



Success with Technology

MassMATCH promotes the use of assistive technology and assistive technology services to enhance the independence of people with disabilities, enabling equal participation in all of life's activities

*2016 ANNUAL
REPORT*



About MassMATCH

MassMATCH is the statewide Assistive Technology (AT) Act Program funded through the Administration for Community Living (ACL) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. MassMATCH programs provide individuals with disabilities, family members, seniors and professionals access to resources for learning about and acquiring AT devices and services. MassMATCH serves individuals of all ages, in all environments, across the range of disabilities. The program is administered by the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and is made possible by the AT Act of 1998, as amended.

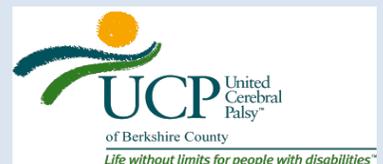
What is AT?

Assistive Technology (AT) is any item, piece of equipment or system that increases, maintains or improves the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Assistive technology devices help individuals with disabilities do what they are able to do better and longer. AT ranges from a simple pencil grip to specialized equipment such as a power wheelchair and includes specialized software or consumer electronics with built-in accessibility features.



AT Regional Centers

MassMATCH partners with Easter Seals of Massachusetts and United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) of Berkshire County to provide AT Regional Centers (ATRCs) in Eastern and Western Massachusetts. The Centers welcome the public to come see, touch and try the latest AT devices without pressure to choose any particular product. Information & assistance, trainings, AT demonstrations, as well as short-term device loans are FREE services provided by the ATRCs. The Centers are located in Boston and Pittsfield. Search or browse the device loan inventory online at http://massmatch.org/find_at/borrow.php.



Learning About AT

AT Demonstration and Short-Term Loans

Device demonstration is the opportunity for an individual or group to see AT in action. Individuals with disabilities, family members, teachers, therapists and others come to the centers to learn about new AT products. Short-term Device Loans allow individuals to try devices for up to four weeks at a time in their intended environments. Both services allow users to make informed decisions or help fulfill short-term equipment needs.

ATRC Demo/Loan Activity	2016
# Devices Loaned	1,169
# Device Loan Participants	618
# Demonstrations	155
# Demonstration Participants	237

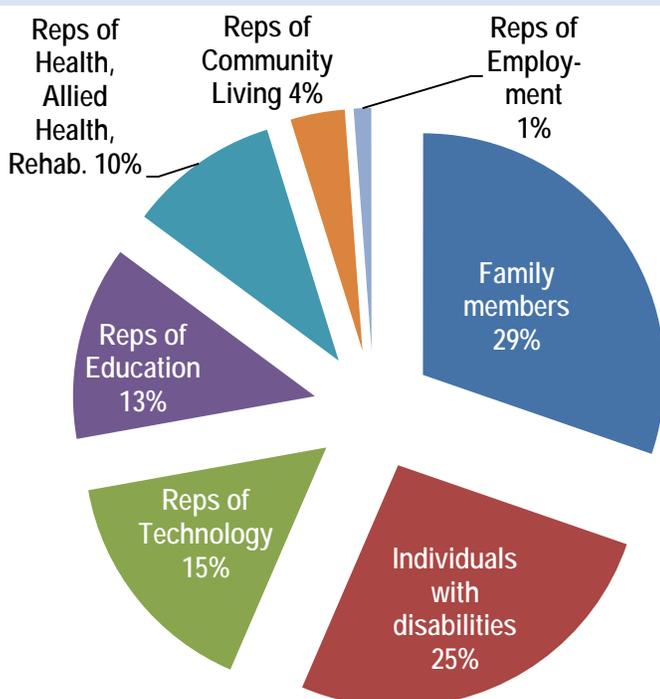
Information & Assistance, Training and Public Awareness

Information and assistance (I &A) is provided about AT devices and services, how to access funding for AT, and other related disability topics. Trainings also address a range of issues that are targeted to specific audiences.

