

Remaining at Home...Priceless
Revisited

Judie Lee, IPAT Director

It is widely recognized that people with long term illnesses and/or disabilities who wish to remain living at home need various types of support. Providers and users of assistive technology (AT) consider AT one of these essential support services and yet realize it is NOT widely recognized. Thus, the potential impact of AT devices and services goes unrecognized. In 2003, an opportunity to partner in a project funded by Olmstead dollars presented itself. IPAT's role was to ensure a systematic exploration and delivery of assistive technology (AT) devices and services for state residents who were at risk of moving to an institution and/or those living in institutions wishing to move to a less restrictive environment.

It was a unique opportunity. Not only would individuals receive an AT assessment, they would receive the devices if the cost was within a specified dollar amount. In addition they would receive the other AT services necessary to use the device, such as equipment set-up and training. Twenty North Dakota residents participated in the program. These individuals represented 10 communities, ranged in age from their mid-thirties to mid-eighties, and had a variety of AT needs. They all had a number of services in place, but were still struggling to remain at home. The provision of AT devices and services had NOT been considered as part of their service plan prior to this project, and yet it was one of the decisive factors in making remaining home possible for them.

Over a year later, 17 of the 20 people served are still in their own homes. They have delayed, and will possibly avoid, entering an institutional setting. They continue to live with their families, are more independent and safe as a result of the AT devices and services received through this project. One individual moved away from North Dakota. Two of the individuals passed away approximately one year after receiving their AT devices and services. Their family members stressed what a difference the assistive technology made, especially in helping them to stay home the last months of their life.

The average cost of a participant to receive the assistive technology devices and services necessary to help them remain living at home through this project was \$1,233. The average yearly cost for an individual to reside in a nursing home in North Dakota is \$43,815 and \$19,726 for assisted living care. The outcome report titled "Remaining at Home... Priceless" gives more details and some anecdotal accounts of the participants. A free copy is available by calling 1-800-265-4728.

This project demonstrated that when the assistive technology provision is part of the service delivery plan, it can delay or eliminate institutional or other high-cost placements. This in turn, enables people of all ages with disabilities or long term illnesses to have a choice as to where they live, which everyone can agree is PRICELESS.

Could you benefit from a CapTel Phone?

Information obtained from the CapTel Website:

www.captionedtelephone.com and www.northdakotarelay.com .

CapTel phones allow the user to **hear** and **see** what someone is saying! CapTel phone users can listen to the caller while they read the written captions in the CapTel phone's display window.

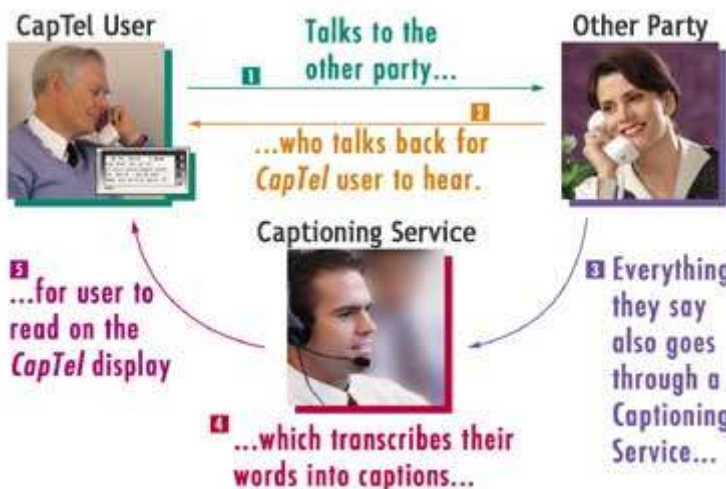
How does the CapTel Phone Work?

"When you place a call with a CapTel phone, the captioning service is connected automatically to provide captions. You just dial the phone number of the person you want to call, and the call will be captioned. "

"Behind the scenes, a specially trained operator at the captioning service transcribes everything the other party says into written text, using the very latest in voice-recognition technology. The written text appears on a bright, easy-to-read display window built into the **CapTel** phone. The captions appear almost simultaneously with the spoken word, allowing the **CapTel** phone users to understand everything that is said — either by hearing it or by reading it."



"To receive a call, your caller must first dial the toll free number of the captioning service through [Relay North Dakota] and then enter your phone number. You



will get captions through any call that is placed through the Captioning Service. If your caller dials you directly, the call will not be captioned. "Call Me" cards that list the toll free captioning service number are included with the CapTel phone. You can give the "Call Me" cards to people who call you frequently."

How does the CapTel Phone compare to a Voice Carry Over (VCO) Phone?

“CapTel phone users can simultaneously hear the voice over the phone and read captions of what is said. Current VCO technology allows only voice or text on the line at one time and does not allow the VCO user to hear the voice of the other party.”

