

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Clinic at Niagara Children's Centre
AAC Consultation Stream

Service Plan For:

Date:

What is Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC)?

AAC refers to tools and strategies that a person who has difficulty speaking, cannot speak, or who has difficulty being understood uses to communicate.

AAC can include gestures, sign language, facial expressions, pictures/graphics, communication displays or books, and/or speech-generating devices/tablets. It looks different for everyone!

About the Clinic

The purpose of our Clinic is to provide assessments and support for children who may be eligible for communication tool *partially* funded by the Assistive Devices Program (ADP).

To be eligible for the Clinic/ADP funding, children/youth must:

- Need a communication tool or device at home/out in the community (cannot be used for school only)
- Have physical difficulty producing speech

Although technical tools like tablets can help children/youth with communication challenges in many ways, our AAC Clinic services focus only on helping children with a physical difficulty speaking to communicate directly with others.

We are not able to help with access technical tools to assist with general learning, language learning, or to help children follow directions.

About AAC Consultation Stream Services

These services are for children/youth who do not need an ADP-funded device as a ***next step*** to help with their communication difficulties. These children:

- Learning to communicate with symbols (photos, pictures, or objects that represent messages) and can continue to expand their communication abilities with the tools and strategies available to them
- Learning foundational joint attention, interaction, and language skills and/or how to use symbols to communicate

Services require parent/caregiver involvement. Parents/primary caregivers must schedule, attend, and follow-through with recommendations in order to continue in the program.

What to Expect at Consultation Stream Appointments

Up-to-four appointments are available for each child per year, one visit per “season”:

- January-March; April-June; July-August; September-December

Appointments will:

- Occur at Niagara Children’s Centre, a satellite site, or virtually (not at school)
- Include a parent/primary caregiver and any other professionals or caregivers involved
- Be led by a Clinic Speech-Language Pathologist and an Occupational Therapist or a Communication Disorders Assistant.

We will:

- Ask you lots of questions about your child’s communication and interests
- Interact with your child and observe them interact with you
- Try different AAC tools and strategies
- Give you recommendations and resources to use AAC at home, including at least one goal to practice before the next visit

Next Steps

1. Consultation appointments can continue as long as needed. If an appointment is not scheduled for one year, we will discharge (services can be resumed in the future).
2. Eligible children may begin Clinic Stream Services at any time.
3. Some children may be provided a low-technology tool or no-technology tool with ADP funding but remain in the Consultation Stream if their needs remain stable.

How to Prepare for Consultation Stream Appointments

1. Be ready to talk about how your child is communicating, including successes and challenges
2. Be ready to talk about the goals and strategies recommended at your last appointment, if applicable. How did it go? What worked well? What didn’t work well?
3. Bring tools your child uses to help them communicate (e.g. photos, pictures, communication books or devices). If this includes technology, please be sure it is working and charged.
4. Bring motivating activities or snacks, if asked.

Contact

Name	Role	Phone	Email