

CDP Update

Happy New Year!

The CDP Update is back after an extended hiatus. As always, the CDP is here to support Manitobans who need a communication device and the professionals who serve them. Not sure whether or not a high tech device might help your client? Need to brainstorm on some SGD or access-related issues? The CDP team is here for informal consults, too.

Have an idea for the next newsletter? [Get in touch!](#)

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Communication Device of the Month

QuickTalker Series

Even in the iPad era, there is a place for simple speech-generating devices. The QuickTalker Series of basic speech-generating devices are simple to use and quick to program. They're easy on the eye and pleasing to the ear. These static display, digitized speech devices can benefit clients who only need to communicate a limited number of messages. A QuickTalker could benefit a client who has short-term AAC needs in an acute care setting or who needs a simple device in early stages of recovery following a stroke.

The QuickTalkers are available with 7, 12, or 23 cells. Each device supports up to 5 levels' worth of messages. The device includes a slot to store extra overlays. Use Boardmaker to create the overlays. Rugged, lightweight, and featuring a large handle, the devices are easy to hold and carry. To reduce mishits, there is also a built-in deep key guard for users to rest their hands on. Microphone and speaker quality is very good. The touch membrane is sensitive and requires little strength to activate.

Consider a QuickTalker for clients who:

- Need to communicate a very limited, predictable number of messages
- Benefit from very simple, easily-learned technology
- Has direct access
- May need an SGD on a temporary basis only (e.g. to meet basic needs while in acute care)
- May need a simple device during early stages of recovery before transitioning to something more complex.



The iPad is Now Switch Accessible!

In a major step forward, Apple's iDevices now allow switch scanning! New to iOS 7, scanning is supported at a system-level across the entire device. You can now use a switch to independently access nearly all apps and settings on the iPad. Scanning settings can be customized to suit the user.

Here is a quick summary of some scanning settings.

Scanning Modes



Point Mode: cross hairs move across the screen. Select by hitting the switch when the cross hairs reach the target.



Item Mode: Similar to traditional item scanning. Can be used with group scanning or item-by-item.

Switch options

- **Camera as switch:** Built-in camera on iPhone or iPad interprets left and/or right head turns as switch press. NOTE: This option does not work with apps that require the camera for taking pictures or video.
- **Screen as switch:** a tap anywhere on the screen is interpreted as a switch press
- **External switch:** Connect a Bluetooth enabled switch or use any switch together with a Bluetooth switch interface such as the [RJ Cooper switch interface](#) or [Tecla Shield](#).

Adjustable switch settings include

- Auto scanning time
- Number of "loops" (i.e., how many times the system cycles through items before stopping the scan if no switch hit is detected)
- Hold duration and ignore repeat (settings that reduce risk of accidental mishits)
- Gliding cursor speed (for use with point mode)

*For full details on switch access in iOS7, see pages 114-16 of this [Apple Manual](#). The assistive technology company [AbleNet](#) has developed some [training resources](#), including a manual and videos. To try it out yourself: open **Settings** (the app with the cog wheel icon). Select the **General** category and select **Accessibility**. **Switch Control** is located under the **Physical & Motor** heading.*

Consider scanning on an iPad for a client who:

- Has at least one reliable switch access site
- Is highly motivated to use/continue to use an iPad
- Has face to face communication needs and computer needs such as communicating through email or Skype, banking, or basic word processing

Communicate for Safety's Sake

We all agree that effective communication is critical to a person's sense of dignity and quality of life. Without a means of communication, it becomes much harder to assert autonomy, demonstrate abilities, and interact with the world. But communication is much more than a 'soft' or 'nice to have' skill.

There is a growing body of evidence linking communication to patient safety. A recent study by a group of researchers from Montreal (Bartlett et al., 2008) found that patients with communication problems, including hearing impairment or not speaking an official language, were "3 times more likely to experience a preventable adverse event than patients without such problems". Those adverse events, related to drugs or poor clinical management, led to extended hospital stays, hospital readmission, and poorer clinical outcomes.

