

## WisTech Best Practices: Assistive Technology Assessments

### Assistive technology assessments defined

An assistive technology (AT) assessment is a comprehensive and thorough evaluation of an individual's needs, their environments, and the tasks or goals they want to achieve. AT assessments are used to identify and recommend specific devices, services, strategies, and training needed by individuals with disabilities. The goal is to provide comprehensive solutions that increase the capabilities and independence of an individual with disabilities. This includes access at home, school, work, and in the community.

AT assessments may be requested by an individual with a disability or by a service provider such as a school, a long-term care organization, an employer, or a vocational rehabilitation counselor.

### AT assessment providers

AT assessments may be obtained from rehabilitation providers who are employed in settings such as medical facilities, universities, schools, and non-profit agencies, or from a private practitioner. While certification is not required, it can be beneficial. The most common national certifications are the Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) and the Seating and Mobility Specialist (SMS). These can be obtained through the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) (<https://www.resna.org/>). The WisTech AT credential is a Wisconsin-based option for AT service providers (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/wistech/atc-credentials.htm>). AT assessments done by those selling equipment should follow the WisTech Best Practices: Vendors of Assistive Technology support document (<https://dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p20214a.pdf>).

### Referral questions and supporting documentation

The following information should be included when making a referral for an AT assessment:

- The reason for the referral and goals of the individual with a disability
- The individual's disability or disabilities
- Functional skills that are impacted by the disability or disabilities (if known)
- AT devices and solutions that are being used or have been used in the past (if known)
- Any relevant environmental or situational concerns

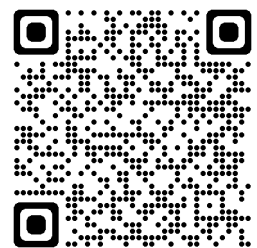
- Any applicable releases of information
- Any additional documentation to support the referral (if applicable)

### **Comprehensive AT assessment and report**

An AT assessment typically results in a comprehensive report that outlines the recommended solutions and strategies for an individual with a disability to address identified goals related to the referral. The report should include all the following information:

- Description of the disability or disabilities and any relevant background information
- Description of the setting where the AT assessment took place and the methods used (for example, hands-on trial of a device)
- Outline of the specific type(s) of AT devices and strategies that were assessed along with the pros and cons of each
- Identification of any variables that impacted the assessment (for example, if the assessment took place at a location other than where the final AT solutions will be used or if devices were not available for the individual to try)
- Outline of the specific type(s) of assistive technology being recommended
- Identification of any potential alternatives to the recommended AT devices and solutions
- Outline of the estimated costs for the recommended devices and strategies
- Identification of training needs for the recommended device(s), who can provide that training (the vendor, manufacturer, or an outside provider), and training-related expenses
- Identification of potential vendors or providers for implementing the recommended devices and strategies
- Identification of any potential funding resources applicable to recommendations
- Outline of any maintenance agreement, warranty information, or other safeguards related to the devices and whether it is included in the cost estimate or available at an additional cost
- Identification of any ongoing costs related to the equipment, maintenance, upgrades, and/or training
- Description of the repair procedures (for example, shipped, in-home, or remote service)
- The availability of loaner equipment before purchase or during repair services
- Identification of any additional or applicable community resources available

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