

Information sheet for clients

What is ACTS?

The Access and Communication Technology Specialist (ACTS) Service is a consultancy service that can provide support to primary 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's allied health specialists, with backgrounds in speech pathology, occupational therapy and electronics, and expertise in the field of assistive technology.

ACTS services

ACTS supports the primary clinician you already work with by providing a flexible, consultative service to assist them in providing the best service for their clients in this complex and dynamic area of practice. Together with your primary clinician, the ACTS clinicians may provide the following types of support:

- assessment to identify your needs and abilities in technology use
- assistance to identify systems with features that match your needs and abilities
- assistance to implement technology systems, including assistance with goal setting, trial, training and evaluation of trial and prescription outcomes
- development of a plan for how to support you and your key people in using your system
- Provide advice and training directly to primary clinicians regarding the latest available DCSI eligible technology.

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 of commonly provided items to allow timely access to trial items. 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.

The primary 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. Often the equipment prescribed for trial will be available for use in the client's environment.

ACTS primarily operates on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays; however, appointments outside those days may be provided based on your 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.

Specific equipment focus:

- Category 2 speech generating devices
- Complex access requirements for communication devices (including eye-gaze access)
- Computer access technology
- Environmental control systems
- Advice regarding complex non-electronic communication systems (ACTS will support primary clinicians to consider their clients' non-electronic communication system needs) and suggest the best alternatives to explore.

How to access

As ACTS is a consultative service, there must be a speech pathologist or occupational therapist from outside of ACTS who is able to support a client through the prescription process. Please speak to your speech pathologist, occupational therapist or service co-ordinator.

For more information regarding ACTS and detailed information regarding the referral process please check our website at www.novita.org.au. 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 while awaiting availability of an ACTS clinic appointment (if required).