

RI Council on Assistive Technology
January 26, 2012 ~ 2:30 – 4:00 pm
Warwick Public Library
600 Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI

Minutes

Attendees: Flo Adeni-Awosika, Elisabeth Hubbard, James Litvack, Teresa O'Brien, Daniel Pieroni, and Ying Sun.

Partners: Denise Corson, ATEL; Roberta Greene-Whittemore, ATAP Program Director; Alan Parent-Wetmore, PARI; Lisa Labitt, EBEC; Judi Carlson, TechACCESS; and Lezlee Shaffer, OSCIL.

Guest: Courtney Petrarcha, RI Relay

Excused: Margaret Hoye, Melissa MacDonald (B. Wright) - RIDE, Collenn Poliselli, Bill Robinson, Kim Wennermark.

Welcome: Meeting was called to order at 2:40 p.m. by Chair Michael Matraccia and introductions were made.

Approval of Minutes from 10/27/11: Teresa O'Brien made motion, seconded by Ying Sun to approve minutes with corrections made by Judi Carlson added that she was "Excused from last meeting". Motion unanimously passed.

AT Project Director's Report: Roberta stated that the ATAP partner work plans have all been submitted, contracts have all been signed, equipment purchased for their wish list, and the first quarter into their new contract period has already gone by. Next step is meeting the deadline of February 24th, 2012 to submit the state plan updates.

During this time period there were discussions in Washington with the ATAP partners and some of the independent living programs as to whether or not they would be requesting in the reauthorization of the AT Act, the requirement for some state financing activities and there was somewhat of a battle in Washington because there was some discussion as to whether they would require 25 percent of total funding go to state financing. That requirement was taken out of the language.

New Business

- **ATAP Partners**

- **ATEL:** Denise Corson reported that ATEL did 95 demonstrations and issued 101 devices. Denise noted she had done a home visit for a lady about 50 years old and completely deaf for the last 20 years who had tried hearing aids 20 years ago that did not work for her. She was unfamiliar with any technology out there - no smoke detector, alarm clock, no alerting system in any part of her house. Her husband had to be with her at all times to communicate back and forth. He was recently in the hospital, and because he was worried about her being alone in the house and her inability to communicate with his office or doctor, he contacted ATEL. She went to two hearing loss demos that James Litvack and Denise were speaking at. She wasn't familiar with CART, but was able to use it at the second demo. For the first time in 20 years she was able to go to a meeting and actually be a participant, so it was an eye opening experience. While there, she called her daughter on the phone, and for the first time in 20 years she was able to talk to her grandkids. Denise added that this woman had always wanted to attend a town meeting. She lives in West Warwick so the ADA does require a reasonable accommodation such as CART unless it's a financial hardship to the town. A lot of discussion is going on regarding this and available options. Roberta questioned if she had any AT devices. Denise responded that she now has the CapTel phone, and an alerting device that she can wear that vibrates, and a little pager that will tell if somebody is at the door or whether the phone is ringing. Different alerting devices are being used in her house now as well. Courtney showed her mobile CapTel because she does have a portable phone so she can talk to other people rather than texting. So she was very excited about a lot of different things. One of the trainings that Courtney and Denise did was with netWORKri where they'll be putting CapTels in all of their locations over the next month along with an informational booth on it. (Roberta commented that the Pawtucket netWORKri was closing. So to help the folks in Pawtucket they'll be setting up some, some sessions in the Pawtucket library but it won't be that one-on-one opportunity any more. So that is a loss for individuals.)
- **OSCIL:** Lezlee Shaffer handed out a written report and highlighted a few items including a new program "Living with Macular Degeneration". OSCIL received funding from a Rhode Island foundation for this one-year program that includes money for AT

for individuals with macular degeneration, as well as to enable them to host a symposium on May 31st. It will be an afternoon program, and they will be having experts from within the field that have macular degeneration as a specialty area. They will be collaborating with Services for the Blind & Visually Impaired and In-sight.

OSCIL's Deaf Services program is now up and running with a new staff person, Margaret Molloy. Margaret has experience working with the Deaf/Blind population through previous employment and that is a consumer group OSCIL had not been addressing, so it will branch them out in a different area.

