



Communication Aids **Survey**

This project is supported by BT



Time to get equal

scope

About cerebral palsy.
For disabled people achieving equality.



The communication aids survey

Scope believes that everyone should have the right to communicate. Lots of people with communication impairments have told us that they find it difficult to get the right equipment and support to speak for themselves.

We are keen to record the experiences of people with communication impairments, so that we can use this evidence to improve communication aid provision and support. If you or a family member have a communication impairment, we really want to hear from you.

The more people who get involved the more information we will have to help us, so if you know other people who have communication impairments please tell them about this survey. Thank you for taking part; it really does help make a difference.

The survey is for people with a communication impairment, who use (or would like to use) a communication aid. We would also like to hear from parents / family members or those that work with people with communication impairments.

If you do not meet this description but have an experience to share, Scope would still like to hear from you.

Please email **communication.aids@scope.org.uk** or ring us on **020 7619 7254** with your experiences.

You can complete this survey in three ways:

- Electronically – send it back as an attachment to: **communication.aids@scope.org.uk**
- On paper and post it back to: **Scope, Communication aids survey, FREEPOST 17 LON8654 London N7 9BR**
- On the phone with a member of Scope staff. To arrange a time, please ring **020 7619 7254**.

For more information about the survey, go to

www.scope.org.uk/disablism/communication.shtml

Please return the survey by **1 July 2007**

Thank you for your help

4 Section 1

What do we mean by 'communication aid'?

Communication aids are tools for everyday living. Some are low-tech, such as communication books and symbol boards. Others are high-tech electronic devices. These are often called 'Talkers', Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCA for short) or Augmentative and Alternative communication (AAC) devices. All of these enable people who have no speech, limited speech or impaired speech to communicate their wishes and thoughts to others.

In this survey, we will call all devices (both high-tech and low-tech) 'communication aids'.

1. Do you have a communication impairment?

Yes No

2. If no, does a family member have a communication impairment or are you working with someone who has a communication impairment?

Yes No

If yes, please answer the following questions with / on behalf of the AAC user.

3. Have you ever had a communication aid?

Yes No

4. Do you currently have a communication aid?

Yes No

5. If no, do you think that you require a communication aid?

Yes No Not applicable

Getting assessed

6. Have you been assessed for your communication needs?

Yes

No

Don't know

7. If yes, at what age were you first assessed?

Not applicable

0-3

4-5

6-10

11-16

17-25

26-40

41-65

66+

8. Who assessed you? (Tick all that apply)

Local authority speech and language therapist

Private speech and language therapist

Communication aid service eg. ACE Centres / Wolfson Centre

Charity

Communication Aids Project (CAP)

School / college

Other (please give details)

I have not had an assessment (please tell us why not and then go on to **question 13**)

6 Section 2

9. How long did you have to wait for your first communication assessment?

- Less than 1 month 1 to 2 months 3 to 6 months
 7 months to 1 year More than 1 year Don't know

10. Approximately, how regularly do you have follow-up assessments for your communication aid needs?

- I have never had a follow-up assessment
 Every 6 months Every year
 Every 2 years Every 3 years
 Every 4 years + Don't know

11. Who paid for your most recent communication assessment? (Tick all that apply)

- Health service Local education authority
 Social services Charity
 Self-funded Family / friend(s)
 Don't know Other (please give details)

12. How long after being assessed, did you wait to receive your own communication aid?

- I don't have one yet Less than 1 month
 1 to 2 months 3 to 6 months
 7 months to 1 year More than 1 year
 Don't know

13. Were you able to try out different communication aids?

- Yes No Don't know

14. If yes, who provided the equipment for you to try out?

- Local authority
- Local health authority
- A communication aid service e.g. ACE Centres / Wolfson Centre
- A charity
- Communication Aids Project (CAP)
- Educational establishment
- Manufacturer
- Other communication aid users
- Other (please give details)

15. How many communication aids were you able to try out?

- None 1 2 3 4 5+

16. During the trial period were you given adequate support to try out the communication aid(s) properly?

eg. did you have the right switches / mounts for the equipment?

