

## Assistive Devices Resource Service

### Welcome to the Assistive Devices Resource Service (ADRS) at ErinoakKids!

Children and Youth who meet ADRS eligibility criteria can be referred for assessment and consultation, to help determine if assistive technology may help address the following areas of need:

- 1) Face-to-Face communication – for clients who cannot communicate clearly with speech alone
- 2) Written Communication – for clients who have difficulty with handwriting or straight forward typing
- 3) Adapted Access - for clients who are not able to use their fingers to point to or push buttons to access computers, face-to-face communication devices, switch toys or power wheelchair controls

ADRS works with the client, family & school staff (when appropriate) to determine which assistive technology may help the client. ADRS does not provide regular treatment.

A parent or guardian at home needs to be identified as the home mediator. It is critical that this person helps support the client's learning & use of the system. The assessment process is very intensive and requires a lot of time and effort from the home mediator. ADRS will help with the initial programming and set-up of the device. ADRS will also show home & school how the device has been set-up, how it works, and how to program it. Once this has happened, the home mediator is responsible for making sure the system is working and updating the system as needed. The home mediator needs to work with their child to help him or her use their device.

The client must have a need for the assistive device at home or in the community to be eligible for ADRS assessment. The client would not be eligible for assessment if they only need a system for use in school.

### STEPS IN THE ADRS PROCESS

#### 1. Screening assessment and gathering background information

After the referral to ADRS has been made, a screening visit will be booked. The parent(s) will meet with an ADRS Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) and/or Occupational Therapist (OT) at the ADRS clinic without their child. At this visit, the clinician will get background information on the client and will provide information about the ADRS assessment.

#### 2. Screening observation visit at home or school

The ADRS clinician(s) will book a visit to observe the client in a familiar setting. The clinician(s) will observe the client in that environment, to see how they are doing. At that time, one of two things may happen:

- a) Recommendations will be provided and the client will be discharged. The client can be re-referred when the recommendations no longer meet the client's needs.
- b) Recommendations will be provided and the client will continue on with ADRS for a full assessment.

#### 3. Full Assessment

The client typically comes to the ADRS clinic for the full assessment. At that time, the ADRS SLP and/or OT will work with the client to determine if any assistive devices may be helpful. This assessment may require multiple visits to ErinoakKids.

Clients may be assessed on a number of different systems and/or access methods. Clinicians may look at no-tech and low-tech options, before looking at more complex technology.

A Communication Technology Facilitator (CTF) will also be part of the assessment. CTFs will help with the set-up and programming of equipment and will train home/school mediators. The ADRS-Technologist may also be needed. The Technologist can offer support for AAC devices, and can create mounting systems as needed. Assessment results are always discussed with the ADRS team to review funding criteria & eligibility.

#### **4. Four to six week home equipment trial**

If clinicians and family find that a specific piece of equipment could help the client a short trial of the system will be put into place. There may be a fee of up to \$28.25 for the equipment loan. If vocabulary is needed to set-up a face-to-face communication system, the vocabulary list must be received, along with the fee, before ADRS can order the equipment for trial. At the start of the trial, ADRS Clinicians and parents will work together to set goals for the client & mediator to work towards during the trial. The CTF will schedule training sessions and will provide support with any technical issues.

#### **5. Equipment Trial Outcome/Funding**

After the trial, there are many possibilities regarding recommendations and equipment. You will meet with the ADRS clinician(s) to discuss the appropriate next steps. If equipment is recommended, the Assistive Devices Program (ADP) may cover part of the costs. It is important to note that ADP funding may not be available.

#### **Risks, benefits, alternatives to assessment**

It is important to remember that ADP funding may not be available for the client. There is also no guarantee that a specific type of technology that the client wants will be recommended. ADRS Clinicians are working to find the solution that best meets the clients' needs. No-tech, low tech and/or high tech options may all be considered. Assessment may include multiple centre visits, which may result in missed time at school for clients. If the parent/client is interested, ADRS Clinicians can provide information regarding possible alternatives to full ADRS assessment (i.e. Individual Authorizers, vendors, etc.)

#### **It is important for ADRS Clinicians to know the following information –**

- a. Where should the Observation visit take place?
- b. Name of School/Daycare
- c. Who are the primary identified mediators
  - i. At home?
  - ii. At School?
- d. Are you receiving ACSD(Assistance for Children with Severe Disabilities), ODSP(Ontario Disability Support Program), OSAP (Ontario Student Assistance Program) or any other funding?
- e. Are there any concerns about being able to pay a portion of costs for a system?
- f. Is there any reason that the assessment cannot proceed at this time?

**Next step – ADRS Clinician will contact \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ to schedule the observation visit. The ADRS clinician will inform you of the time/date of the observation visit, so that if the client will not be present, you can call to re-schedule.**