

What is AAC?

AAC stands for Augmentative and Alternative Communication. AAC is any strategy, tool, system or device that makes communication easier. It's used by people who can't use speech effectively to get their message across.



Types of AAC

- Some AAC does not require any additional equipment. You can use gestures, facial expressions, body language and pointing to express yourself.
- Low-tech AAC means using a simple piece of equipment. You can use a pen and paper or a whiteboard to write messages or you can point to a paper chart.

Here are a couple of examples of paper charts:

A	B	C	D	Number chart	You've misunderstood
E	F	G	H	New Word	Start Again
I	J	K	L	M	N
O	P	Qu	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y	Z

Alphabet chart – you spell out a message

A. Main Needs

A-1 I need suctioning

A-2 I am in pain

A-3 I need to pee

A-4 I need the bedpan

A-5 I am cold/hot

A-6 I need to be cleaned

B. Positioning

B-1 Elevate Head of Bed

B-2 Lower Head of Bed

B-3 Adjust Head Pillow

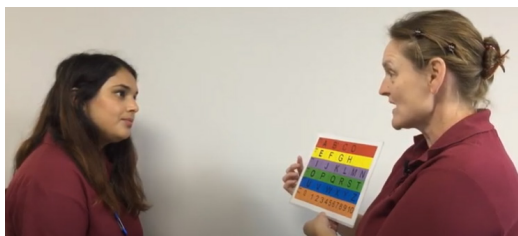
B-4 Adjust Other Pillows

B-5 Pull Me Up

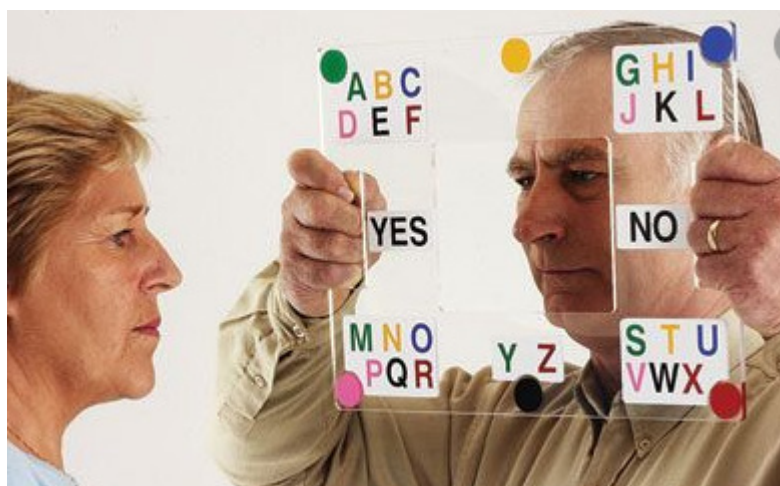
B-6 Elevate Foot of Bed

Phrase chart – you point to a phrase

If pointing is difficult, you can use **partner scanning**. This is when your family/carer hold up the chart and say each row aloud in turn e.g. “is it in row A? Row E?”. You wait until they say the row you want and then indicate ‘yes’ to them. You might nod your head or raise your thumb for this.



Another option is using an **e-tran frame** to spell out messages. Your family/carer holds up the frame as shown in the picture and you look at the letter you want to select. They read your eye movement and confirm that's the letter you wanted to select.



- High-tech AAC means any electronic device that helps you communicate. There are a wide range of special devices, iPad apps and Android apps available. There are other options available if you cannot use a touchscreen e.g. using your eyes, head or feet.



Your Speech and Language Therapist will advise you on the types of the AAC that will work best for you.

Demonstrations of using low-tech AAC:

Compass Assistive Technology YouTube page:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQqCdPZzdKVXgdq-Dzd_bXQ/videos



Compass are the specialised service for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) in West London for adults who have difficulty communicating using speech.

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