- Yes No Not applicable

17. Please tell us approximately how much your communication aid/s cost?

This information can help us make a case to the Government to provide more funding for AAC equipment and support. Please include any extra costs – such as mounting to a wheelchair, switches, controls or keyguards that you need to use the aid.

- £99 or less £100 – £499 £500 – £999
 £1,000 – £2,999 £3,000 – £4,999 £5,000 – £9,999
 £10,000+ Don't know

8 Section 2

18. Who purchased your communication aid? (Tick all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Awaiting a decision | <input type="checkbox"/> Health service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local education authority | <input type="checkbox"/> Social services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Charity | <input type="checkbox"/> Self-funded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Direct payments | <input type="checkbox"/> Individualised budgets |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family / friend(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Given second-hand equipment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please give details) |

19. Who owns the communication aid you use?

- I own it
- It's on loan for as long as I need it
- It's on short-term loan. (I have to give it back within a certain period of time)
- Other (please give details)

Training

20. Who showed you how to use your equipment? (Tick all that apply)

- Nobody showed me
- Speech and language therapist
- Speech and language assistant / technician
- I taught myself
- Carer / enabler
- Parent / family member / partner / friend
- The equipment manufacturer
- Community group / other communication aid users
- School / college / university
- Charity
- Don't know
- Other (please give details)

21. Do you think the amount of time this person spent showing you how to use the equipment was:

- Too little About right Too much Don't know

22. Have any of the following been trained or been shown how to use your aid: (Tick all that apply)

- Speech and language therapist / assistant
- Parent / family member / partner / friend
- Work colleagues
- Other (please give details)
- Carer / enabler
- Teacher
- Don't know

10 Section 4

Services in your area

23. How would you rate the communication support services in your area?

- Excellent Good Satisfactory
 Poor Very poor There isn't a service available to me

24. Do you have access to on-going support for the use of your communication aid?

- Yes No

25. Are there any groups or projects within your area that specifically support people with communication impairments?

- Yes No Don't know

If yes, please tell us the name and contact details of the group / project:

26. How do they support you? (Tick all that apply)

- Financial
 Advice
 Training
 Equipment
 Speech and language therapy
 Opportunities to meet other communication aid users
 They do not support me
 Other (please give details)

Communication equipment

27. What communication equipment do you use? (Tick all that apply)

- Sign support speech (eg. BSL, Sign-along, Makaton)
- Low-tech (eg. a symbol or letter board, or communication book)
- High-tech (eg. electronic communication equipment)
- None

28. Are you able to program your own communication aid, or do you need someone else to do it for you?

- Not applicable
- I can program the communication aid myself
- I need someone to program the communication aid for me

29. Is there a limit to the number of words that you can put on your communication aid?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

30. Are you satisfied with the communication aid you currently use?

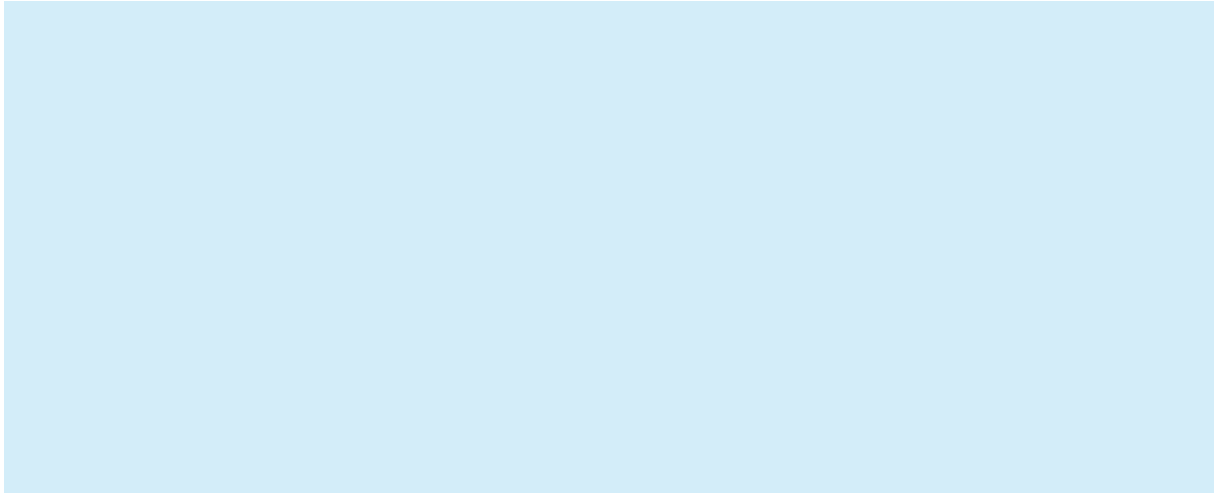
- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied / nor unsatisfied
- Unsatisfied
- Very unsatisfied

