million (Creer et al, 2016).

Not all powered communication aids are provided by specialised AAC services, and thus the cohort accessing these services is estimated to be less than 500 per million.

**Most children and adults who need AAC will be supported by local AAC services. These are commissioned by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), education and social care commissioners.**

Those accessing local AAC services are likely to be a group around 10 times larger than those using specialised AAC services. That is, around 90% of the AAC population require local AAC services and 10% of the AAC population require specialised AAC services.

If you are seeking funding for a communication aid for a client who is not eligible for Specialised AAC Services, you should approach your CCG for funding. Before doing so, it may be useful to arrange for a quote for the equipment you are recommending, which can be attached to the application.

When recommending communication equipment for a client, it is useful to consider additional costs for items such as mounting or protective cases, as well as for warranties, training and maintenance.

The CCG should be aware of their role in providing funding for AAC. However, if they have no application route for this funding, you may need to complete an Individual Funding Request (IFR).

An IFR is for a patient whose treatment falls under the ‘not normally funded’ category and needs to be considered on an individual patient basis. As outlined above, people requiring AAC equipment are ‘exceptional’ in terms of their needs (approx. 5000 per million).

The following letter template may assist you in this application.

(Please note that there is likely to be an IFR form which will be required to be completed along with this letter – this is usually found on the CCG’s website).

(Insert date)

Dear …………………………………

**RE: INDIVIDUAL FUNDING REQUEST FOR COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT**

I am writing to request individual funding for augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) equipment for …………………………………………………

NHS Number ……………………………………

This individual does not meet the eligibility criteria for assessment by one of the regional NHSE Specialised AAC Services however, they have communication difficulties which are affecting their ability to communicate with others and they require funding for a communication aid.

Therefore, in line with NHS England / Specialised Commissioning guidance (see Guidance for commissioning AAC services and equipment 2016), I would like to request funding for the following equipment / services:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Equipment required** | **Cost** |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
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|  |  |

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In addition, the NHSE Specialised AAC Service providing services in this area ………………………………………………, may also be able to provide rationale as to why CCG funding is appropriate in this case.

Their contact details are:

…………………………………..

……………………………………..

……………………………………..

Yours sincerely,