**The future of skills development training in the AT world**

**Word Count:** 242

**Introduction/Aims**

Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES) is a business unit of the Department of Human Services (DHS) in South Australia (SA), providing assistive technology (AT) to support people across the sectors of disability, ageing and health.

Poor AT selection and provision has poor outcomes for end users and funding schemes. People may be injured, abandon their AT, or may need re-assessment to modify or replace their AT. Ensuring clinicians are appropriately skilled in assessing for AT, training is a key component to increase the quality and cost effectiveness of AT programs.

**Abstract**

DHS has funded an AT training program, coordinated by DES, with clinicians across the state accessing it at no cost. This comprehensive, hands-on training has focused on higher risk AT areas such as manual and powered wheelchairs, complex seating, pressure management, bariatric equipment, and home modifications. Recent customer sounding research by DES has shown this training is highly regarded by the clinicians.

With the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), there are a number of people whose AT needs will remain the responsibility of state jurisdictions. SA will need to consider its responsibilities to continue AT assessment training as a quality and safeguarding measure. However, it must be argued that irrelevant of funding program, all clinicians assessing for AT should be appropriately skilled. Surely, there are opportunities for stakeholders around the country to work together and ensure that training can support better outcomes for end users, clinicians and funders alike?