Who Benefits from a CapTel Phone?

- Anyone with some degree of hearing loss, who finds it difficult to understand telephone conversations
- People using hearing aids or assistive listening devices
- People who are deaf or hard of hearing and can speak

Is there a charge for the Captioning Services from North Dakota Relay?

There is no charge for the captioning service; however, when making long distance calls from a CapTel phone there is a charge just as there would be if you used a standard telephone. If you want the Captioning Service to bill the long distance company of your choice, you will need to call them and set that up, just as you would if you used a Text Telephone (TTY) or Voice Carry Over (VCO) Phone.

How do I get a CapTel Phone?

The CapTel Phone is now offered at no cost to eligible participants as part of the North Dakota Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Services (TEDS) which is currently run through the Interagency Program for Assistive Technology (IPAT). To see if you qualify, call IPAT at 1-800-265-4728. The forms for the TEDS program are also available at the IPAT website: www.ndipat.org .

To find out more information regarding CapTel, the Captioning Service, or Relay North Dakota see the following:

- **CapTel website:** www.captionedtelephone.com
 - **CapTel Phone numbers:** 1 (888) 269-7477 OR 1 (800) 482-2424
 - **Captioning Service phone numbers:** 1(888) 269-7477 VOICE OR 1(800) 482-2424 TTY
 - **ND Relay website:** www.relaynorthdakota.com
 - **ND Relay Phone Number:** 711
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CONSUMER CONNECTION

COME PLAY ~July 14 -16, 2006 ~ Bismarck – Mandan

The 20th annual Prairie Rose State Games (PRSG) extends a special invitation to you! Come play if you live in North Dakota, South Dakota, Canada or a city bordering North Dakota. Come play if you are a former resident of North Dakota. Your participation is welcome as an athlete, an athlete with physical challenges, spectator, or volunteer.

The PRSG provides an opportunity for the greater North Dakota community to gather in the spirit of friendly competition in 48 sports over 3 days. Individuals are welcome to participate in any sport, or compete in the physically challenged divisions within archery, bowling, 5K road race and track and field. Non-competitive events are also offered and include; family fishing, kite flying, recreational bike-ride, skate jam, and volksmarch. To register or to get additional information go to www.prairierose.org or call 1-701-222-4263 and ask for Sarah.

In the spirit of fun and increased sport awareness there will be kite flying, skate boarding, and remote-controlled aircraft demonstrations. All sport competitions and demonstrations are open and free to spectators.

The PRSG also provides ample opportunity for volunteerism. Volunteers are needed for all sporting events to help at registration, time events, hand out water at event stations, or organize awards for event winners. Opportunities are also available at the Opening Ceremonies or at the Games headquarters located in the Kirkwood Mall. The success of the Prairie Rose State Games is dependent on the help and hard work of its volunteers. If you wish to be one, call Sarah at 1-701-222-4263. All volunteers will receive a 20th anniversary PRSG t-shirt.

Great Year for the AT Expo 2006!

Here's to the attendees, vendors, presenters, sponsors, and the AT Expo Committee who together made the AT Expo 2006 a huge success! The third annual AT Expo was held on April 13, 2006 at the Ramada Plaza Suites in Fargo, North Dakota, and brought in over 50 vendors and 460 attendees - a 50% increase over last year in both categories! The participants spent the morning in a variety of AT presentations, enjoyed a joint luncheon with the Fargo/Moorhead Area Mayor's Committee Awards Banquet, and explored the AT Expo Exhibit Hall from 1-7 pm. There were many positive comments about the Expo and numerous requests to hold another in 2007. The Committee is working to make that a reality! Stay Tuned. . . .

EQUIPMENT SPOTLIGHT



Finger Mouse

This computer mouse has a three button design with a trackball. It can be operated on or off a table, thereby, reducing fatigue and stress to muscles and joints. The thumb mouse connects to a desktop or a laptop computer through the USB port or PS/2 adaptor. Simply plug and play. This device retails for \$20-\$25. Visit the following websites to purchase this computer mouse:

- <http://www.pcconnection.com> or call 1-888-800-0323;
- <http://www.fentek-ind.com/fingermouse.htm> or call 1-800-639-0710.

If you would like to try this device, contact the IPAT Equipment Loan Library at 1-800-895-4728.

For Your Information

**Anne Carlson Center's
TechnoCamp – Adapting the Arts Using Technology
Elk's Camp Grassick**
July 9-14, 2006

Addressing Challenging Behaviors Using Visual Supports
August 14 & 15, 2006
Contact: Theresa Hanson 1-800-568-5175 ext. 169

2nd Annual Dakota Disabilities Issues Forum
August 23 & 24, 2006 - Bismarck
Contact: Brenda or Jim 701-223-0347