



The AT Service Method (ATSM) is an evidence-based process framework to efficiently manage the diverse variables necessary for effective provision of AT. The ATSM employs the ICF to establish an internationally relevant, person centered, cross-disability, interdisciplinary, trans-environmental methodology supporting data collection to inform practice and policy on AT interventions. Creation of an International Workshop Agreement standard for provision of AT based on the ATSM can rapidly advance the Global Research Agenda.

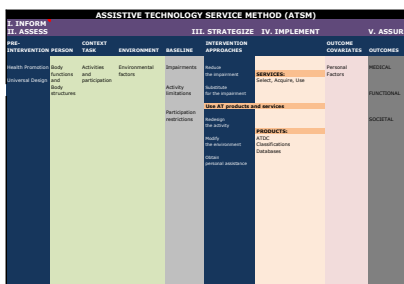
### The Assistive Technology Service Method

*Thematic area 5 of the GRA “Standards and methodologies for the assessment of assistive technology need and unmet need”.*

The evidence-based ATSM incorporates existing models, guidelines, and classifications to develop a robust framework that delineates key elements of AT services and how they interact.

The ATSM identifies “what” variables must be considered during service provision. “How” services are provided will be governed by national legislation, discipline specific regulations, and cultural expectations.

The ATSM framework allows for overlay of existing and future best practices as new knowledge becomes available.



### What is the impact for AT users and other stakeholders?

*Thematic area 1 of the GRA “Effects, costs and economic impact of assistive technology”.*

The ATSM is user driven while acknowledging service contexts, systems level resources and constraints, and policy driven access to AT. The task “INFORM” extends across the entire process to assure the user’s role is facilitated and maximized.

The ATSM acknowledges the impact of health promotion, universal design, and rehabilitation on use of AT as one of multiple intervention options.

The ATSM can produce immediate improvements to provision of services and support data collection for research on medical, functional, and socially responsible outcomes as well as comparative effectiveness and return on investment cost considerations.

### Implications for Products, Provision, Personnel or Policy?

*Thematic area 4 of the GRA “Human resources for the assistive technology sector”.*

#### Products

The ATSM demonstrates the critical unmet need for provider access to a guideline on how to link user function to product features and functions, product descriptors in classifications and databases, and the intended functional outcome when using a product in order to identify an effective AT intervention. Please see the ATDC Snapshot as companion work to the ATSM.

#### Provision

The ATSM criteria will help individuals and organizations assess their AT provision process, quickly identify strengths and opportunities for improvement and compare outcomes to other international practices.

#### Personnel

The ATSM comprehensively identifies the variables impacting AT users and incorporates a critical thinking taxonomy to inform decision making by all stakeholders. The process approach of the ATSM becomes the foundation for development of educational curriculum which can be tailored to identify levels of competency including accreditation and certification.

#### Policy

Without a standard method or tool to connect services and outcomes, there is a lack of comparable data for AT, leading to problems in assessing the impacts of current policies and developing new ones.

The ATSM acknowledges societal outcomes as critical to provision of AT in preventing primary and secondary losses in health and well-being and reducing health and welfare costs.

The ATSM provides benchmarks linking personal function and environmental contexts. Identification of a need that cannot be met due to the lack of resources becomes readily apparent in support of investment by policy-makers.

### Implications for other aspects of the Global Research Agenda

*Thematic area 2 of the GRA “Assistive technology policies, systems, service provision models and best practices”.*

The ATSM responds to urgent market requirements for AT service provision by identifying core performance benchmarks to optimize decision making and decrease the potential for dissatisfaction with and or abandonment of AT.

The standardized framework of the ATSM is intended to ensure a controlled and consistent best practice, process approach between different service contexts, facilitate comparisons between service systems in different countries, and quality outcome equivalence for AT to all consumers regardless of divergent economic conditions.

The ATSM can enable rapid implementation of a framework (user involved, social and environmental approach to functioning) showing the interactions necessary to improve processes while balancing the system at large.

### Strategies to share and build global capacity based on this work.

The ATSM provides an actionable basis for creation of an International Workshop Agreement as a normative document in an area where ISO does not have existing technical structures. This rapid response process can result in a working document clearly defining the aims, principles and elements of good practice for provision of AT services within 12-18 months.

The ATSM also employs the Guidelines for AT Service Standards (GATeSS) process developed by the Foundation for AT (FAST UK) to assist service standard development activity with reference to the AGREE instrument which evaluates the process of practice development and the quality of reporting.

### Contact point for global liaison

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