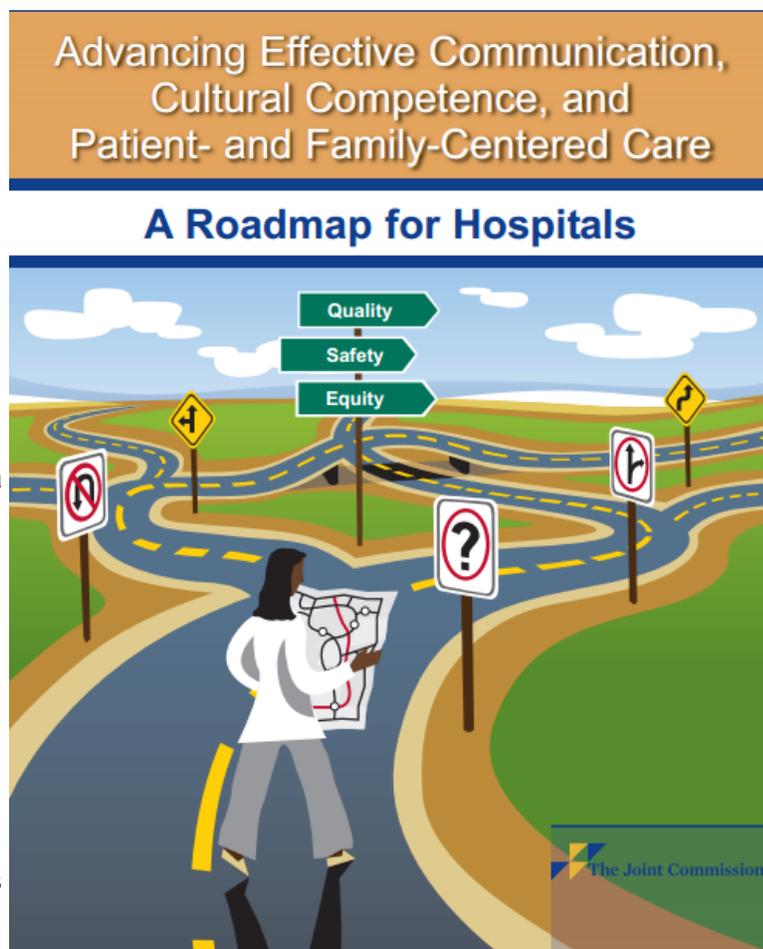
In response to findings such as those, the largest US accreditation body, the [Joint Commission](#), published a [road map](#) for implementing new accreditation guidelines that are directly related to patient communication. The Road Map is based on the expert advice of physicians, civil rights lawyers, and others. It makes detailed best practice recommendations touching on hospital admissions, treatment, discharge and transfer, and end of life care. Communication is treated with such importance that the authors even recommend staff "consider whether bed positioning or the placement of medical equipment for treatments or procedures will impede the patient's use of required AAC resources". In fact, AAC is mentioned 26(!) times in the document.

Below are just some of the Joint Commission's recommendations:

- Ensure a client's communication needs are identified at time of admission
- Ensure access to hearing aids, dentures, and glasses at all times
- Provide AAC resources to help with treatment of patients with communication impairments
- Train all staff in effective communication strategies for a variety of client/patient populations
- Anticipate communication needs of patients whose treatment will impact communication (e.g., intubation or tracheostomy)
- Ensure documentation meets health literacy needs of clients; target a 5th grade or lower reading level

Bartlett, G. R., Blais, R., & Tamblyn, R. (2008). Impact of patient communication problems on the risk of preventable adverse events in the acute care settings. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 178, 1555–1562.

The Joint Commission (2010a). *Advancing Effective Communication, Cultural Competence, and Patient- and Family-Centered Care: A Roadmap for Hospitals*. Oakbrook Terrace, IL: Author. Retrieved Jan. 17, 2011 from www.jointcommission.org/Advancing_Effective_Communication_Cultural_Competence_and_Patient_and_Family_Centered_Care/.



