

Summary of the 2021 Nevada Assistive Technology Collaborative's (NATC) Annual Program Reporting (APR) to the Administration for Community Living (ACL)

The report follows the federal reporting year from October 2020 through September 2021.

Performance Measure data must be collected for each State Level Activity and for any Training that is for Information and Communication Technology accessibility. The Performance Measures and Satisfaction Surveys were established as goals. Created federally within the reporting but were established with input from the Assistive Technology Act programs.

Each consumer must be surveyed for both the Performance Measure questions and the Satisfaction. The consumer also identifies their primary purpose for the AT needed as either Education, Employment, or Community Living. There are two variations of performance measures for the Access To Assistive Technology, such as Device Demonstrations and Device Loans, and for Acquisition Of Assistive Technology for State Finance Programs, Reutilization/Open-Ended-Loans, and Device Loans for short term accommodations.

Acquisition related Performance options:

1. Could only afford the AT through the AT program.
2. AT was only available through the AT program.
3. AT was available through other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time too long.
4. None of the above
5. Nonrespondent

Access related Performance options:

1. Could only afford the AT through the AT program.
2. AT was only available through the AT program.
3. AT was available through other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time too long.
4. None of the above
5. Nonrespondent

Information and Communication Technology Accessibility Training Performance options: What do you anticipate will be the primary outcome of your participation in this training on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) accessibility?

1. ICT (web, software, etc.) procurement or development policies, procedures, or practices will be improved or better implemented to ensure accessibility.
2. Training will be developed/implemented to ensure accessibility of websites, software or other ICT (web, software, etc.)
3. Outcome is unknown at this time.

Satisfaction Survey options:

1. Highly satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Satisfied somewhat
4. Not at all satisfied
5. Nonrespondent

State Financing: The CARE Loan Fund and the Assistive Technology for Independent Living Program (AT/IL).

CARE Loan is the state's Financial Loan Program. In 2021 there were 24 total loan applications. There were 19 Loans approved and made with an additional 4 Loans approved and not made. There was 1 Loan that was rejected. There was a total of \$89,140 loaned.

2 loans were for Hearing related AT

1 loan was for Mobility, Seating and Positioning related AT

2 loans were for Daily Living related AT

14 loans for Vehicle Modifications and Transportation related AT

During the year there were 2 loans in default. Net loss in default of \$4,022

Consumer story:

We approved a loan for a father who has a minor child with a rare gene mutation. The father was not able to obtain insurance coverage, so he has been paying out of pocket for the child's medical care. The father has been declined for loans due to a bankruptcy. The van they have required special seating for his son and was referred to CARE Chest by a vendor they were working with. We were able to provide the financing to purchase the specialty equipment necessary to meet their transportation needs. Their home is in rural Nevada and travel consists of several hundred miles to receive medical treatments.

Performance Measure and Survey responses:

The 19 Responses reported the Primary Need as Community Living and all selected that they Could only afford the AT through the AT program. There were 16 consumers responding as Highly satisfied and 3 as Satisfied.

Assistive Technology for Independent Living falls under a last resort activity. The data reported is from consumer cases that were closed during the year and not reflective of services provided in cases that are still open. In 2021 there were 95 consumers reported providing 307 solutions with a total of \$938,803 for the Assistive Technology.

Types of Assistive Technology, number of devices funded and amounts of funding:

14 devices/services in the area of Vision totaling \$8,184

20 devices/services in the area of Hearing totaling \$45,064

4 devices/services in the area of Speech Communication totaling \$441

4 devices/services in the area of Mobility, Seating and Positioning totaling \$128,140

72 devices/services in the area of Daily Living totaling \$5,861

176 devices/services in the area of Environmental Adaptations totaling \$623,348

17 devices/services in the area of Vehicle Modification and Transportation totaling \$127,765

Consumer stories:

1. Jennifer requires the use of a wheelchair for the majority of her personal mobility. She was unable to access her home. Had difficulty accessing her bathroom due to narrow door. Inside the bathroom she was unable to access her bathtub and had difficulty accessing the commode. Additionally identified were barriers to preparing meals and accessing the kitchen area. Once her goals were established and the barriers were identified AT solutions were explored to remove the barriers. A ramp was installed to access the home. The bathroom door was widened as well as a bathtub lift chair and a raised toilet. To access the kitchen features the consumer was able to try a hydraulic lift stool and determine if it would work. The lift stool worked and was provided permanently. She can now reach her counter tops and as a bonus she can reach her upper cabinets as well. This story is a good example of a consumer reaching out because of one barrier in their daily life but finding that many areas could be improved, and we often don't have to settle with "getting by". Again, highlighting that when we engage with people and encourage exploration in all areas of daily living that we find there is quite often much room to improve independence. Leading to greater self-esteem and greater goals ahead.
2. The consumer is in her 50s who lives with her spouse, who is also her caregiver. Experiencing deteriorating health the past 10 years resulted in difficulty with personal mobility and self-care. The goals established were for Self-Care, Home Access, and Transportation. She said she was beginning to feel "like a burden" and worried that her spouse was taking on too much on top of his health issues. She expressed concern about needing to go to a care facility in the future if she was not able to take a more active role in her own care. Especially getting her into the home and into the shower. Solutions were explored to maximize her personal independence. Resulting in the installation of a porch lift to access the home, a roll-in shower, widened doorway as well as vehicle modifications & training. She is now able to enter and exit her shower independently and she is able to complete her self-care without assistance from her spouse. To address her transportation goal their vehicle was fitted with hand controls as well as receiving driver training, she already had a lift to transport her power wheelchair. She is now able to go out into the community with their vehicle. In her own words, "Thank you doesn't seem enough for all you guys at Care Chest did to help me! I was ready to give up and go to a nursing home, so I wasn't a burden on my husband. You all changed that for me. Thank you so much for putting some ability back into my disability! I will NEVER forget how much all of your assistance did for me. I will try to "pay that forward" in my life."

Performance Measure and Survey responses:

The 95 Responses reported the Primary Need as Community Living and the following selections:

72 Could only afford the AT through the AT program.

23 AT was only available through the AT program.

37 consumers responding Highly Satisfied

3 consumers responding Satisfied

1 consumer responding Satisfied somewhat

1 consumers responding Not at all satisfied

53 nonrespondent

Information not reportable in the federal report but important to this program:

The caseload for 2021 was 353 consumers with 853 Goals Set; 303 Goals being Met and 447 Goals in Progress.

During the year 90.3% of the Goals were met after the adjustment for Goals Withdrawn or closed Unable to Contact. Only 9 Goals were closed where No Solution was Available. 19 goals were closed unmet where the consumer passed away. 43 Goals were Withdrawn and 30 Goals closed as Unable to Contact.

There were 65 Consumers, with a total of 106 Independent Living Goals, that were directly related to either a Transition or a Prevention of needing institutional care. Of the Goals set 74 were Prevention related and 31 were Transition related. Of these consumer goals 62 were closed as Goal Met; 37 are in Progress.

All consumers are surveyed following services through the AT/IL program. The survey includes satisfaction and life impact questions as well as a question about choice and control. This year there was a 46% voluntary return rate of surveys from the consumer. The following are the results for the consumer data also in this report:

Are you satisfied with our services? Rate the service provided by the staff:

Excellent	78%
Very Good	17%
Good	0%
Fair	0%
Poor	5%

Did you have choice and control over the Goals you set and the types of services you received?

A lot of control and choice	71%
Quite a bit of control and choice	16%
A little control and choice	2%
Not enough control and choice	11%

Rate your overall satisfaction with the program: Which of the following best reflects your level of satisfaction with the services you received?

Very Satisfied	90%
Mostly Satisfied	8%
Somewhat Satisfied	0%
Not Satisfied	2%

Have the services provided made a positive impact on your life?