Lezlee noted that they are getting into areas within Providence, Central Falls and some outlying areas because of their bus shelter campaigns, and things are moving along, and they are now back to the fear of running out of money due to all of the new referrals.

Roberta asked about nursing home transition numbers. Lezlee responded they have seen an increase in those too. Usually referrals are from someone they helped referring a friend who is also in a nursing home.

- TechACCESS: Judi Carlson reported on the AT Conference held in November, 2011. Total attendance was 327 which is the largest total yet. There were 63 exhibits; 30 people who presented; and 10 volunteers. Eleven students were paid for at the student rate; and 3 people received scholarships. They did not have as many requests for accommodations as usual, but included three large print programs, the digital memory stick and a couple FM systems. They didn't have anybody ask for Braille this year. Judi explained that rather than just having presentation rooms and an exhibit hall, they tried "Freestyle" having user sessions giving lots of choices to conference attendees. Judi added that eight or ten folks actually brought their technology, set it up, and actually used it. Timing of keynote address has been discussed because of issues at this year's luncheon. The thought for next year is to have the keynote first thing in the morning. Judi added she is hoping the committee can review and plan for next year an elderly track, employment track, and school track to appeal to a larger group of people. People did like the exhibit hall this year and said they felt there was more of a variety of things to be interested in.

- EBEC: Lisa Labitt reported that in the world of schools and education, she has noticed that at various conferences she attended has research and development as a main track. Schools are trying to manage their systems and upgrade in a whole district perspective and sometimes the students needs are met in a global way, but not always specifically in an assistive technology way. Some of the demonstrations and trainings focused on this quarter were tools for struggling readers and writers, including various software products for communication. One of the huge debates now is whether or not children should be using dedicated communication devices or iPads or tablets with apps on them, so it's interesting to see all of the perspectives - the family perspective, the clinician perspective, and the student's perspective. Yesterday Dynavox did a specific training, communication solutions for children with autism, and also, communication solutions - how do they take it to the next level for literacy and access to the curriculum. Lisa also commented that she has been getting a lot of calls from Massachusetts residents, and gave them the information they needed and also gave them the Mass. AT project information.

Lisa commented that a high-school student that just started using a reader like a hand-held Kindle who is in the 9th grade had been refusing technology since 6th grade. His IEP team was relentless and tried to introduce technology to this student for the past three or four years. It clicked that if he was going to college, he would need to be independent. It was kind of a shock to everyone when they called Lisa in and said "I think he's ready to listen to something and get a few things", so that was nice that EBEC had the equipment. They tried two or three things with him and he decided on one. He's borrowing one now, while the school is procuring and purchasing it. It's nice because now he can access and do his biology and his English assignments by himself without relying on mom at home and a teacher assistant.

Lisa also added that their website is dated, and she is trying to get more things on it in "The Tech Corner". Eventually she would like to post the AT inventory on it to show what inventory is in or out or when it's due back, maybe link to her e-mail, make it fluid and easy for people to figure out what is there, and how they can get it and use it.

- PARI: Allen Parent-Wetmore reported that the program is still running pretty much the same, however slowed down a little over

the holidays. A lot of calls that come into PARI are the information/referral calls. A gentleman who called was a resident representative for the attendance union at his complex. He had a 90 year-old woman who had not used her electric wheelchair in a year because it was broken leaving her stuck in her bed. He had been trying to get one from a relative, but couldn't due to the cost of shipping. Allen gave him a few resources for different ground shippers. Upon learning the woman's name, he realized he had assisted her earlier to obtain a pressure relief mattress he had in the office. Allen had also discussed an assessment with their program director. By the end of the day Allen had spoken to PARI's mobility specialist who had worked with her before, The Point, and her social worker to work together to see that she will be assessed for a new electric wheelchair at the end of the next month.