31. Can you communicate all that you would like to with your current communication aid?

- Yes
- No

12 Section 5

32. Are there any more details about your ability to communicate that you would like to tell us about?



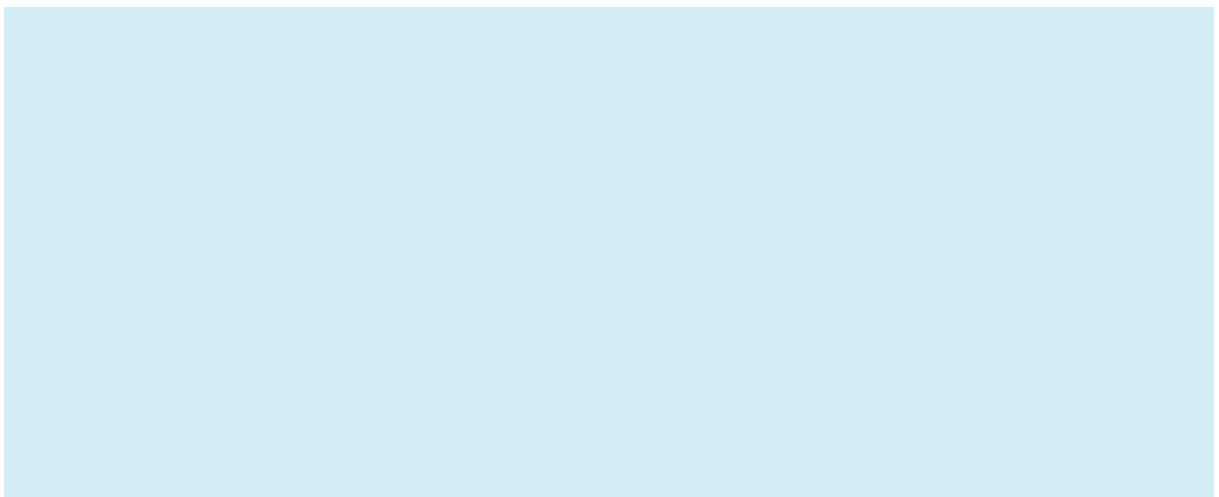
33. How many different communication aids did you have in each of the following years of your life?

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0-3 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 4-5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11-16 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 17-25 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 26-40 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 41-65 years | <input type="checkbox"/> 66+ years | |

34. Do you use a different communication aid when you talk to people you know (eg. friends and family) than when you talk to people you don't know (eg. shop assistants)?

- Yes No

If yes, please could you tell us why this is the case:



Electronic communication aid users only.Non-electronic communication aid users go to **Section 7****Reliability and breakdown**

35. How reliable do you feel your current communication aid is?

- Very reliable Reliable Not very reliable
 Very unreliable Don't know

36. Has your current communication aid ever broken down?

- Yes No Don't know

37. Approximately how long were you unable to use the aid, the last time it broke down?

- It has never broken down 1 hour or less
 Less than 24 hours Less than 1 week
 Less than 1 month Less than 2 months
 2 months or more

