



MND Masterclass, Cranford Hospice

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TalkLink Trust

- Charitable trust – established in 1991
- Provide services throughout New Zealand – offices based in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch
- Staffed by SLTs, OTs, teachers, technical support and administrative teams
- National contracts with Ministry of Health and ACC
- Assessment service – not a therapy service – working with existing teams

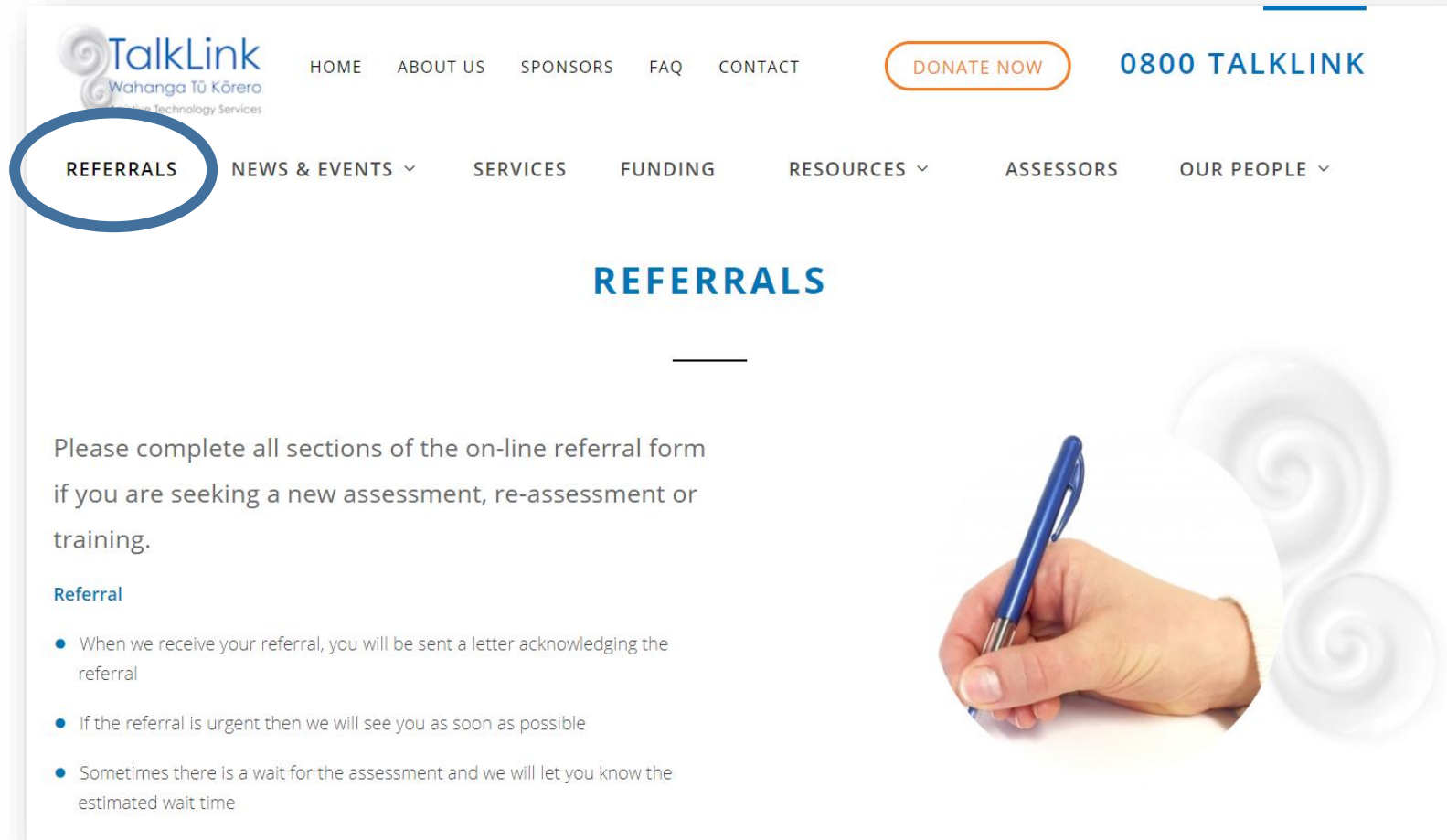



TalkLink Assessment Process

- Referral → screening → waitlist
- Assessment: initial meeting to gather information using SETT framework → AAC trials → decide which system/s worked best → Funding application → TalkLink setup equipment → training & support
- Further support:
 - Technical issues with a device
 - Questions around how to progress communication skills
 - Reassessment