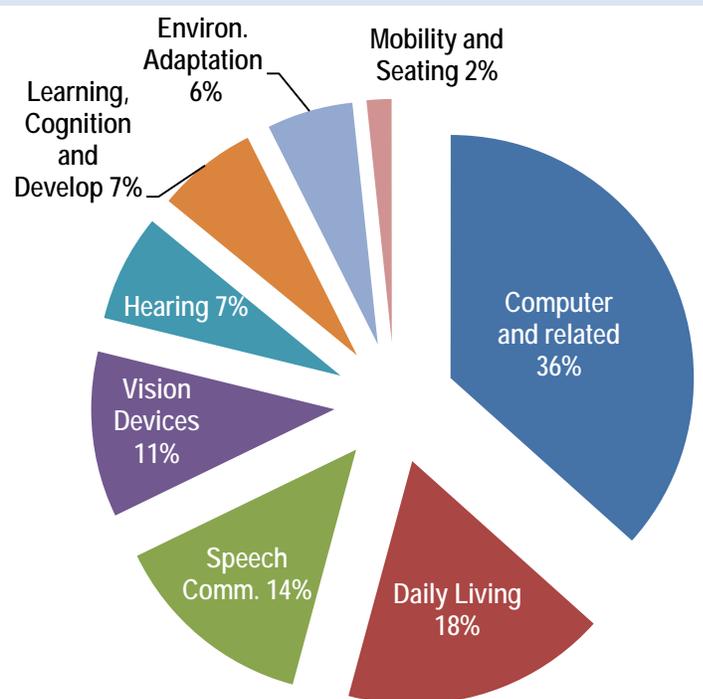
During 2016:

- 3,271 individuals received I&A. 30% were individuals with disabilities; 26% were representatives of health, allied health and rehabilitation; and 20% were representatives of education.
- 705 individuals attended AT trainings statewide. 50% of training participants were individual with disabilities; 31% were representatives of health, allied health, and rehabilitation.
- An estimated 593,490 individuals were reached through public awareness activities including presentations, expos and conferences, internet outreach, email notices, newsletters and PSAs.

Demonstration and Loan Participants



Types of AT Loaned and Demonstrated



Acquiring AT

The Massachusetts AT Loan Program

MassMATCH partners with Easter Seals MA and Santander Bank to enable persons with disabilities to purchase AT devices and AT services (such as training with devices). The Massachusetts AT Loan Program (MATLP) makes financial loans accessible to people who may ordinarily be turned down by traditional lenders.

- During 2016, MATLP loaned \$755,698 to 47 borrowers. 51% of applicants had annual household incomes of \$30,000 or less. The applicant approval rate was 48% and the program's default rate was 4.5%.

The Long-Term Device Loan Program

The Long-Term Device Loan Program is administered by Easter Seals MA and provides devices valued at under \$500 to applicants who demonstrate financial need. Borrowers may keep the equipment for as long as they need it.

- During 2016, the Long-Term Device Loan Program saved 117 borrowers a total of \$31,052. The program provided hearing, vision and mobility aids as well as computers and other devices for learning, cognition and development.

Get AT Stuff.org—The AT Exchange in New England and New York

GetATStuff.org is the website of the Assistive Technology Exchange in New England and New York. At GetATStuff.org, individuals buy, sell and give away equipment. Users also post their equipment needs.

- During 2016 there were 30 completed exchanges saving consumers an estimated \$119,056 over retail. There were also 247 new users registered on the website.

REquipment DME Reuse Program

REquipment refurbishes donated wheelchairs, ramps, shower chairs, rollators, adapted strollers and other

gently-used high-quality durable medical equipment. The program keeps valuable DME out of landfills and in the hands of persons with disabilities.



During 2016:

- REquipment expanded statewide with reuse centers now in Canton, Boston, Amherst, Worcester, and Pittsfield!
- \$1,173,361 was saved by device recipients.
- 669 devices were reassigned to individuals who needed them.
- Program partners now include REquipment, Inc., the Department of Developmental Services, The Boston Home, Pappas Rehabilitation Hospital for Children, Stavros Center for Independent Living and United Cerebral Palsy-Berkshire.

Additional Reuse Initiatives

MassMATCH also supports the additional DME reuse activities of Stavros CIL in Amherst and UCP in Pittsfield.

- During 2016, these programs refurbished and reassigned 269 devices and saved recipients an estimated \$218,824 over retail.

