

Environmental Control, Computer Access and Personal Alert Systems Funding Criteria



HealthShare
EnableNSW

This criteria has been developed in consultation with expert clinicians and is based on available evidence at the time of development. This document is designed to specify the criteria to access assistance through EnableNSW for this group of assistive technology, and provide a basis for consistent and transparent decision making.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL, COMPUTER ACCESS AND PERSONAL ALERT SYSTEMS	
Included Equipment	Eligible Prescriber
<p>Group 2 Disability-specific:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental control systems (ECS) such as environmental control units (ECU), accessories, software, and adaptations. Computer access such as switches, alternative keyboard, mouse, and software. Personal alarm/ alerting systems. 	<p>Occupational Therapist or Speech Pathologist with >1 year experience + 3 previous prescriptions for group 2 equipment in this category.</p>
<p>Group 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group 2 devices with complex access requirements including voice recognition, eye gaze, head control, head array, integration with power wheelchair controls or complex switch scanning. Group 2 devices with complex mounting requirements. 	<p>Occupational Therapist with > 3 years experience and 5 previous prescriptions for group 3 equipment in this category.</p> <p>Request to be completed in conjunction with another member of a multi-disciplinary team or a specialist service.</p>
Exclusions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non disability specific systems including air conditioners, telephones, mobile phones, standard smoke alarms, home alarm systems, door bells, door openers, CCTV monitoring devices, computer desks or mounts, regular batteries. Non disability specific computers, personal digital assistants and portable touch screen equipment, computer upgrades and associated equipment such as printers, scanners, speakers and cables. Installation of systems including electrical or telephone outlets and electrical wiring Disability specific adaptations that involve permanent fixtures to the residence such as hard wired receivers; door motors; lifts; wall mounts etc. Rental costs for telecommunication or personal alarm/alerting systems. Continence, movement monitoring/fall detection, seizure and SIDS alarms. Devices, features or programming costs solely for recreational or vocational use, or for accessing the educational curriculum. Features that are a recreational or vocational add-on to the primary purpose of the device. Devices or software where the primary purpose is for treatment. Devices or software under \$100. 	

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Ineligible Groups

Consumers who are eligible for services and equipment to be provided under any of the following will not be eligible to receive equipment through EnableNSW (see EnableNSW Policy).

- ADHC owned and operated supported accommodation facilities.
- Respite or temporary care facilities.
- Transitional Aged Care Package.
- Commonwealth Home Care Packages (levels 1-4).
- Motor Accidents Authority Lifetime Care and Support Authority.
- Dust Disease Board.
- Department of Veteran's Affairs Gold Card holder.
- Department of Veteran's Affairs White Card holder if the requested assistive technology is for an injury/condition developed during/or as a result of time in service.
- Third party/Worker's Compensation/other compensation related to the injury/disease.

Equipment Eligibility Criteria

An environmental control or computer access system may be funded when:

1. The consumer requires the system in order to complete regularly occurring self-care activities* independently **AND**
2. The system is the primary system used to complete the self-care activities and a more basic alternative method is not suitable **AND**
3. A plan for training and support for device use is in place.

*Self-care activities may include:

Health/Disability Management – carer scheduling, managing appointments, communication with health agencies.

Controlling the environment – for example temperature regulation, turning lights on and off, access to rooms, access to telephone.

Personal organisation – accessing computer for banking and money management, essential shopping, personal correspondence.

A personal alarm or alerting system may be funded when:

1. The consumer has an established risk of falls or other medical emergency **AND**
2. The consumer lives alone or spends periods of time unable to alert a carer by other means **AND** Risk management strategies have been explored (in addition to a personal alarm/alert system) and are unable to mitigate the risk.

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Key information to consider or include in the Equipment Request Form (ERF)

Consumer Factors

Provide

- The consumer's diagnosis and/or functional disability.
- A measurable functional goal or goals in relation to the system.
- Detail about the consumer's current systems/methods, and the benefits of the recommended system for the consumer.
- Information from the clinical and functional assessment of relevant skills including: physical and cognitive factors, ability to access the system, vision and hearing ability, and environmental factors.
- Any relevant medical information that impacts on consumer's current and ongoing ability to use the system such as deterioration or improvement in condition, fatigue, physiological issues, and medications.
- A relevant report from a specialist service if available.

For environmental control systems and computer access systems provide

- Comprehensive detail regarding the self-care activities the consumer will complete including frequency and duration of activities. Please note that activities must be regularly occurring during a typical week.
- Comprehensive detail regarding the level of independence achieved using the system.

For computer access systems provide

- Detail regarding the consumer's computer system, and their demonstrated ability to use the computer including trouble shooting.

For personal alarm/ alerting systems provide

- Detail regarding the risk factors for the consumer, and what other strategies have been put in place to assist in minimising risk.