Yes	98%
No	2%

Did the services provided impact your life? My overall quality of life:

Improved a lot	63%
Improved quite a bit	31%
Improved a little	6%
Did not change	0%
Not Applicable or No response	0%

My overall Independence related to the goals established:

Improved a lot	56%
Improved quite a bit	19%
Improved a little	12%
Did not change	2%

Not Applicable or No response 9%

My chances of staying OUT of a nursing home:

Improved a lot	56%
Improved quite a bit	15%
Improved a little	2%
Did not change	2%
Not Applicable or No response	25%

How often are the devices or modifications used?

Daily	95%
Weekly	3%
Monthly	0%
At least every 3 months	0%
Not Applicable or No response	2%

Do you think the government should continue funding this program?

Yes	100%
No	0%

My ability to volunteer, be involved in my community, or do leisure activities:

Improved a lot	43%
Improved quite a bit	11%
Improved a little	2%
Did not change	14%
Not Applicable or No response	30%

Rate the services provided by the vendors, building contractors, or businesses that you worked with:

Excellent	65%
Very Good	17%
Good	11%
Fair	5%
Poor	2%

Reutilization: CARE Chest of Sierra Nevada's Equipment Loan provides both new and used Assistive Technology.

In 2021 there were 1,367 consumers receiving 2,716 Assistive Technology solutions with a total cost savings to the consumer of \$360,720.

Types of Assistive Technology, number of devices funded and cost savings:

1,429 devices in the area of Mobility, Seating and Positioning totaling \$271,691

1,221 devices in the area of Daily Living totaling \$74,840

66 devices in the area of Environmental Adaptations totaling \$14,189

Consumer stories:

1. A family of four was in a motor vehicle accident when they were hit by a drunk driver. Three of the four family members (two children and their father) suffered serious injuries and were in the ICU and rehabilitation center following the accident. CARE Chest assisted all three of the family members with the durable medical equipment needed. Without these services the family would have needed to rent or purchase the equipment at a significant burden to the family.
2. Another impactful intervention occurred when the sister of a young woman came to CARE Chest looking for a bathing solution for her sister. Her sister had been shot and when returning home required family to provide care. She was unstable and had blood pressure issues. A reclining shower chair was available and provided, enabling her to bathe in a reclined position.

Performance Measure and Survey responses:

The 95 Responses reported the Primary Need as Community Living and the following selections:

1,335 Could only afford the AT through the AT program. Primary Need: 1 Education and 1,334 Community Living

27 AT was only available through the AT program. Primary Need was all reported as Community Living.

2 AT was available through other programs, but the system was too complex or the wait time too long. Primary Need was all reported as Community Living.

3 nonrespondents to the Performance Measures

1,260 consumers responding Highly Satisfied

81 consumers responding Satisfied

1 consumer responding Satisfied somewhat

25 nonrespondents

Device Loans (short term): Nevada Assistive Technology Resource Centers provided Assistive Technology Device Loans for Decision making and Short Term Accommodations.

In 2021 there were 29 short term loans and 57 devices loaned to people with disabilities.

20 loans were to Assist in decision-making (device trial or evaluation); 39 devices loaned.

6 loans were to Serve as loaner during service repair or while waiting for funding

3 loans were to Provide an accommodation on a short-term basis for a time-limited event/situation

Types of Assistive Technology, number of devices and for what purpose:

24 devices in the area of Vision; 13 Decision Making and 11 Non-Decision Making.

2 devices in the area of Hearing; 1 Decision Making and 1 Non-Decision Making.

4 devices in the area of Speech Communication; all were Decision Making.

4 devices in the area of Learning, Cognition and Developmental; 2 Decision Making and 2 Non-Decision Making.

5 devices in the area of Environmental Adaptations; 4 Decision Making and 1 Non-Decision Making.

18 devices in the area of Computers and Related; 15 Decision Making and 3 Non-Decision Making.

