Funding Assistive Technology

Resources

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Presenter

- RESNA Certified ATP

- M.S. in Rehabilitation Science and Technology

- Taught undergraduate and graduate level assistive technology courses at East Carolina University

- Developed an online graduate certificate program in AT for East Carolina University

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Key Learning Objectives

➢Discuss funding issues and sources:
  - ➢Schools
  - ➢Insurance
  - ➢Organizations
  - ➢Federal and State Programs
  - ➢Advocacy Groups
  - ➢State Vocational Rehab
  - ➢Veterans Administration
  - ➢Employer
  - ➢Other

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Funding of AT in Schools

Issues & Sources

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Funding in Schools

- Schools need to provide and pay for AT if it's needed
- IDEA
  - Is AT necessary for FAPE?
    - Access Curriculum
    - Participate in Class
    - Demonstrate knowledge
  - Is AT part of the IEP or IFSP?
- Section 504
  - Guidelines aren't as clear or direct
  - School still needs to assess as needed

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Funding in Schools

- If deemed necessary, schools must pay for the assistive technology
  - Parents are not required to:
    - Use private or public insurance
    - When student is identified under IDEA or 504
    - Have option to use insurance to own AT
  - AT purchased by school:
    - Can be used at school
    - Can be used at home
    - Belongs to the school

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Funding in Schools

- Regional and local educational agencies (depending on the state) are allocated funds specifically for AT.

- The school district is still responsible for providing AT devices and services.

- Alternative funding sources and loaner equipment is available through the LEA.

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Funding in Schools

- When AT is medically necessary or related, the school is not responsible.
  - AT is needed to keep the student healthy or safe
  - Classified as DME (wheelchair)

- Medicaid, Medicare, Private Insurance

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Insurance Options

Medicare, Medicaid, Private

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Insurance Options

- Medicare:
  - Adults – 65 and older
  - Or younger with a disability
- Durable Medical Equipment – Part B
  - Medically necessary
  - "reasonable and necessary for the diagnosis or treatment of illness or injury or to improve the functioning of a malformed body member."
- Examples:
  - Mobility (canes, walkers, wheelchairs)
  - SGD (speech-generating device)

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Insurance Options

- Medicaid
  - Low income
  - People with certain disabilities
    - Blind/Disabled with no SSI
- Devices must be medically necessary
  - Physician prescription required
  - Least costly or "cost effective"
  - SGD – limit of 1 per 5 years with max reimbursement up to $7000 depending on type of AAC device
  - Wheelchairs, scooters
- Medicaid waivers can be used to cover other AT

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Insurance Options

- Private
  - Coverage varies by carrier and policy
  - AT services and devices must be medically necessary

- Automatic Denial Policy
  - All insurance providers have this policy
  - Never accept initial denial
  - Provide supporting documentation with appeal
    - Medically necessary letter from physician

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Organizations

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Organizations

- Both public and private sources
- Disability-focused organizations
- National
  - Multiple Sclerosis Society
  - Muscular Dystrophy Association
  - United Cerebral Palsy
    - UCP Bellows Fund
  - American Council for the Blind
  - American Foundation for the Blind

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Organizations

- State and Local Chapters
  - Easter Seals
  - United Way
  - Lions Club
  - March of Dimes
  - Kiwanis
  - Knights of Columbus

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Federal & State Programs

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Federal Programs

- OSERS – Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services

- NIDRR – National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

- OSEP – Office of Special Education Programs

- RSA – Rehabilitation Services Administration

- CAP – Client Assistance Program

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State Programs

- State AT Programs – Tech Act
  - AT of OH - atohio.engineering.osu.edu

- Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)

- Medicaid

Program Directory - Find Your State Program

+ Need help searching?

Step Number 1: Select Directory:

State AT Programs
Device Loans
Device Demo
Device Reutilization
Financial Loan
Other State Financing

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Refurbished Computer Programs

Local & National

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Refurbished Computer Programs

- Refurbished Computer Programs
  - AT of OH or other state tech act program
  - Computer Banc (IL)
  - PCs for People
  - Human-I-T
  - Project Reboot (DC area)
  - Computer Reach (PA)
  - Digital Bridge (WI)

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State Vocational Rehab

VRS

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Voc Rehab

- States began receiving fund in 1973 with the Rehab Act
- Reauthorized with the Workforce Investment Act/Rehab Act Amendments of 1998
  - Rehabilitation Technology & Services
  - Connected to vocational goals
  - VR services:
    - Maximize employability
    - Self-sufficiency
    - Independence
    - Workplace accessibility
    - Community accessibility

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Voc Rehab

- Assists individuals with disabilities:
  - Physical
  - Intellectual
  - Mental Health
  - Sensory
- Services include:
  - Finding a job
  - Being more independent
  - Job services
  - Training
  - Job Coaching

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Voc Rehab

- Assistive Technology – Get or keep a job
  - Reachers
  - Canes
  - Wrist Rests
  - Mobility Aids
  - Workstation design
  - Communication Devices
  - Specialized Computer Access