Reuse Activity	2016
# Devices Exchanged	30
# Devices Reassigned	924
# Long-Term Device Loans	117
Total Reutilized	1,071

Success Highlights

Short-Term Device Loan Program

Andrew was just two years old when Boston Children's Hospital prescribed him a Touch Chat for communication due to a pediatric stroke. The hospital loaned him the speech generating



device, but needed it back after 4 weeks, just as Andrew was getting to know the difference between the Touch Chat and any other iPad. Insurance, however, required Andrew to prove he could make a request with the Touch Chat before they would approve a purchase. Luckily Andrew's aunt had heard of the device loan program at UCP-Berkshire, one of the MassMATCH AT Regional Centers. The ATRC was able to loan the family a Touch Chat, and because there was no waiting list, Andrew worked with the device for eight months, "proving" what he needed to the family's insurance, and continuing to learn communication while awaiting delivery. "If it wasn't for UCP," says his mom, "Andrew wouldn't be where is now with language."

Device Demonstration Program

For several years many of the local college and university assistive technology, education, occupational and physical therapy programs in the Boston area have made visiting and borrowing from the ATRC-Boston a mandatory and essential part of their curriculum. Feedback in 2016 included this note:



"Thank you so much for the opportunity to have our entire class of Occupational Therapy students visit the ATRC today. This experience provides them with an invaluable learning opportunity. Being able to touch and try out the various devices and software programs is a much more meaningful learning experience than

reading about, listening to lectures, and/or looking at slides could ever provide."

Long-Term Device Loan Program (LTDLP)

Katie had been homeless for years and was finally getting assistance for housing and food through public assistance. She could not, however, afford the devices recommended to her for coping with her Asperger's Syndrome, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), panic and sleep disorders. With the help of the LTDLP, however, Katie acquired a weighted blanket for use sleeping and a weighted shoulder wrap for daytime. The results, she reports, have been life-changing. Her sleep is much improved and she is functioning at a higher level than before. The LTDLP, she says, was her true "security blanket."

REquipment DME Reuse Program

Olivia is an active woman who uses a power-assist wheelchair for mobility and knows how to self-advocate. When her DME company told her they don't supply loaner equipment should she ever need a repair, Olivia contacted the REquipment DME reuse program. Good thing she did! REquipment provided her with a back-up power wheelchair and a month later a front caster broke off her primary chair while crossing trolley tracks. The DME company took several days to assess their chair and then said insurance would need to be authorized before the \$21 part was ordered. If not for her foresight and REquipment's assistance, Olivia could have spent weeks in bed! (Note: Olivia did sidestep insurance, ordering and installing the part herself, and sending the bill to the transportation authority.)



Massachusetts AT Loan Program

MATLP helped Alan stay on the road in 2016. Alan is a United States veteran with PTSD and other disabilities. When he needed a vehicle, MATLP helped him obtain a loan on his limited income. Then, when that vehicle needed major repairs shortly after its warranty expired, MATLP arranged to modify his loan to include funds for the repairs and keep Alan driving!

Coordination and Collaboration

No Wrong Door

MassMATCH has been advising on curriculum development for two series of trainings to be provided to staff throughout the No Wrong Door system (implemented by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and other state human services agencies). The trainings will give Transition Coordinators, Options Counselors, Case Managers, Skills Trainers and other staff skills and tools to help seniors and persons with disabilities identify AT that can help support their independence living at home.

Mobility and Adaptive Seating Clinics

During 2016, MassMATCH, the Department of Developmental Services, and the Stavros Center for Independent Living collaborated to offer three adaptive seating clinics to persons with disabilities living in the Pioneer Valley. Using their expertise in design, modification and fabrication, DDS personnel solve seating and positioning issues that existing community services have been unable to address. In FFY16, 18 individuals used this service to resolve problems that jeopardized their health and safety, or restricted their independence.

Abilities Expo and EdCamp Access

In 2016, MassMATCH sponsored

Abilities Expo for

a fourth consecutive year and was a Gold Sponsor for the fourth annual EdCamp Access Boston. Abilities is a high-spirited expo held at the Boston Convention Center offering opportunities to learn about the latest AT devices, adapted vans and durable medical equipment. EdCamp Access is held at Marshall Simonds Middle School in Burlington; it draws special and general educators, therapists, students, parents and others who are passionate to support struggling learners in K-12 education, and often with technology.



AT Advisory Council

MassMATCH is advised by a council made up of community members and professionals who understand the importance of assistive technology for persons with disabilities. The AT Act requires that the majority of the council members (not less than 51%) are individuals with disabilities who use assistive technology or are family members or guardians of individuals who use AT. During FFY16, the council was made up of 7 AT-user representatives, 6 family representatives and 8 representatives of agencies concerned with creating better access for people who could benefit from AT.

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EdCamp Access Student Panel