

HOW PEOPLE UNDERSTAND AND CHOOSE AIDS AND EQUIPMENT (ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY)

Participant Information Sheet for consumer participants

(1) What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a study exploring how people understand and choose aids and equipment (called assistive technology or AT in this study) used by people with disability. The project will allow us to understand how you think about choice in the process of acquiring aids and equipment and ways in which you might like this to change. The researchers are concerned with improving systems and practices supporting people with disability, and not with evaluating individual participants involved in the project.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Emily Steel, under the supervision of Associate Professor Sally Bennett and Associate Professor Michele Foster from the University of Queensland, and Desleigh de Jonge from LifeTec Queensland. It will form the basis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Queensland.

(3) What does the study involve?

The project will involve interviews with people with disability and service providers involved in supporting them. The researchers will also be looking at the service delivery systems that support provision of aids and equipment.

You will be asked to participate in two interviews in which you will be asked about your experience of acquiring aids and equipment. The interviews will be audio-recorded and the researcher will make notes to keep a record. The researcher will also ask for your consent to take photos of your aids and equipment, to illustrate your experiences and accompany descriptions in publications. The researcher will take all steps to ensure these photos are de-identified and used solely for the purposes they are intended. The recordings, photos and notes will be stored securely at the University of Queensland, and only accessible to the researchers.

In the first interview you will be asked about the aids and equipment you use, how you came to start using them and who else was involved when you were acquiring them. You will also be asked how you feel about the process of getting aids and equipment and the choices and support available to you. This interview will take place at your home, OR a place where you work, OR at a quiet public place (e.g., the local library), OR at the St

Lucia campus of the University of Queensland. You may choose when and where the interview occurs.

You will be sent a summary of your interview and asked to confirm the accuracy of the summary or clarify comments made during the interview. We will ask you for your contact information so that we can send this information to you. Your contact information will be kept on a project contact list database which can only be accessed by team members.

The researchers will also seek to understand how the system through which you acquired your aids and equipment influenced this process and experience by talking to one service provider you worked with (e.g. an occupational therapist, an equipment salesperson, a case manager), and by analyzing policies and other documents that are relevant to the system.

We will then contact you again to invite you to a follow-up interview, to explore important findings with you, and to clarify any outstanding issues raised from our interview with the service provider and analysis of documents. This interview may be conducted face-to-face with you, or via a phone call or video link. You may choose when and how the interview occurs.

At the completion of each interview you will be asked whether you would like to discuss any of the matters raised in the interview, and invited to offer feedback. We will be happy to discuss any concerns or issues at this time. You are also welcome to offer feedback to the research team members, either verbally or in writing, at any time later. You will also be sent a copy of the summary of research findings from this phase of the project.

If you experience discomfort or distress at any time during the project please contact Emily Steel (07 3365 4526) or her academic advisor Sally Bennett (07 3365 3451) immediately. We will endeavor to provide accommodations to ensure your comfort while participating, or put you in touch with appropriate supports.

(4) How much time will the study take?

The first interview will take approximately one hour. The second interview will take approximately half an hour.

If you would like to clarify comments made during your interview after reading the summary, or discuss the research findings, it will take additional time.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary; you are not under any obligation to consent and if you do consent, you can withdraw without affecting your relationship with The University of Queensland. You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue; the audio recording and photos will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

We will ask for your consent to discuss information from your first interview when interviewing the service provider you nominate. We will not share any information that you

wish to remain confidential, and will check this both during the interview and after you have read the interview summary.

Except for the interview with the service provider you have nominated, information and comments you provide will be strictly confidential and only be identifiable by members of the research team. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but you will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from the study. We hope that the results from this study will contribute to knowledge about the experience of how people with disability choose, and can be supported to choose, aids and equipment for use in everyday life. This information will help inform the development of policies and training for enhancement of service delivery.

In order to recompense for your time and participation, you will receive a gift voucher for \$50 if you complete both interviews. You will also be offered reimbursement of up to \$50, in the form of a taxi voucher or fuel voucher, if you incur travel expenses as part of your participation.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

You can inform anyone you like about the study. If you know another adult who uses aids and equipment and is interested in participating in the study, tell that person to contact the researchers to request further information.

(9) What if I require further information about the study or my involvement in it?

If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Emily Steel (PhD student) on 07 3365 4526 or e.steel@uq.edu.au or her academic advisor Sally Bennett on 07 3365 3451 or sally.bennett@uq.edu.au.

This study adheres to the Guidelines of the ethical review process of The University of Queensland and the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Whilst you are free to discuss your participation in this study with project staff (Emily Steel contactable on 07 3365 4526), if you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Coordinator on 07 3365 3924.

(10) What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Ethics Officer at the University of Queensland on 07 3365 3924.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

This information sheet is for you to keep.