Consumer story:

Graeme was referred to the program from Legal Services and in need of assistance to transition from a care facility and into the community. His goal was to live in a suitable, community-based setting. He received information on his AT choices, and his most important request was to have a way to contact his attorney and he supported decision makers while trying to transition to community living. He was loaned a smart phone. While in the hospital it was his lifeline to contact people. While in the facility the phone was lost or stolen in one of the many moves within the institution. He was then loaned a tablet to enable him to work towards his community placement and conduct banking, and other business, and to stay in touch with his supported decision makers. All challenges during Covid and being institutionalized. During the time of his transition the smart phone and tablet were his lifeline to the outside world. Without it Graeme would not have been able to make decisions. Unfortunately, Graeme passed away before transitioning into the community.

Performance Measure and Survey responses:

Performance measures for Device Loans are split between Access to and Acquisition Of. Access To measures are when the consumer is borrowing for the purpose of making a decision. Acquisition Of measures are for short term accommodations or while the person is waiting for a repair or a funding source.

Access To Performance Measures:

17 consumers Decided that AT device/service will meet needs. Primary Need: 3 Education, 3 Employment, and 11 Community Living.

3 consumers Decided that an AT device/ service will not meet needs. Primary Need: 1 Employment and 2 Community Living.

There were none reported as not making a decision or non-respondents.

Acquisition Of Performance Measures:

7 consumers Could only afford the AT through the AT program. All Community Living.

1 consumer that the AT was only available through the AT program.

26 consumers responding Highly Satisfied

1 consumer responding Satisfied

2 consumers responding Satisfied somewhat

100% response

Device Demonstrations: Nevada Assistive Technology Resource Centers provided Assistive Technology Device Demonstrations supporting informed consumers decision making.

In 2021 there were 59 devices demonstrations to 72 participants. With 67 of the participants being the person that would be using the Assistive Technology. Following the demonstrations 32 referrals to Funding Sources, Service Providers, Vendors and Others.

Types of Assistive Technology, number of devices and for what purpose:

32 devices in the area of Vision.

7 devices in the area of Hearing.

3 devices in the area of Speech Communication.

7 devices in the area of Learning, Cognition and Developmental.

4 devices in the area of Environmental Adaptations.

6 devices in the area of Computers and Related.

Consumer story:

David has been working with the NATRC on multiple areas of service. Through that process he was demonstrated several ways to magnify print material. He decided that he would like try the CCTV instead of the iPad and the related applications. He was loaned the CCTV. When we asked if he was satisfied he replied with the following comments, "Little things mean a lot. That's the song I sang as a teenager, back in the 1950s. Well, now those words have a new much greater meaning to me. I am 82 years old, Legally Blind and suffer from Severe Parkinson's Disease. Now, Thanks to the AT Resource Center, I realized that it is still the Little Things, that Truly mean a lot. The simple joy of reading the Sports Page in a local newspaper, the wonderful feeling you get when seeing old photographs of your life's history. Family, Friends, and great moments. It has given me Dignity, Self Respect, and most of all INDEPENDENCE!".

Performance Measure and Survey responses:

Access To Performance Measures:

48 consumers Decided that AT device/service will meet needs. Primary Need: 10 Education, 3 Employment, and 35 Community Living.

5 consumers Decided that an AT device/ service will not meet needs. Primary Need Community Living.

6 consumers did not respond.

45 consumers responding Highly Satisfied

14 consumers responding Satisfied

2 consumers responding Satisfied somewhat

1 consumer responding Not at all satisfied

10 consumers did not respond

86% response

Description of Training Activities

Innovative one high-impact assistance training activity conducted during the reporting period:

Provided high impact training to 60 employees of the State of Nevada Workers Compensation Division regarding effective communication technology. Training was mandated by a Department of Labor Civil Rights

Center settlement agreement mandating training and policy changes. Purpose of the training was to educate employees on the methods and means to provided auxiliary aids and services including any assistive technology needed to insure effective communication with deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired customers. This included telecommunication equipment usage, video relay services, video remote interpreting and other means of information and communication technology currently used. Although this was a mandated agreement employees were receptive to the needs and really did not have a grasp of the vastness of AT that is used, and also how it could ultimately make things easier for them if they implemented its use on a day to day basis.

