

What is ACTS?

The Access and Communication Technology Specialist (ACTS) Service is a consultancy service that can provide support to clinicians when prescribing Department of Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) eligible augmentative and alternative communication systems (AAC), computer access technology (CAT) and/or environmental control systems (ECS) for their clients.

ACTS is staffed by a team of Novita allied health specialists, with backgrounds in speech pathology, occupational therapy and electronics, and expertise in the field of assistive technology.

Services we provide

ACTS aims to have a flexible, consultative service that can assist clinicians in providing the best support and advice for their clients in this complex and dynamic area of practice. In conjunction with the primary clinician, the ACTS clinicians may provide the following types of support:

- assessment to identify the client's needs and abilities in technology use
- assistance to identify systems with features that match clients' needs and abilities
- assistance to implement technology systems, including goal setting, trial, training and evaluation of trial and prescription outcomes
- developing a plan for how to support the client and their key support people to use their system

ACTS will be responsible for managing the loan and issue of AAC, CAT and ECS equipment on behalf of the DCSI Equipment Program. We will aim to maintain a stock level to allow timely access to trial items.

ACTS provides the opportunity for capacity building and knowledge sharing through services including:

- training for clinicians
- access to prescription knowledge and resources
- a central point for collation and dissemination of information related to technology
- a demonstration room with fully functioning devices for hands-on experience and trial

The ACTS service site and demonstration room is based at Novita's Regency Park Centre. Visits to other environments may be offered if clinically justified and within scope of resources.

Equipment prescribed for trial will be available for use in the client's environment. Eligible clinicians may be able to borrow equipment for self-education, dependent on availability and need.

ACTS primarily operates on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays; however, appointments outside those days may be provided based on client needs or programmed events.

Who is eligible?

South Australians who are eligible for the DCSI Equipment Program and have met specific eligibility criteria for one or more of the eligible equipment items.

Eligible equipment

- Category 2 speech generating devices
- Complex access requirements for communication devices (including eye-gaze access)
- Computer access technology
- Environmental control systems
- Complex non-electronic communication systems (the ACTS service will not fabricate the systems, but will support primary clinicians to consider their clients' non-electronic communication system needs).

Please refer to the DCSI e-reference system / Novita Quality system for specific details regarding scope and eligibility of this provision.

It is noted that CAT, for use in educational settings and workplaces will continue to be provided by other relevant state and commonwealth agencies according to their respective eligibility criteria and processes.

How to access

ACTS involvement will depend on your need.

- For information and advice, call or email one of our ACTS clinicians.
- To arrange trial or provision of equipment, complete the DCSI Prescription Form
- For clinical support for your prescription you can refer a client to ACTS via DES using the DCSI Prescription Form; see our website for more information.

For more information regarding ACTS and detailed information regarding the referral procedure please check our website www.novita.org.au/ACTS. If you have specific questions you can call or email ACTS at 08 8243 8261 or ACTS@novita.org.au

What happens when I access ACTS?

Following receipt of a prescription or phone/email contact, ACTS will aim to engage in an initial discussion with the referring primary clinician. This will focus on determining support needs and key factors relating to the priority and timing of the prescription, as well as providing some initial clinical support before accessing an ACTS clinic appointment.