Telehealth information for persons with disabilities

	Blindness	Low Vision & Color Blindness	Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Solutions	**AT** Software:** Screen readers, voice-command software. **AT Hardware:** Refreshable braille displays and keyboards, headphones, hands-free microphone.	**AT Software:** Screen magnifiers, contrast adjustment, browser zoom, screen readers. **AT Hardware:** Large-print / high-contrast keyboards, large monitors, headphones, hands-free microphone. **Additional:** Customizable lighting.	**AT Hardware:** Large monitors, volume control, high-quality speakers, high-volume headphones. **Additional:** Captioning or transcripts, monitored chat box, volume control, sign-language interpretation (in-person or remote), text messaging. Quiet rooms, plain or solid video backgrounds, customizable lighting.
Planning	Setup and test all assistive technology. Sign in early and allow for extended visits.	Setup and test all assistive technology. Sign in early and allow for extended visits.	Confirm arrangements with captioners, interpreters, and/or companions. Captioners or interpreters should be booked at the same time the visit is scheduled. Check if hearing aids are compatible with audio output. Sign in early and allow for extended visits.
Alternatives	Telephone calls directly with the provider. A companion to assist during the session.	Telephone calls directly with the provider. A companion to assist during the session.	Chat/text messages between patient and provider. Automated speech-to-text software

*Adapted from [WHO-ITU Global Standard for Accessibility of Telehealth Services](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240050464) (https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240050464)

**See [Examples of Assistive Technologies (AT)](#).

	Mobility Impairments	Speech	Mental Health & Psychosocial	Cognitive, Learning, and Neurological
Solutions	**AT Software:** Voice-command software, eye-tracking software. **AT Hardware:** Ergonomic keyboard or mouse; alternative input devices such as switch control, head pointer or mouth stick.	**AT Software:** Text-to-speech software (automatic conversion of text into synthesized speech). **Additional:** Text messaging	**AT Software:** Contrast adjustment, browser zoom. **AT Hardware:** Headphones, hands-free microphone. **Additional:** Quiet rooms, plain or solid video backgrounds, customizable lighting.	**AT Software:** Screen magnifiers, contrast adjustment, browser zoom, screen readers. **AT Hardware:** Large-print / high-contrast keyboards, large monitors, headphones, hands-free microphone. **Additional:** Quiet rooms, plain or solid video backgrounds, customizable lighting.
Planning	Setup and test all assistive technology. Sign in early and allow for extended visits.	Setup and test all assistive technology. Sign in early and allow for extended visits.	Inform the user of the security measures in place to keep their visit safe, private and secure. Provide as much information as possible ahead of time, and explain what the user can expect during the visit. Sign in early and allow for extended visits.	Provide relevant documents and test results to individuals ahead of time in accessible and easy-to-read formats. Sign in early and allow for extended visits.
Alternatives	A companion to assist during the session.	Use of non-verbal communication. Chat/text messages between patient and provider. A companion to assist during the session.	Telephone calls directly with the provider. A companion to assist during the session.	Telephone calls directly with the provider. Automated speech-to-text software. A companion to assist during the session.

Sources:

iCanConnect: Maine (https://www.icanconnect.org/how-to-apply/maine-2/)
>   Details about the iCanConnect program at Perkins School for the Blind, including contact information and application forms for the state of Maine.

Improving Access to Telehealth (US Health and Human Services); (https://telehealth.hhs.gov/providers/health-equity-in-telehealth/improving-access-to-telehealth)
>   A resource for improving telehealth services for all users.

Maine Telecommunications Relay Service Council (https://www.maine.gov/trs/relay-services)
>   Free statewide services for connecting telephone users with people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability.

The Northeast Telehealth Resource Center (https://netrc.org)
>   Technical assistance for developing and implementing telehealth services in New England and New York.

Telehealth Guidance and Resources (https://www.ncdhhs.gov/dsdhh/telehealth-resources)
>   Guidance for accommodating the needs of telehealth patients with disabilities, as well as information for health care providers about accessible telehealth.

Telehealth Classroom (https://www.telehealthclassroom.org/)
>   Resources for successfully implementing telehealth services.

Tools and Techniques: How People with Disabilities Use the Web (https://www.w3.org/WAI/people-use-web/tools-techniques/)
>   An overview of tools and techniques that people with disabilities use when interacting with digital materials.

WHO-ITU Global Standard for Accessibility of Telehealth Services (https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240050464)
>   Technical and other requirements that telehealth platforms should meet in order to provide accessible services.

Telehealth Accessibility Checklist

Preparing for a visit

Questions to ask the resident prior to the session

- Have you had a telehealth visit before?

- Have you had a previous telehealth visit with the provider you are seeing today?

- Do you require any accommodations, such as:

  - An ASL or foreign-language interpreter

  - A companion

  - Captioning

  - Relay Services - Relay Services | Maine Telecommunications Relay Service Council (https://www.maine.gov/trs/relay-services)

  - Assistive technology, such as:

    - screen reader; screen magnifier; text-to-speech software (automatic conversion of text into synthesized speech);

    - a large monitor; high-contrast keyboard; an alternative input device to a mouse; headphones; hands-free microphone

  A more comprehensive list of accommodations can be found in Examples of Assistive Technologies (AT).

- Is the provider aware of your accessibility requirements?

  - If so, have they made any arrangements to support you during the visit?

Pre-visit arrangements

- Ensure all software required by the provider is downloaded and installed.

- Set up and test any required assistive technology (hardware and/or software).

- Confirm arrangements with captioners, interpreters, or companions, if required. Note: captioners or interpreters should be booked at the same time the visit is scheduled.

- Allow for extra time: plan to sign in to the telehealth session early to allow for any last-minute changes or adjustments to the room, hardware, software, etc.

- To the extent possible, provide relevant documents, test results, medication lists, etc., to individuals ahead of time. If necessary, ensure documents are available in the individual's preferred accessible format (e.g., digital, large print, braille).

Day of visit

- Ensure the user has everything they need and they are comfortable with the setup.

- Sign in to the telehealth session early and allow for an extended visit if necessary.
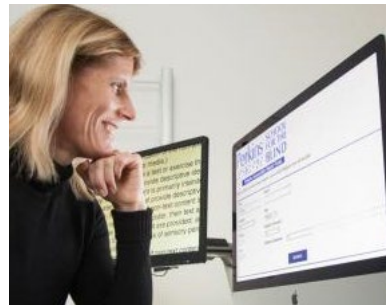
Examples of Assistive Technologies (AT)

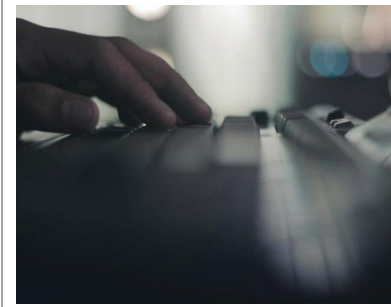|			
Screen Reader	Screen Magnification	Browser Zoom	Braille Display
Reverse Contrast	Voice Command	Switch Navigation	Keyboard