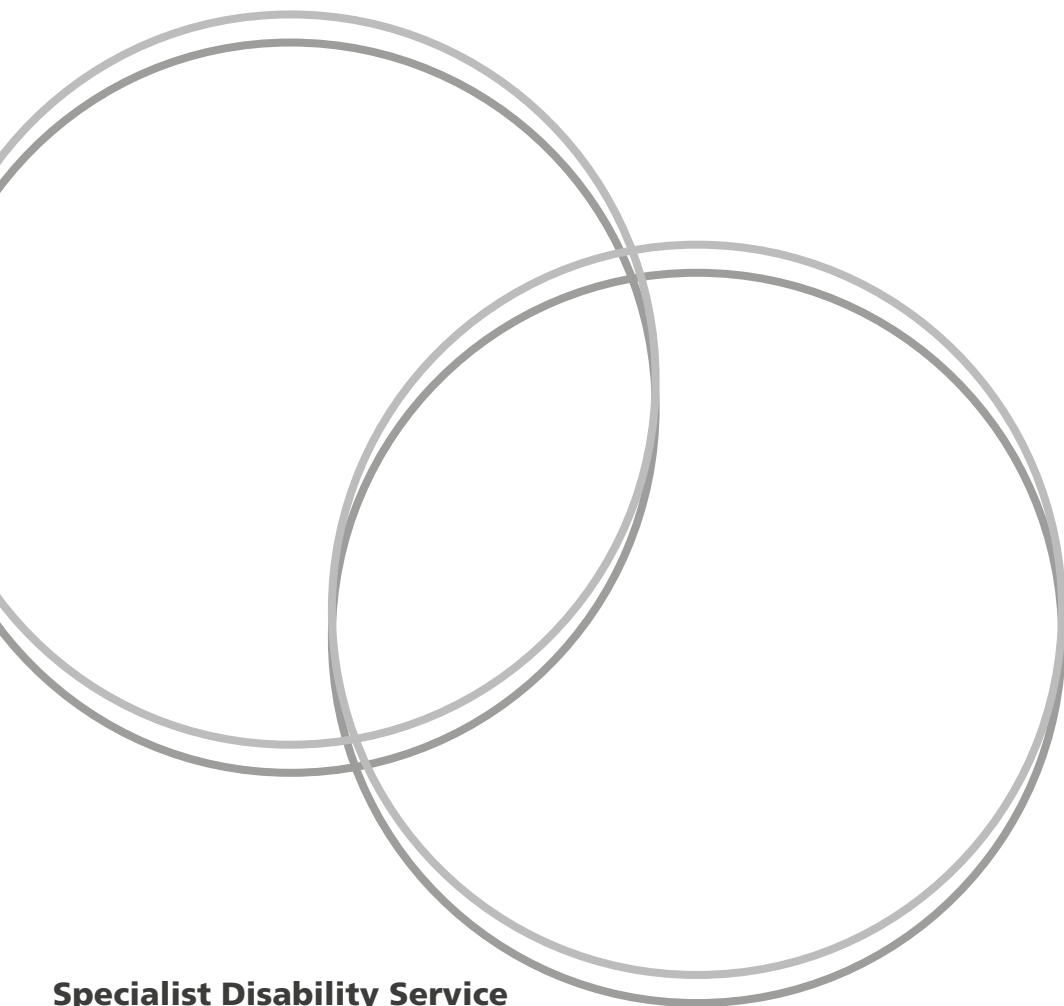




Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Service

Information for patients



Specialist Disability Service

The Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Service provides assessment and advice about communication aids. Your appointment may be provided at your home or at the Oxford Centre for Enablement.

Our services

Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs)

These are electronic devices which have speech output to enable you to communicate if you can no longer speak or find it difficult to make yourself understood. You can type your message on a keyboard and /or select from stored words and phrases. Pictures can be used to help you find the message if reading is difficult. If using your hands is difficult, there are a range of alternative methods to operate the device. We will provide an assessment to identify the most suitable device and provide support to help you learn to use it. Sometimes we will refer you to NHS England Specialised AAC Services for assessment and will attend these appointments with you.

Voice amplifiers

If your voice is quiet, a voice amplifier may help increase the volume of your speech. We have a range of amplifiers available that you can try with our Speech & Language Therapy Support Worker to determine which is best for you. We are able to loan equipment to amplify your speech to a normal conversational level.

Voice banking

If there is a likelihood that you may lose your speech, you may wish to make recordings of your speech to create a personal synthetic voice that can be used with a communication aid at a later date. We can discuss what is involved and provide advice about which software to use. We can loan some equipment short term and help with the recording process if needed.

Eligibility criteria and referrals

The service is open to all adults with acquired communication difficulties in Oxfordshire. If you have language difficulties, an assessment with a Speech & Language Therapist is needed first, who will make the referral to us and provide some support.

Referrals are made using the Oxfordshire Communication Aids Referral form:

www.ouh.nhs.uk/ocf/referrals/specialist-disability-services.aspx

We may be able to accept referrals on a case-by-case basis for people who have a different diagnosis and for people who live outside Oxfordshire for assessment/advice only. Please contact us to discuss this.

Funding

Equipment funding for a VOCA or an amplifier can be requested for all adults within the Oxfordshire County Council Area and is allocated on a prioritisation basis. Equipment is provided on loan and is regularly reviewed.

Funding is not available to purchase voices created via voice banking, however, there are several charities who may fund this.

If the equipment is to be used primarily for work/education purposes, the cost should be met by your employer. If you meet the criteria for Specialised AAC Services, they will provide the equipment recommended.

Contact details

Telephone: 01865 737 445 or 01865 227 447

Email: specialist.disabilityservice@ouh.nhs.uk

Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

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Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
www.ouh.nhs.uk/information



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