ATAP State Plan Update

Roberta commented that she would review a portion of the State Plan updates, but asked everyone to take a look at it -specifically the portions detailing the activities – and submit any comments or questions prior to February 15th. Report is due on February 24, 2012 and information included is basically taken from work plans and contracts of the ATAP partners. Roberta noted that the vision or goals for the next three years, based upon the input of these work plans were summed up a lot by what Lisa said today about getting information out to individuals giving individuals an opportunity to know what devices are there, and have an opportunity to try the devices out and then if appropriate, look to resources to provide funding. Roberta added that she would like the VR Counselors at ORS to become more knowledgeable about the assistive technology program; what the partners do; and how under our regulations they are supposed to be considering assistive technology in the complete rehab process. She wants to have a comprehensive list of the devices that are available for loan, especially for evaluation purposes and to find out user comfort so that a device ends does not end up in a closet. Roberta then had members look at access goal table and acquisition goal table and explained that this year the government decided to come up with the goals. They set the Access goal at 70 and the Acquisition goal at 75. ATAP partners have far exceeded these numbers over the past years, and are going to continue with the goals that have been identified in their work plans.

Judi asked what happens when a device is purchased, case is closed, but then a client leaves job; if you go back to that person even though the case is closed and say, can you do a survey for us or can we interview about the

use of your technology? Judi questioned how data is collected after leaving ORS. Roberta responded they keep the case open for 90 days once the person obtained employment, so there is a three-month window available to obtain that data. In the past, they put an ID number on a piece of equipment and technically it still belonged to the state unless the person was successfully employed for 90 days. It was suggested that they do a pilot of assessing that for maybe a six month or a one year period. Roberta will take a look and see if we can do that.

Judi also suggested that instead of doing workshops, perhaps a curriculum or series of introduction, intermediate or, by disability/ function could be set up over time allowing staff continuity.

Roundtable

A question was brought up a council member regarding students who have visual or hearing impairments, and how she should be assisting them to get the assistive technology they need. Lisa responded that the Special Ed. Director and the IEP team should be contacted. Liz Hubbard added that the Rhode Island Disability Law Center helps students advocate when they need assistive technology and the schools are not providing. It was suggested that in the Providence district, she should talk to Nancy Stevenin and added that RIPIN, the Rhode Island Parent Information Network has a parent liaison that works with high school aged students, there is a parent partner and a professional educator that should be dealing with kids with transition issues.

▪ 2012 Meeting Dates

- April 26th – Warwick Public Library, 600 Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI
- July 26th – TechACCESS of RI, 110 Jefferson Boulevard, Suite I, Warwick, RI
- October 25th – TechACCESS of RI, 110 Jefferson Boulevard, Suite I, Warwick, RI

Next Meeting: April 26, 2012 from 2:30 – 4:00 pm at Warwick Public Library, 600 Sandy Lane, Warwick, RI where they will begin working on Policies and Procedures.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Teresa O'Brien and seconded by Flo Adeni-Awosika to adjourn meeting at 4:00 pm. Motion passed.

East Bay Educational Collaborative

Portsmouth - Little Compton - Tiverton - Newport - Middletown - Bristol
Warren - Barrington - East Providence
317 Market Street Warren, RI 02885 401-245-4998 401-245-9332
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RICAT Meeting Summary January 26, 2012 East Bay Educational Collaborative

The ATAP Children and Youth Resource Center located at East Bay Educational Collaborative provides a Lending Library of Assistive Technology devices and a Demonstration Center for School age children, educators and families.

Device Demonstration & Lending Library of AT equipment:

Career Academy Student Users borrowing Hand held device readers for access to their reading curriculum in English Class. Kindle reader and Nook readers.

IPad as an educational Tool: a basic orientation on general settings, app search for students and educators in their respective content area, Accessibility Options for voice commands and Tips and Tricks of IPad use in the classroom, Projecting I pads for whole classroom integration.

Rhode Island Teacher Assistants: demonstration and hands on with Assistive Technology tools and devices during a 4 day course. This a course offered twice yearly wanting employment as Teacher Assistants in any school district.

Teacher Assistant Network Training on Students with Aspergers and technology tools they may benefit from.

Device Training:

Interactive Whiteboard demonstration series: provided to **Science specialists.**

Communication Vendor demonstration for Speech Language Pathologists.
Dynavox Alternative Communication held at ebec. Regional Dynavox representative present .

Spring College Forum March 10 for Students leaving High School looking into Post secondary School options using Technology Tools. ½ day conference held for families At Providence College.

Website posting for Educators to trial devices: www.ebecri.org
Hosts some equipment for lending. I will be looking to post our complete inventory of devices for educators to browse and e-mail me directly for lending options. Coordinating with TechACCESS with their equipment.

