



FINDING FUNDING FOR SPEECH COMMUNICATION DEVICES

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FROM FAMILIES AND POTENTIAL AUGMENTED COMMUNICATORS

Can I get help paying for a speech communication device?

Yes. The good news is – most people do not have to pay much out of pocket for these devices. Funding is available through many sources. Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance, the Department of Veteran’s Affairs, and school districts pay for these devices, leaving very little out of pocket expense for the family.

DynaVox takes care of the funding paperwork and the reimbursement process, so our customers don’t have to do it themselves.

Ask your healthcare provider or speech-language pathologist (SLP) to provide additional information or links to funding resources. Also, some speech communication device manufactures provide a range of funding assistance and support services.

How do I initiate the process of securing a device and related funding?

Before anything else, an SLP conducts an evaluation to confirm that a potential augmented communicator will benefit from a speech communication device and to ensure that the device ordered will best meet the individual’s current and future communication needs. The SLP then writes a detailed report explaining the need for a product and demonstrating that the individual would be able to use the device.

The SLP also will recommend any ancillary equipment that might be needed to ensure the individual can effectively and efficiently use the system. This evaluation and a list of recommended equipment is sent to the individual’s physician who, generally, writes a prescription. All paperwork is typically sent to the device manufacturer who processes and sends it on to the funding agency for review.

How long does the funding process take?

Generally, there is a one to three month period from the initiation of the funding process to the time that a device is shipped. The waiting period is affected by the type of funding you use and the number of insurance policies you carry.

What exactly is the role of a funding coordinator?

Speech communication device manufacturers, such as DynaVox, employ full-time funding coordinators who act as the intermediaries between clients and their insurance providers. Throughout the process, they work with

-more-



customers, their physician and SLPs, and their insurance carriers to ensure funding is secured quickly, efficiently and accurately. Among other things, they advise SLPs on the information that must be included in evaluation documents, submit paperwork to insurers, and bill funding sources on customers' behalf. Most importantly, they keep customers informed throughout the process.

I don't want to wait for an approval. Can I pay for my device now and be reimbursed?

Yes. However, there is no guarantee that you will be reimbursed without a funding approval on file from your insurance carrier. If you choose to submit to your insurer yourself, remember to fax or e-mail a copy of the documentation to the device manufacturer.

What if my device manufacturer isn't an in-network provider for my insurance carrier?

Most insurers recognize DynaVox as the sole supplier and vendor of DynaVox speech communication devices. Because of this, they are typically willing to cover products at in-network rates. This often means that customers save on co-payments.

Do school districts have a responsibility toward children with severe speech disabilities?

Yes. The majority of people who use speech communication devices currently are students under the age of 18. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (the IDEA law) in the U.S., school districts are required to consider a disabled student's need for assistive technology, which includes speech-generating devices.

Media Contact: Joanne Kaufmann, 412-222-7952, joanne.kaufmann@dynavoxtech.com