TalkLink Referral

- Anyone can refer – SLT, family member, GP, etc
- Online referral form OR download Word version



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REFERRALS

Please complete all sections of the on-line referral form if you are seeking a new assessment, re-assessment or training.

Referral

- When we receive your referral, you will be sent a letter acknowledging the referral
- If the referral is urgent then we will see you as soon as possible
- Sometimes there is a wait for the assessment and we will let you know the estimated wait time



When to refer: Early if possible

- The assessment and application process takes time, we may have to wait on equipment trials, funding approval, equipment arrival and setup etc.
- MND clients are prioritized- both on wait times and equipment trials
- This allows the person to consider all options available to them e.g. phrase banking, story banking and voice banking.
- This allows the team time to become proficient with the solution before the client is fully reliant on it.

Low tech text based options:

- Alphabet boards
- Communication books
- Phrase boards
- E-tran frames
- Yes/No resources
- Pain charts
- Visual scales

Mid-tech:

- Megabee – low tech eye gaze solution.
- Voice amplifiers – often used early in diagnosis to help avoid vocal fatigue. Will pick up unintelligible speech too.
- Call bells – many components available for gaining attention and safety.

High-tech:

- Tablet devices with apps
 - Predictable
 - Proloquo4text
 - Assistive Express
 - Grid for iPad
 - ClaroCom
 - Verbally + Verbally Premium
- Dedicated devices
 - GridPad devices, Tobii devices, Accent devices

Pairing low and high tech:

- Clients need access to both comprehensive low-tech and high-tech solutions.
- High-tech solutions break, batteries die
- Positioning can often affect access to systems e.g. eye gaze, head mouse etc.
- Different tools for different situations or communication partners.
- Multi-modal communication.

Access methods:

Client's access method may change over time so good to consider how access may change when providing a solution.