For all systems confirm

- That the consumer has the ability to use the system to fulfil the stated functional goals.
- That the skills of the consumer match the features and specifications of the system.
- That a specific training plan is in place for the system across all appropriate environments.
- For systems requiring complex navigation, that the consumer has the cognitive skills necessary.
- Who will provide support with the implementation of the system.

Consider

- If the consumer has a degenerative condition is the system able to be adapted for ongoing use.
- If the consumer has an alternative system or emergency plan in case of breakdown or unforeseen inability to use the system.
- The level of support the consumer requires to position and access the system
If a commercially available device or feature is more suitable for the consumer.

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Social/carer criteria

Confirm

- That the consumer and/or the support people who assist the consumer will be trained to operate, program, charge and maintain the system appropriately.
- That, if applicable, the consumer's carers are able to set up mounting systems or access methods accurately.

Environmental and Equipment Factors

Confirm

- That the equipment is reliable, durable and efficient with regards to the type and frequency of use that will occur.
- That the equipment is compatible with all environments of use.

Consider applicable features as follows:

Environmental Control Systems (ECS) and Computer Access Systems

Feature	Considerations
Output mode compatibility	Is the output (for example, infra-red, radio frequency or wi-fi) compatible with the item being controlled (for example door, fan, light, computer, mobile phone)
Navigation	How is the device or software navigated: Is the display static or dynamic? Does the device offer sufficient levels to allow integration with the required items including consideration for foreseeable future needs? Is the arrangement of the levels customised to improve the efficiency for the consumer?
Programming	How is the device or software programmed and adjusted as the need arises?
Display	Is the display easy for the user to see? Will the user be able to see the screen outdoors or during the night? Will the display use symbols and/or text? Does the device provide auditory feedback if the consumer has difficulty seeing the visual display?
Access	What access options does the device / software have? Does the device match the access needs of the consumer? Will other equipment be required in order to access to the device?
Integration with Powered Mobility Controls	How will the consumer access the device when they are not using the powered mobility device? Does the consumer have the cognitive ability to switch between drive mode, environmental controls, and computer access mode?
Bed or Wheelchair Mounting	Is a mount required for the device? Is a switch mount required? Is mounting system compatible with the consumer's current and/or future seated mobility? How does the mount impact on the positioning of controls for powered mobility?
Keys	What size do the keys need to be? How sensitive are the keys? Is a key guard required?
Positioning	Are changes required to the consumer's seating or bed system to facilitate use of, or access to, the device? Should final prescription of device and/or mount wait until seating has been reviewed?

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Durability	How durable does the device need to be: Does the consumer have a movement disorder? Does the consumer have secretion management issues? Does the consumer have any behavioural challenges? How often will the device need to be moved for charging or access (e.g. chair to bed)?
Memory	Does the device have: Adequate memory for needs? Adequate battery life for needs? Have adequate systems to back up programs and content
Personal Alarms and Alerting Systems	
Feature	Considerations
Externally Monitored Systems	Is the consumer aware of the ongoing rental costs/monitoring fees associated with the system?
Access	Does the consumer require adaptations to access the system such as switch access or mounting?
Trial	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial of the device is essential. <p>Provide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed information regarding all devices trialled including objective measures of goal attainment. • Include specific examples of how the device enabled the consumer to achieve goals that would otherwise not be achievable using their current system. • Length of trial and environments of trial. • Functional outcomes of the trial. • Comparison with similar devices. • Reasons why comparative devices were unsuitable. <p>Confirm</p> <p>That the most cost effective device that meets the consumer's functional need has been considered.</p>	
Plan for delivery and evaluation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide the name and telephone number of the client/carer or any clinicians who must be notified of delivery. • Equipment Evaluation Form (EEF) is required in 4 – 12 weeks of receiving the device. 	

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Appendix 1 COMPONENTS

Component	Components may be funded when the
Complex Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer requires a specialised access system such as head tracking, eye gaze or voice recognition for functional device use. These systems may be considered when the consumer: has no functional switch site; or experiences severe fatigue when using switches; and/or has very poor accuracy and/or slow speed when using switches. A trial of the system is essential. Trials must include documented comparisons of access systems with objective outcome measures. For eye gaze access at least two systems must be considered.
Integration into Powered Mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer requires an access system that is integrated into powered mobility controls. A trial of the system is essential.
Mounting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer requires mounting in order to access the device or switch. For eligible consumers the primary mounting system will be funded.
Keyguards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer requires a key guard, specialised keyboard or mouse to access the device. Prescribed items must be trialled.
Switches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer requires a switch/switches to access the device. Switch access systems must be trialled. Consider if a switch mounting system will be required.
Protective covers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer has poorly controlled secretions and requires protective covers for the device or components of the device. Device is mounted on a tray that is used concurrently for mealtimes.