

## PROJECT TITLE

Interprofessional Education in AAC in Ontario: Enhancing Teamwork

## TEAM MEMBERS

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## ORGANIZATIONS/ PROGRAMS

1. Centralized Equipment Pool, 2. Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, 3. St. Clair College 4. Bloorview Research Institute, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## RATIONALE

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) clinical practice is a collaborative team approach. Team members include SLP, OT, CDA and Technologists.

**Challenge:** New team members need to learn on the job and require significant support and training. There are over 375 staff at 27 AAC clinics in Ontario. The **Centralized Equipment Pool** provides a continuing education program for AAC clinics across Ontario and has the opportunity to enhance education for new team members.

## OBJECTIVE /METHODS

To identify the learning needs and gaps for new team members working at AAC clinics in Ontario.

This quality improvement project used an online version of a modified Delphi technique to achieve consensus with key stakeholders (clinic managers, experienced clinicians and new staff) Three online surveys were conducted: 1. Identification of gaps, 2. Rating of importance and 3. Consensus building.

# To enhance Augmentative & Alternative Communication (AAC) education we need to expand training to include team building, AAC knowledge, skills and practice in the real world



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## RESULTS

33 stakeholders responded to all 3 surveys ( 73% response rate) . They represented new and experienced staff and clinic managers across Ontario. Identified learning needs for new staff were refined during the 3 survey rounds and ranked in terms of importance.

The top 3 learning needs in each area are presented below:

### Interprofessional Team Skills

- *Communication skills*
- *Team approach*
- *Team dynamics*

### Clinical Knowledge

- *Knowledge of devices*
- *Vocabulary and language*
- *AAC assessment tools & frameworks*

### Clinical Skills

- *Practical hands on*
- *Assessment methods*
- *Team based skills*

### Technical Knowledge

- *Exposure to a range of devices*
- *Keeping up with changes*
- *Problem solving, creativity*

### Technical Skills

- *On the job training*
- *Keeping up with tech changes*
- *Skills hardware and software*

**CONCLUSIONS** This project will enhance education programs offered through the Centralized Equipment Pool (CEP) for new staff in AAC clinics. Providing a strong foundation in AAC clinical practice will improve team based practice to support AAC services for clients and families.

## NEXT STEPS

To enhance AAC curriculum for new staff in Ontario through:

- Formation of a CEP Education Advisory Committee
- Develop AAC curriculum targeting identified needs and explore best education delivery mechanisms.