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Programming Tip of the Month

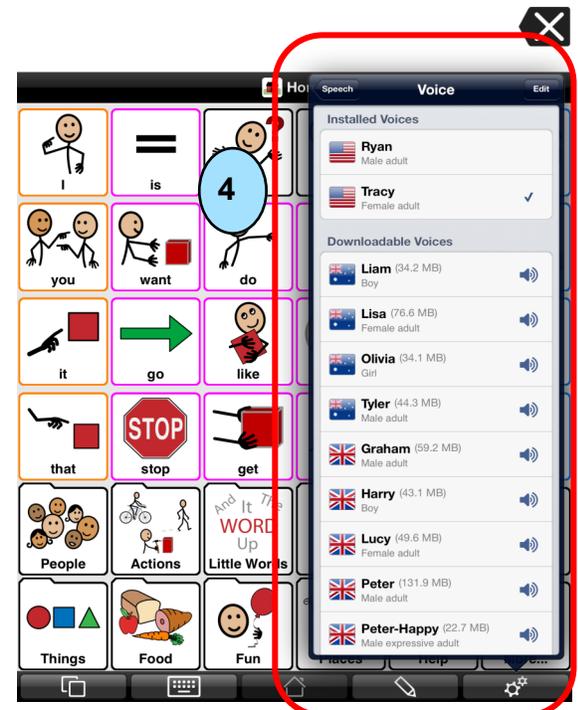
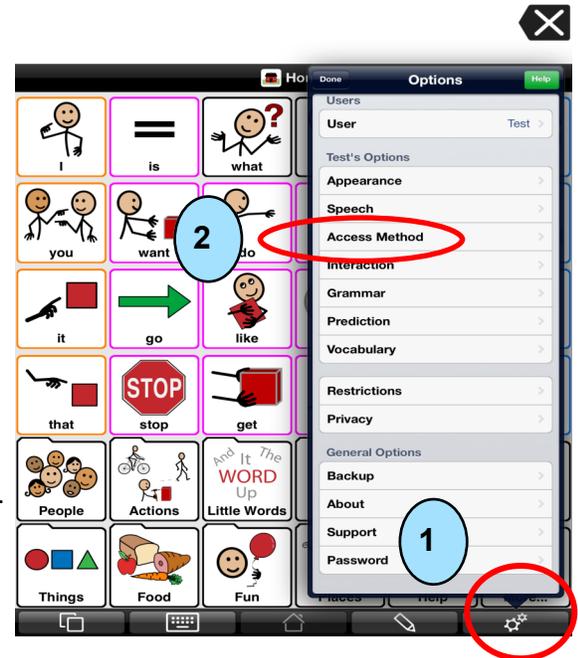


Proloquo2go: More and Better Voices to Choose

The latest version of Proloquo2go includes more voice options than ever before –32 to be exact. Gone are the days of clients all being stuck with the same voice. Clients can now choose from Australian, British, Indian and American English accents. The available voices are nearly all high quality and range from children to OldMan. Plus who can resist trying out the fun options like Queen Elizabeth, LittleCreature (sounds like Yoda from Star Wars), Saul “the American Hip Hop male adult” or the Micah the Texan cowboy. Clients may enjoy exploring the options to discover their new voice.

Here's how to change or add voices:

1. Press the cog wheel symbol at the bottom of the screen. The **Options** menu will appear.
2. Select **Speech**.
3. Select **Voice**. You will see a list that includes installed voices and others available for free download.
4. Scroll through the options and press the speaker icon to hear samples of each voice. To download a new voice, simply tap the voice name. A confirmation screen will appear. Select Download to confirm. No password is needed.
5. The downloaded voice will now appear in the “Installed voices” section of the list. Tap the desired voice to begin using it. You'll see a checkmark beside it. Have fun!