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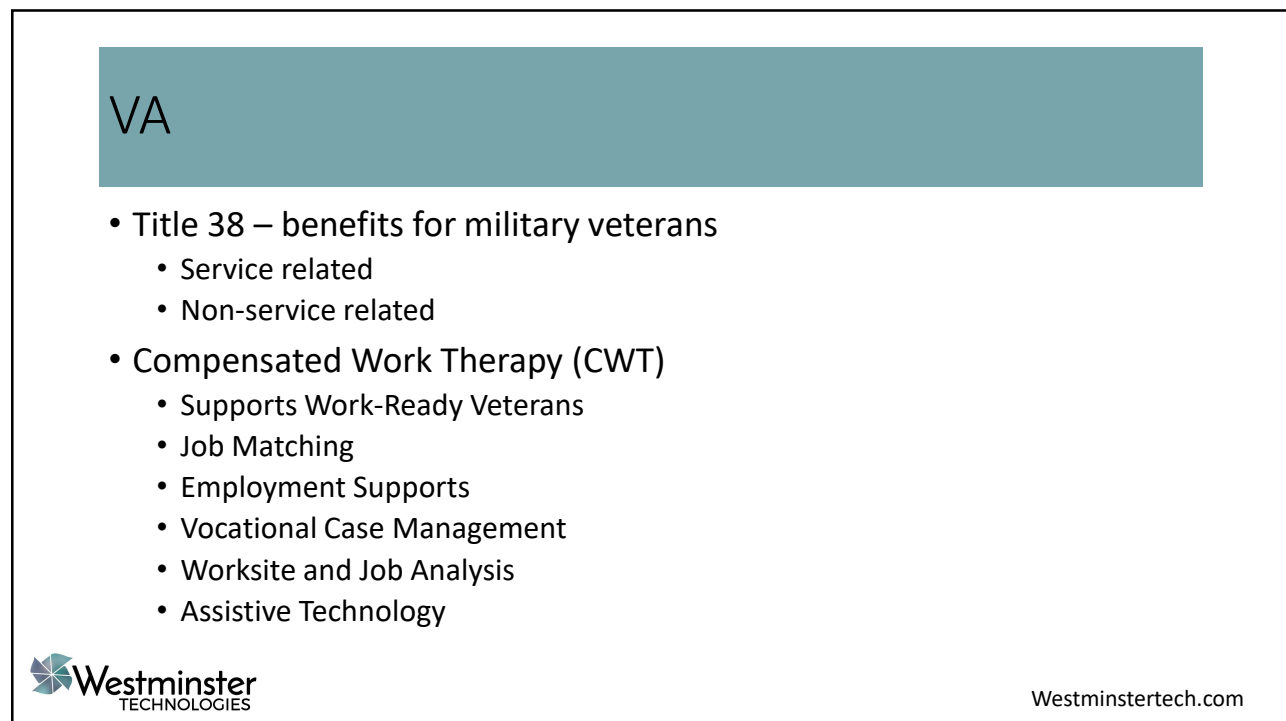
Veterans Administration

VA

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VA

- Title 38 – benefits for military veterans
  - Service related
  - Non-service related
- Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)
  - Supports Work-Ready Veterans
  - Job Matching
  - Employment Supports
  - Vocational Case Management
  - Worksite and Job Analysis
  - Assistive Technology

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Employer

Reasonable Accommodations

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Employer

- Most employers are required to provide reasonable accommodations.
  - Cannot create an undue burden
  - Does not include making significant changes
  - Includes making changes to allow employee to complete job duties
  - Can include AT

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Scholarships

Post-secondary

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Scholarships

- Scholarships to fund AT for post-secondary education
  - Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA)
    - Award grants/scholarships to colleges
    - Assistance to students
  - Employers
  - Organizations
  - Religious Groups
  - Chamber of Commerce
  - National Merit Scholarships (PSAT)
  - AmeriCorps

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Scholarships

- Disability-Related Scholarships
  - Disabled World
  - Incight Scholarship
  - Lime Scholarship
  - Paul G. Hearne Leadership Award (AAPD)
  - Student Award Program – Foundation for Science and Disability

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Scholarships

- https://www.washington.edu/doit/college-funding-students-disabilities
  - ASD
  - Hearing Impairments
  - Vision Impairments
  - Mobility Impairments
  - Health Impairments
  - Learning Disabilities
  - Mental Health

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Other Private Pay Options

Loans

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Other Options

- No- or low-interest loan programs
  - State Loan Programs
    - https://www.at3center.net/repository/osf
    - Alternative Financing Programs
      http://assistivetech.net/webresources/AlternativeFinancingPrograms2015.php

- Reutilization Programs
  - State Tech Act Programs
  - Pass It On Center

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Resources

Links

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Resources

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- "AT Resources Funding Guide." *Assistive Technology Industry Association*, 2017, www.atia.org/home/at-resources/what-is-at/resources-funding-guide/.

- "College Funding for Students with Disabilities." *College Funding for Students with Disabilities | DO-IT*, www.washington.edu/doit/college-funding-students-disabilities.

- Disabled World. "Disability Scholarships and Disabled Student Financial Aid Programs." *Disabled World*, Disabled World, 3 Apr. 2020, www.disabled-world.com/disability/education/scholarships/.

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- Knighton, Kathy. "Assistive Technology Funding in Schools." West Virginia Department of Education. http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/ASSISTIVETECHFUNDINGSCHOOLSQ&A.pdf

- "Medicare Speech-Generating Devices Information." American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, www.asha.org/SLP/healthcare/Medicare-Speech-Generating-Devices-Information/.

- "Vendors." *PCs for People - Refurbished Computer Vendors*, pcsrefurbished.com/about/vendorlist.aspx.

- "Vocational Rehabilitation." *Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities*, OODWorks Accessibility, oodworks.com/index.html#vr .

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Questions

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Any Questions after Webinar

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