38. When your communication aid breaks down for a day or more, are you provided with a replacement aid?

- Yes No If one is available Don't know

39. Do you have an alternative communication system to use as a back-up or in other situations?

- No Yes (please give details)

Redundant equipment

40. Have you ever stopped using a communication aid?

- Yes No

41. Why did you stop using it? (Tick all that apply)

- I am still using my first communication aid
- It was lost or stolen
- It was damaged
- My needs changed and it was no longer suitable
- The technology was out of date
- The technology was too complicated for me to use
- My family / partner / teachers / personal assistant didn't know how to use it
- It was on loan
- I could not move around easily with it
- It could not be mounted on my wheelchair
- Other (please give details)

42. What happened to the communication aid when you stopped using it?

- I do not have a communication aid
- I am still using my first communication aid
- It was returned to the supplier
- It was returned back to the communication aid loan provider
- I still have it It was thrown away It was recycled
- Other (please give details)

Electronic communication users only.

Non-electronic communication aid users go to **Section 7**

Generated voice and vocabulary

43. Is the voice produced by your communication aid

- Synthesized (the device generates the voice)
- Digitalised (someone has to record all the vocabulary onto the device)
- Don't know

Design

44. How do you rate the design of your communication aid?

- Excellent
- Good
- OK
- Poor
- Very poor

45. Have you experienced any difficulties with your equipment?

(Tick all that apply)

- No difficulties
- Increasing or changing vocabulary
- Physically accessing the aid (eg. screen / keypad, switches)
- Size of equipment
- Weight of equipment
- Portability
- Mounting equipment onto a wheelchair
- Don't know
- Other (please give details)

16 Section 6

46. Do you have use of your communication aid whenever you need it?

Yes No

If no, why not?

Insurance / warranty

47. Did your communication aid come with a warranty or guarantee?

Yes No Don't know

48. Approximately, what was the length of the warranty or guarantee?

I don't have one Under 1 year
 1 year 2 years 3+ years

49. Is your communication aid covered by insurance?

Yes No Don't know

50. Who pays for the insurance of your communication aid?

I don't have any insurance Health service
 Local education authority Charity
 Self-funded Family / friend(s)
 Don't know Other (please give details)