Training activity related to transition conducted during the reporting period:

Provided transition related training to 7 special education students at an Elementary School regarding literacy applications in the classroom. The teacher and the students were interested in improving composition and accuracy. We trained the students on several interactive applications that allowed the student to have fun learning to type faster as well as the proper use of spell check, word prediction, and word completion. The students not only liked the applications but showed improvement fairly quickly. Some student needed other AT to get the most out of the literacy apps such as magnification, or adjustments in accessibility settings on the tablets.

Training activity related to Information and Communication Technology accessibility:

Assisted the NV-SILC and their 3rd party website consultant in understanding how problematic Website overlays can be. We had vision impaired users there to demonstrate the barriers and provided input and training on revising their site to meet W3C standards. The screen reader users demonstrated how they moved through a site and what they heard and how they navigated the site. The barriers were very clear to everyone using that method. The third party web developer company made changes to the SILC's site in a reasonable timeframe and we continue to provide direction on meeting the standards on web accessibility.

Notes:

Providing in person training remained a challenge throughout the pandemic, as protocols fluctuated from time to time and were sometimes different between agencies both in the public and private sectors. This impacted our efforts and challenged the project to provide training on line, both individually, and in smaller groups. A great deal of time was spent training people on the features of online platforms as well as how the accessibility features worked within those platforms. The project continues to search for the best methods to engage people with effective training as we hopefully move away from in person restrictions.

Technical Assistance

Innovative one high-impact assistance activity that is not related to transition:

The NV-DPAC is a group of about a dozen individuals with a variety of disabilities. It is a Peer to-Peer based group that discuss' barriers to assistive technology and its effective use. The group decides on the topics and themes for discussion and debate and the resource center team facilitates and offers guidance as needed. The group then decides based on information shared, what their options are for changing policy or systems regarding the topic areas. In this reporting period the group worked on barriers within several state systems including: Regional Transportation, Vocational Rehabilitation, Voting Accessibility, State Legislation, Independent Living, and Statewide Health and Human Services agencies. The group was an important catalyst

and had a significant impact to push policy changes through these State and Local Governments and other entities.

Technical assistance activity related to transition conducted during the reporting period:

Began discussions with the Nevada Special Education Technology Assistance Project since they have hired a new director recently. We shared information about our programs and how to work together. Nevada is a very geographically large state and insuring kids who are transitioning in rural school districts get the services they need. We discussed our policies and areas of service and will continue to work on our referral process in order to maximize our effectiveness in rural Nevada. One TA effort specifically involved our projects and a Rural School District in Southern Nevada. NATRC staff had multiple Zoom meetings and phone conversations on what the best way was to deliver services and educate Rural Districts on how to best use both programs and their resources. We refined the referral process and were able to immediately schedule other services such as training, device demonstrations and device loans based on our technical assistance efforts.

Public Awareness

High-impact public awareness activities conducted during this reporting period. Highlight the content/focus of the awareness information shared, the mechanism used to disseminate or communicate the awareness information, the numbers and/or types of individuals reached, and positive outcomes resulting from the activity. If quantitative numbers are available regarding the reach of the activity, please provide those: however, quantitative data is not required.

1. During the late Spring and Summer of 2021 (May 2021- August 2021), CARE Chest launched an aggressive social media campaign highlighting our AT programming. That specific campaign reached more than 300,000 individuals living in and around Reno/Sparks. As a result, donations of gently used AT increased as did monetary support for the organization.

2. A major public awareness activity undertaken this past year was with the Economic Opportunity Board of Nevada. Staff worked with the organization, whose mission is to end poverty, to engage with their consumers to address concerns about connectivity and social isolation during and after the COVID 19 pandemic. Based on several conversations and Zoom meetings we were able to arrange and outreach during one of their meetings. We presented on who we are and what we do, and how the individuals could use assistive technology in their daily lives to reduce isolation and access services during these unprecedented times. Around 40 members received information and were excited to learn more about what our Resource Center could offer. This has already led to numerous activities in other areas of the project such as device demonstrations and loans. We will continue to develop this relationship in the years following.