RICAT PARTNER REPORT
10-1-11 THRU 12-31-11
Quarterly Report: Device Demonstrations

Demonstrations provided: 95

Anecdote:

I did a CapTel Demonstration for a 60 year old lady that has been HOH all her life, but went almost completely Deaf 18 years ago. She taught herself how to lip read, and used absolutely no assistive technology. Hearing Aids were the only thing she was aware of, and due to her extensive hearing loss they were of no help to her. She had not been on the phone for 18 years, other than texting. Her first call was to her daughter and her grandkids. Her grandkids had never spoke to her on the phone before. When we were done with the CapTel demonstration, I informed her of other assistive technology that could help her. She was unaware that any of these devices existed; therefore, she was never left alone in the house for any length of time because they worried about if there was a fire or an emergency. She was amazed that there were signaling systems for not just the phone, the alarm clock, door bell, but most importantly the smoke detector. Her and her husband attended our monthly demonstration to test out many of these devices.

Quarterly Report: Training

Hamilton Relay donated 5 CapTel phones to the state of RI, to be used as demonstration models. Courtenay Petracca (Hamilton Relay Outreach Coordinator) and I decided that the 5 Network RI offices would be a great location for these demonstration models. The Network RI Centers are conveniently located throughout the state: Pawtucket, Providence, Wakefield, W. Warwick and Woonsocket. On December 6th, we met with Vincent Rossi, and staff of the Dept of Labor and training to discuss having these phones installed at their location.

Courtenay and I did training on the CapTel at the Department of Labor and Training with Vincent Rossi (Coordinator of E&T Programs), Marie DeRoche (Chief of Employment & Training Programs) Hector Rivera (Chief of Employment & Training Programs) and James White (Manager of Network RI Wakefield). We showed them how the technology works, and

how the different features of the phone and different Captel services can assist HOH individuals at home(Captel 800 and 800i), work(Web Captel) and on the road(Mobile Captel). The potential impact from the training is to secure the 5 Network RI Offices as demonstration sites for the Captel phone; this would give the Captel accessibility and exposure to many individuals. Many of our Deaf and HOH clients were referred by family, friends, representatives of community living, or hearing professionals, not because they came across the ATEL Program on their own; therefore, having these phones in a public area would allow these 'referring individuals' to be aware of the Captel and generate and even greater presence in RI .

Quarterly Report: State Financing

Clients served: 95

Devices issued: 101

Anecdote:

We provided a Speakerphone to a 42 year old man that recently became a quadriplegic. His sister was referred to OSCIL for other needs, and then she was referred to ATEL to help him with his telephone concerns. He was concerned about the few hours a day that he would not have any aids and wanted to make sure he could still help on to some independence and be able to get help if there was an emergency.

Quarterly Report: Public Awareness/Information & Assistance

I attended the annual TechACCESS Conference on November 30th. We did 2 Hearing Loss Demonstrations: October 12th and December 14th. We cancelled the November 9th Demonstration so we could attend the annual CDHH Coffee Hour.



OCEAN STATE CENTER FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING

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401-738-1015 (TTY)

401-738-1083 (FAX)

1-866-857-1161 (Toll Free)