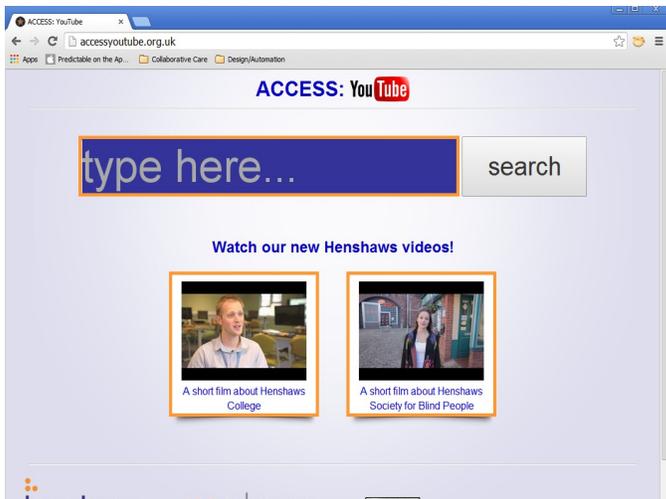


Odds and Ends

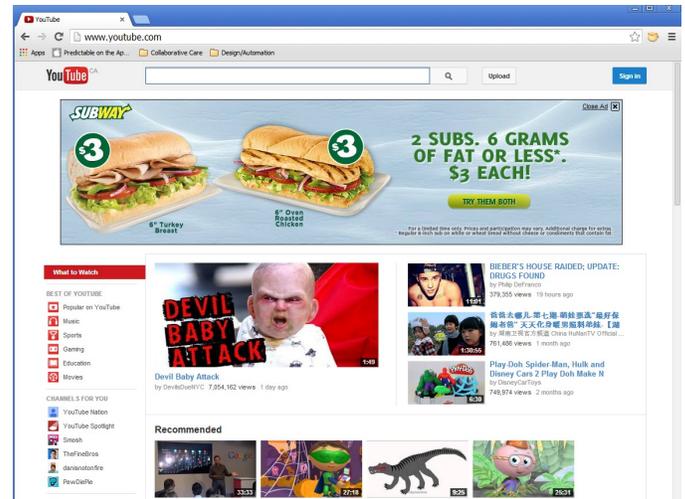
Access: YouTube - Clean. Uncluttered. Alternate Access Friendly.

ACCESS:Youtube is an ultra-simple, alternate access-friendly Youtube portal. Developed at a UK school for persons with disabilities, Access:Youtube removes all of the ads and other visual clutter from a Youtube page. The viewer simply sees tidy, widely spaced rows of videos. This website is great for clients who access the internet using switches for scanning or mouse emulation. (When using switches with a web browser, each press is like hitting 'tab' on a keyboard to move from link to link. Fewer items on the screen means fewer switch hits to reach a target.) CDP clinicians have used Access:Youtube with clients who are working to improve switch accuracy and reliability and who need novel content to stay motivated. It could also benefit clients who are easily distracted or overwhelmed by a complex visual array. See below for a quick comparison.

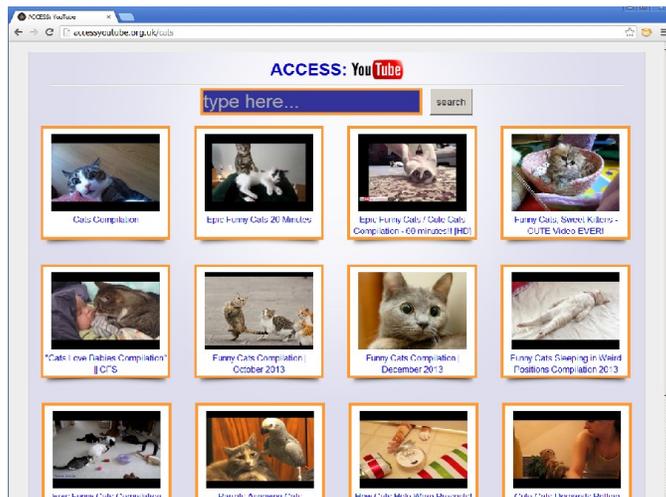
ACCESS: Youtube home page



Standard Youtube homepage



Search results for 'cats'



Search results for 'cats'