All communication aid users

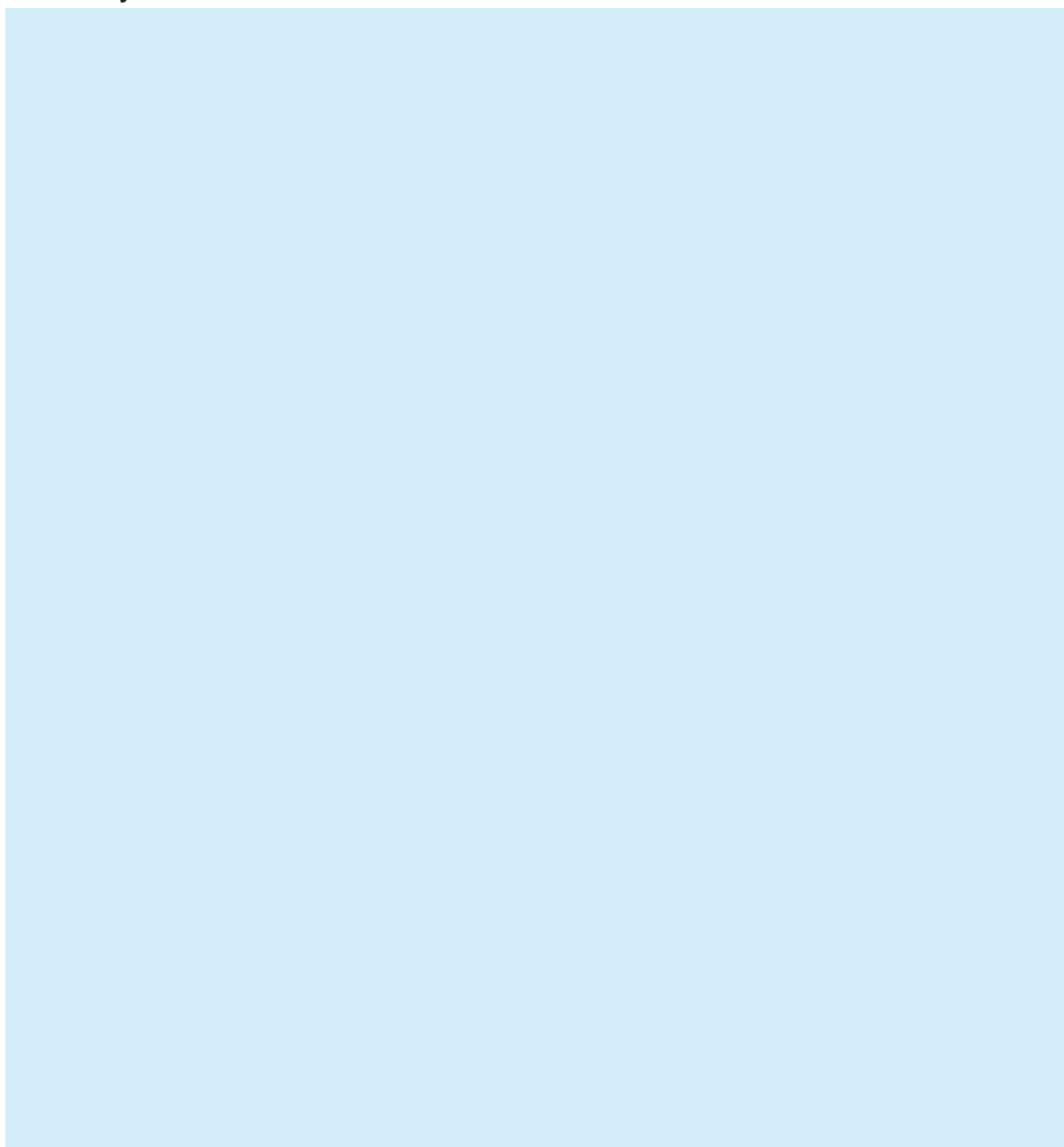
51. On a scale of 1 – 6 how important is your communication aid in supporting your everyday life? (Please tick)

(1 = not important at all; 6 = absolutely essential)

1 2 3 4 5 6

52. Do you have any further comments or experiences?

We are particularly interested in the impact of communication aids on your life.



18 Section 8

About you

(Please fill in details of the communication aid user for all the questions)

What is your name?

Could you tell us your age?

- 0-4 5-15 16-25 26-40 41-65 66+

Please tell us your gender?

- Male Female

How would you describe your ethnicity? (If other, please state)

White British Irish Other _____

Mixed Heritage White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African White and Asian

Other Mixed Heritage _____

Asian or British Asian

Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi

Other _____

Black or Black British Caribbean African

Other _____

Chinese or other Ethnic Group Chinese

Other _____

What is your current work status? (Tick all that apply)

- Full-time education Part-time education
 Full-time employment Part-time employment
 Full-time voluntary work Part-time voluntary work
 Seeking employment Retired
 Not currently in education or employment

Thank you for your support

If you are interested in raising awareness of these issues, there are a number of ways in which you can help. Please tick any of the options below that you would consider:

- Discussing the issues raised with a member of Scope's staff
- Speaking to the media about these issues
- Having your experience used in awareness-raising literature
- Joining a campaign group
- Receiving updates on the campaign

Thank you once again for taking the time to fill out this survey.

By submitting personal information to us, you consent to our collection and use of it. We will not sell, trade or rent your personal information to third parties. We will disclose aggregate statistics about those who have submitted surveys and related information in the final report but we will **not** include information which could enable you to be identified.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Scope

You can support Scope's work in a number of ways by going to www.scope.org.uk/support

For information and advice on cerebral palsy, disability issues and Scope's services, visit **Scope Response** at www.scope.org.uk or call **0808 800 3333**.

Alternative formats

This survey is available in alternative formats. Please call **020 7619 7254** or email communication.aids@scope.org.uk

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scope

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