Report for January 26, 2012 RICAT Meeting

Highlights from Quarter: October 2011 – December 2011

- New Program: *Living with Macular Degeneration*. OSCIL awarded a grant from RI Foundation with funding for AT for consumers with Macular Degeneration, as well as for a Macular Degeneration Symposium – Thursday, May 31 at Radisson Airport Hotel. Collaborating with SBVI and In-Sight on this venture.
- Deaf Services program up and running again. New staff person (Margaret Molloy) started in December. Open House held January 19. New Deaf Services Specialist has prior experience with consumers who are deaf-blind from her experience with Helen Keller Center in NY and the Long Island IL Center.
- OSCIL's bus shelter sign campaign (public information) continues with signage at near hospitals, rehabilitation facilities focused on the Community Living Option/NHT Program; at bus shelters in communities with high Hispanic populations focused on our Hispanic Outreach efforts; and general promotion statewide focusing on OSCIL's Home Access & Adaptive Equipment program. Shelter signs have been placed at 58 locations and are estimated "to be seen" by approx. 250,000 statewide.
- OSCIL is seeing an increase in referrals for assistance with nursing home transition (technical assistance). Referrals from Dept. of Elderly Affairs, nursing home social workers, rehabilitation facilities. OSCIL able to assist consumers requiring comprehensive support with transitioning back into the community, including assessments of housing needs, basic life skills training, recommendations for assistive technology and home modifications, and service coordination to locate community resources, transportation, and other supports, as needed.
- Visits to consumer homes to assess AT needs and demonstrate equipment continue. Staff may bring sample AT for short-term trial use, provide vendor catalogs and ordering information, and help consumers explore alternative funding sources.
- This quarter OSCIL was able to assist in the reutilization of two ramps and one vertical platform lift in three of our Home Modification projects.
- Public Information events and AT presentations during the quarter included: Harris House Apts. (Cranston) to largely Hispanic senior populations; Cranston Senior Center (Cranston); Lockwood Plaza Apts. (Providence); and Oxford Place Apts. (Providence).

Lezlee Shaffer
OSCIL Program Director

**RICAT Meeting Thursday Oct 27, 2011
State Plan Highlight Reporting – PARI PAAT Program
Reporting Year October 1, 2010 thru September 30, 2011**

Device Recycling and Exchange (Reutilization):

The PAAT program provides DME(durable medical equipment) assistive technology equipment to people thru two primary methods, device recycling and device exchange.

514 recycled devices were sold to consumer and their families at an **estimated cost savings of over \$49,599.00 dollars**. This equipment consists of durable medical equipment used in daily living and mobility activities.

23 exchanged devices were provided utilizing an exchange database maintained by PARI through which devices are exchanged at no cost to the consumer. The only financial obligations of the recipients are installation charges, if applicable. This equipment consists of stair glides, vehicle modifications and electric hospital beds providing an **estimated cost savings to consumers of over \$73,000.00 dollars**.

Device Loan:

The PAAT program provides two types of device loans, short term accommodations and very short time loans of durable medical equipment for the purposes of evaluation.

Accommodation Loans:

The objective of this loan service is to provide a short term accommodation while an individual's own equipment is being repaired or are if they are in need of equipment which might be prohibitive to purchase for short term use, such as a portable ramp, electric wheelchair, scooter, transport wheelchair or patient lift. The loan is provided with a \$10.00 charge for each week with an average loan term length of two weeks. Instructions on proper usage and care of the equipment are provided as well as follow-up assessment of the loan.

62 accommodation loans were provided this period.

Evaluation Loans:

The objective of this loan service is to provide the consumer or therapist with the opportunity to bring an assistive device to evaluate in their home environment. Often equipment designed for a particular use does not work in every environment or with every consumer. The ability to simply take one or two types of equipment home and try them prior to purchase rather than accessing all of one's concerns in the showroom and making an immediate decision promotes the right choices being made regarding assistive technology equipment.

31 loans for evaluation were provided this period.

Device Demonstration Center

The PAAT program operates a demonstration center within our sales area, attempting to provide at least one example of all the durable medical equipment that is available through recycling or exchange. Consumers, families and service professionals are able to compare and gain and understanding of the choices available concerning assistive technology equipment.

142 demonstrations of equipment were provided this period, often to families who were for the first time facing the need of assistive equipment. As an example of one of the benefits we provide, after having determined Flora T. did need crutches and properly fitting her we sat at the computer to watch instructional videos of the proper techniques for walking as well as ascending/descending stairs until she felt comfortable.

Information and Referral

Often, quite often actually, people call PARI in need of equipment or services that aren't available nor provided by PARI. In those instances the

PAAT program will provide *any* information possible, including referrals to appropriate agencies, searching for the lowest price on a specialty tub transfer chair, calling a therapist to clarify a consumer's needs or simply providing a Denise's number at ATEL to obtain an assistive telephone. Many of the phone calls we receive require just listening to and asking questions of the consumer or family member, determining what their needs are and trying to help as much as possible.