- Direct access
- Partner assisted scanning
- Head mouse
- Eye gaze
- Switching

Direct access

Stylus options

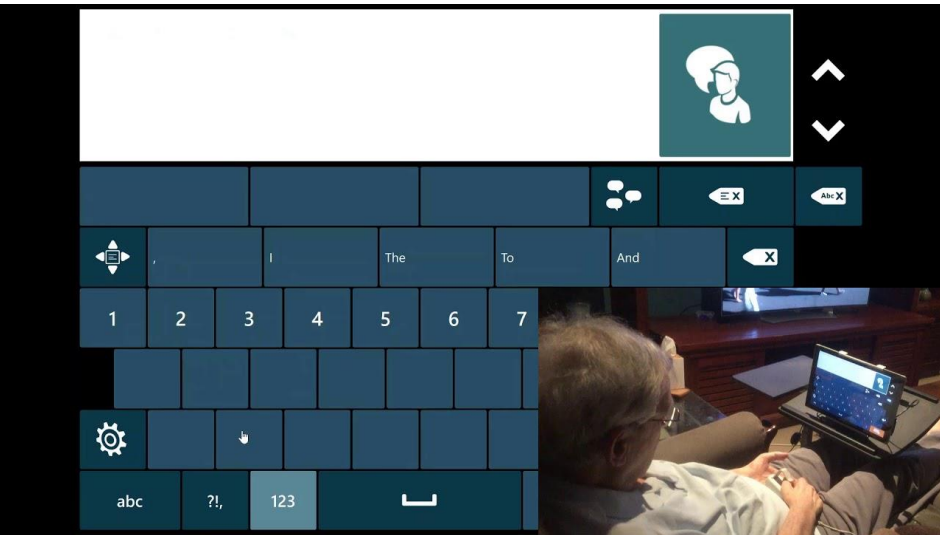
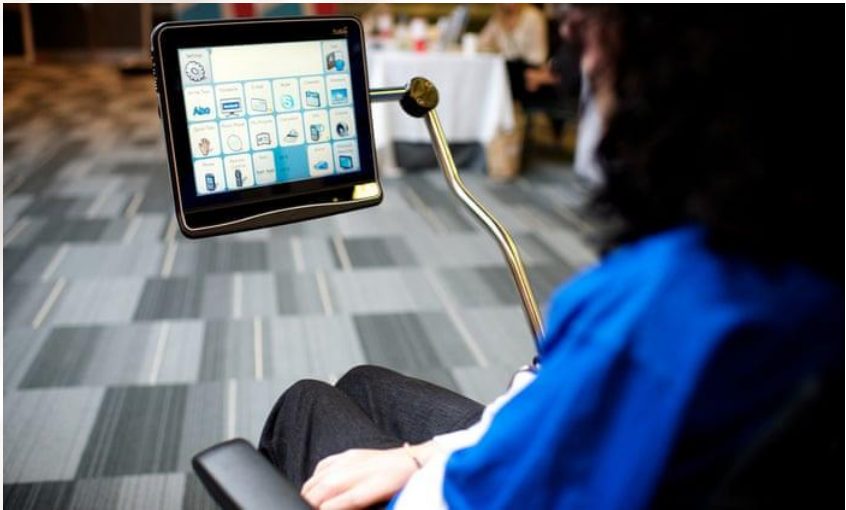


Partner assisted scanning

....'s communication book

Social	People
The body	Needs
Feelings	Food/drink
Questions	Opinions
Alphabet	Numbers
Positioning	Chat

Eye gaze



Head mouse



Switching



Mounting options



Voice, Phrase and Story Banking

Voice Banking

Requires special software in order to record a large sampling of a person's speech that is then consolidated to create a synthetic voice that *approximates* their natural speaking voice.

Phrase/Message Banking

The process of using a digital recorder (or computer recording software), to record and store words, phrases, sentences and personally meaningful expressions in ones natural speaking voice while it is still intact.

Story Banking

A process similar to message banking, however the user focuses on recording favourite stories. These personal, legacy stories are then available for sharing with others later, when speech has become more difficult.

Voice, Phrase and Story Banking

- The decision whether or not to voice/phrase/story bank is a personal one.
- Clients can choose to do a combination of all three methods.

Where to get more information:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENyrG27AbzQ> (webinar on Model Talker with Q&A)

Pro's and Cons of voice banking

- Pros

- Allows client to have a version of their own voice after they have lost the ability to speak
- More personalised – their identity
- Animals can respond better to owner's voice
- Their own accent
- Nice for loved ones, to feel like it is still the person after they can't speak
- Promotes more ownership over communication system
- ? More motivation to use system if more personalised

- Cons

- Sobering and confronting – they will lose their voice
- Ideally, requires a certain level of independence/tech saviness to bank
- Staccato, doesn't use natural intonation/prosody (message banking better)
- Needs very early referral/input
- Time consuming
- Equipment required (ModelTalker)
- No guarantees of result
- Voice can change during banking process

When to start using AAC?

- Start using AAC early to learn how to use a system before it is needed
- Voice/message/story banking – get in ASAP while voice quality is still adequate
- Accessible tools – how do you need to adapt the environment so that the AAC system is always available?

Supported decision making

- Talking Mats is an evidence-based framework that enables health care staff and patients to communicate effectively together.
- Talking Mats is a strategy which allows for the individual to make decisions regarding their care and ACP.
- Uses visual supports to determine what is important for the individual.
- Training courses held around the country, one to be held in Hawkes Bay on 30 April.
- <https://talklink.org.nz/talking-mats-courses>

Questions?

