

## Speech Pathology — Augmentative & Alternative Communication Services

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is the term used to describe any tools used to support a person to communicate with little or no functional use of their verbal speech. AAC can be used to supplement or assist a person with a low level of verbal speech to communicate or it can replace verbal speech entirely.

There is a range of AAC options to support people with no verbal speech, a low level of verbal speech and people who are able to speak in full sentences but may have difficulty using this ability at certain times. These include:

- **Low-Tech AAC Options —**

Low-tech AAC options include:

- Pointing to pictures to communicate.
- Using a system of selecting pictures from a board or book and handing them to another person to communicate.
- Signing as a means of communicating — this can include signing single key words or using signs to communicate more detailed messages.

For each of these options, there are many different systems that can be implemented to meet a person's specific communication needs.

- **High-Tech AAC Options —**

High-tech AAC options include:

- iPad apps that will speak single words, phrases or sentences for a person when they select pictures and/or words.
- Dedicated devices of varying sizes and configurations that speak for a person when they select pictures or words.

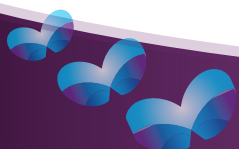
Each of these supports has numerous different settings and options for organising and displaying the pictures that the person interacts with in order to communicate. These devices can also be fully customised to support a person's particular communication needs.

### AAC Support at Fabic

At Fabic we offer a full, comprehensive process of introducing an AAC support into a person's life. This includes:

- An assessment of the person's foundational communication skills and support to develop these skills, where needed, so that they are able to access and make use of an AAC option effectively once it is introduced.
- Trialling various options, including borrowing communication devices from the distributors as required.
- Teaching the person how to use the device and transfer these skills into use in their everyday life.
- Training the significant people in the person's life in the use and maintenance of the AAC support and how to assist them to develop the skills to use it successfully in their everyday life.

**OF NOTE** — *In order for an AAC option to be successful, the person will require the adults in their life, at least in their home setting and in their school or day setting as well, to work with them on a daily basis to develop the skills to communicate using the AAC solution and to transfer these skills into full use in their everyday life. As such, we would typically encourage people to wait until they are able to access this consistency of support over a six to 12-month period before introducing an AAC option.*



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### Location and Funding Options

We are able to offer AAC assessments and interventions at our Gold Coast and Brisbane clinics, as well as in the client's home or other relevant setting via our mobile service to Beaudesert, Brisbane, Lismore, the Gold Coast, other locations and online via Zoom or Skype.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) funding can be used to support access to these sessions and also to purchase the AAC solution. For options over \$1500, the person will require in many cases a formal request to be submitted to the NDIS via their speech pathologist that provision be made for funding the AAC solution.

Private health insurance and Medicare plans can likewise be used to support access to AAC services.

### Meet Kathryn — Our Lead Speech Pathologist

Kathryn Maroney is the lead speech pathologist at Fabic. Kathryn has extensive experience working in the field of disability and the general practice of speech pathology. Kathryn has worked in private practice, schools, community health and the not for profit sector. It has been her absolute pleasure to offer speech pathology services for Fabic since 2014.



Further information about Kathryn is available at  
[www.fabic.com.au/about-us/kathryn-maroney](http://www.fabic.com.au/about-us/kathryn-maroney)

For more information about the AAC services offered through Fabic or to book an appointment, please contact Fabic by phone on (07) 5530 5099 or email at [info@fabic.com.au](mailto:info@fabic.com.au)