379 I/R's provided this period.

Public Awareness

The PARI PAAT Program (PARI's Affordable Assistance Program) raises awareness among individuals with disabilities and their families to the availability of assistive technology equipment and its ability to remove barriers to independence. Awareness activities include participation in informational exhibits and demonstrations we provide in rehabilitation and support group settings. Additionally, PARI distributes informational pamphlets describing the PAAT program to further enhance awareness of assistive technology and provides information through our website, www.pari-ilc.org. PARI is also an active demonstrator/vendor/participant in several conferences throughout the year as well as an active presence in statewide legislation hearings and public events. Bi-annually we co-host an Independent Living Conference with Ocean State Center for Independent Living, promoting the public awareness of disability related issues.

Coordination & Collaboration

PARI Independent Living Center collaborates with ATAP partners and other disability related groups to promote the value of, and access to assistive technology; assisting individuals with disabilities and their families in advocating for the acquisition of AT. This is accomplished through regular attendance and participation in ATAP partner meetings, participation in the ATAP advisory committee (RICAT) meetings, active involvement throughout the state with PARI staff service on boards and planning committees of disability-related agencies as well as participation in community events targeting individuals with disabilities. PARI also provides annual logistical

assistance and publicity for the Governor's Office on Disabilities public forums held throughout the state.

Community Relationships

The PAAT program has established relationships with several community agencies which have allowed us to find homes for donated items not usually accepted by PARI, such as:

Blackstone Valley Community Health Care

Nebulizers, Ensure liquids and medical disposables

Wheels To The World

Manual wheelchairs, parts, walkers and pediatric equipment.

The Wheelchair Recycler

Electric wheelchairs and scooters we cannot pass on.

Planning ahead for the future...

During this reporting period, the PAAT program has begun selling new equipment as an option to consumers when used equipment is not available. Consumers, families and professionals are taking advantage of this affordable equipment and are visiting our demonstration center, often returning within weeks to obtain additional needed equipment through our recycled program or at the least thinking of the PAAT program as their first contact for equipment and/or information. ***The continuous availability of affordable assistive technology equipment whether recycled or new*** is paramount to the PAAT program's success and a vital part of our continued growth and expansion. Two hundred new pieces of equipment were sold this year and even at this early stage we are seeing a 1.5 % return of the new equipment into our recycled inventory.

We are in *very preliminary discussions* to promote a pediatric specific AT recycling program with therapists and parents in RI.

We are in *continuing discussions* to expand the PAAT program to satellite locations, coordinating with regional Independent Living Centers to obtain funding and develop these activities.

Beginning this new reporting year we have established a partnership with an AT vendor and a nursing home to receive donated electric hospital beds. The PAAT program will receive a cash donation for each bed these agencies receive. The PAAT program will only facilitate the exchange and not assume custody of the beds. The data will continue to be collected with the reutilization portion of our ATAP as an exchange is being facilitated. This is a great option for many families who in the past may have simply disposed of the bed when transportation and delivery issues were a hindrance to donating.

2011 Conference Report
30th 2011

Conference Date: November

Attendee numbers

Total recorded attendees: 327 (does not include free vendor hall attendees)

Number of attendees who came as exhibitors: 63

Number of attendees who came as presenters: 30 (includes users)

Payments

Check payments: 66

Credit Card payments: 66

Purchase orders: 67

Attendees who paid the student rate: 11

Scholarships given: 3

Accommodations requested

Large print program: 3

Digital program: 4

FM Systems for workshops: 1

Vegetarian Lunches: 25

Number of times the program book was downloaded from the website: 84

Evaluation Results

Attendee Evaluations

Did the conference meet your expectations?

Yes: 89%

Somewhat: 11%

No: 0

Attendee Evaluations Cont'd

Presentation I enjoyed most was...

AAC Apps – Matthew: 14%

E-Readers – Gloria: 12%

UDL: 10%

Vizzle: 8%

Hard of Hearing - Dorian and James: 8%

User Sessions: 8%

RJ Cooper: 4%

Assessment – Shawn: 4%

App Fit – Madalaine: 4%

Other: 28%

How did you hear about the conference?

Email: 41%

Data incomplete.

Exhibitor Evaluations

Do you like the location?

Yes 100%

No 0

Was the cost reasonable?

Yes 87%

No 13%

Okay 0

Was the traffic good?

Yes 87%

No 13%

Will you exhibit next year?

Yes 90%

No 0

Maybe 10%

Data compiled by TechACCESS 12/22/2011