State Improvement Outcomes

Overview of Coordination/Collaboration Activities

Coordination/Collaboration activities are not required. You may report up to two MAJOR coordination/collaboration activities for this reporting period. How many will you be reporting?

A. Coordination/Collaboration

1. As concisely as possible, describe the partnership initiative. What activities/services were provided? Who are the major collaborating organizations and what is their role? Who is served/benefited? What funding was used to implement the initiative?

The NV-DPAC is a group of individuals with a variety of disabilities. It is a Peer to Peer based group that discuss barriers to assistive technology and its effective use. The group decides on the topics and themes for discussion and debate and the resource center team provides technical assistance.

2. As concisely as possible, describe the measurable results of the initiative and any lessons learned. How did access to AT change as a result of the coordination/collaboration/partnership? How did awareness of AT change as a result of the partnership? How did the reach of the state AT program change as a result of the partnership? What made the partnership successful? What would you change or wish you had done differently? Provided funding/resources are available, will the initiative continue or is this a one-time event? What advice would you give for replication of the initiative? Please include URL for initiative if available.

In this reporting period the group changed procedures for websites at 3 different agencies, assisted making compliant forms accessible at an employment agency, and has been a catalyst for changing the way agencies host accessible meetings online.

3. What focus areas(s) were addressed by the initiative?

Information and Communication Technology / Remote Connectivity;

4. What AT Act authorized activity(s) were addressed?

Information & Assistance; Technical Assistance;

A.2 Coordination/Collaboration (Entry 2)

1. As concisely as possible, describe the partnership initiative. What activities/services were provided? Who are the major collaborating organizations and what is their role? Who is served/benefited? What funding was used to implement the initiative?

Initiated conversations about care facility transition with Nevada's Money Follows the Person (MFP), Facility Outreach and Community Integration Services (FOCIS), Centers for Independent Living and the Nevada Statewide Independent Living Council. Resulting in ongoing Community Transition Workgroup that meets every other month to discuss resources, referrals, and barriers.

2. As concisely as possible, describe the measurable results of the initiative and any lessons learned. How did access to AT change as a result of the coordination/collaboration/partnership? How did awareness of AT change as a result of the partnership? How did the reach of the state AT program change as a result of the partnership? What made the partnership successful? What would you change or wish you had done differently? Provided funding/resources are available, will the initiative continue or is this a one-time event? What advice would you give for replication of the initiative? Please include URL for initiative if available.

As a result opportunities to provide training and technical assistance have been established. In 2022 a presentation of all NATC services will take place with the next step being the establishment of training and technical assistance. Trainings will be established and provided to support successful transitions with emphasis on the importance of Assistive Technology needed by the consumer. Value was found by having ongoing conversations about issues that were occurring in the state. This has enabled the NATC to re-establish a relationship with MFP and FOCIS that had withered with the changing of personnel and structure within the state.

3. What focus areas(s) were addressed by the initiative?

Community Participation and Integration;

4. What AT Act authorized activity(s) were addressed?

Device Loan; Demonstration; Reuse; State Financing; Training; Information & Assistance; Public Awareness; Technical Assistance;

State Improvements

What changed during this reporting period as a result of the AT program's initiative.

The project coordinated a public awareness activity with the Nevada Special Education Technology Assistance Project. Their mission is to enhance the capacity of school districts to provide assistive technology devices and services. They recently named a new director and we need to touch base to enhance our collaboration. After the outreach we received a call from a rural school district and began the engagement process to assist with the school and several of their students who needed a variety of services.

Written policies, practices, and procedures that have been developed and implemented as a result of the AT program's initiative.

This resulted in a practice change almost immediately. Resulting in meeting within a school and working with students directly. Also the AT Resource Center has been asked to present at their annual conference later in 2022.

Overall Performance Measures

Acquisition Of Performance Measure

ACL goal 85% - NATC 99.59%

Access To Performance Measure

ACL goal 90% - NATC 92.4%

Satisfaction

ACL goal 95% - NATC 99.5%

Response Rate ACL goal 90% - NATC 94.3%