

Charting the Cs
Conference 2025:

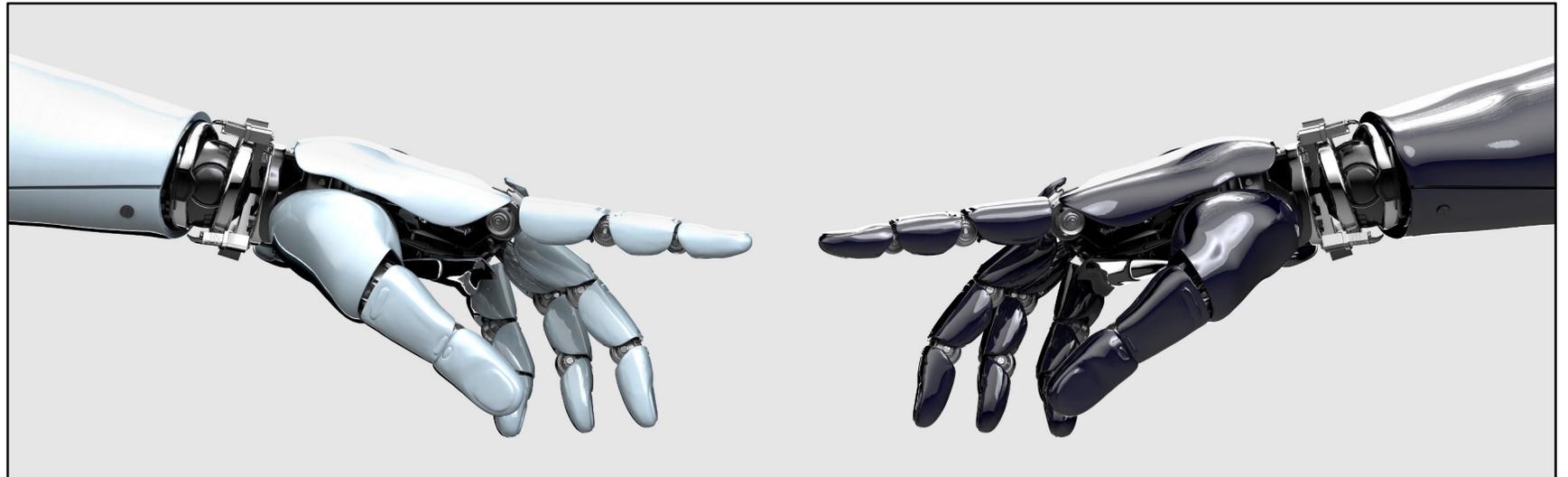
*To Literacy and
Beyond*

Cooperation
Communication
Collaboration

Introduction to Technology First

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What do we mean when we say “technology” within disability services?



Assistive Technology and Assessment



Remote Support

Assistive Technology

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities

Assistive technology is not just the equipment but also includes the human expertise to assess a person's needs, determine or design the best technology solution(s) to meet those needs, and then train and support its use

Remote Support

Remote Support is the provision of a covered service by a staff or caregiver who is in a remote location and is engaged with a person through enabling technology that utilizes live two-way communication.

Remote support definition (cont.)

Enabling technology is the technology that makes the on-demand remote support and supervision.

Examples include live audio and video feeds, web-based monitoring systems, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), mobile applications, communication devices, smart devices or devices that otherwise meet the requirement for live, two-way communication.

Remote support definition (cont. 2)

Live two-way communication is the real-time transmission of information between a person and an actively involved caregiver. It can be conveyed through the exchange of speech, visuals, signals or writing but must flow both ways and be in actual time.

Why is Incorporating Technology so Important?

- Assistive Technology allows people to do things for themselves they would otherwise rely on someone else to help them with - giving people more control and independence
- Assistive technology (AT) and Remote support (RS) offer our greatest chance at surviving the current and future staffing issues which are projected to only become worse
- DHS Workforce Shortage Workgroup has identified Support technology (AT & RS) as their premier promising practice to assist with the staffing shortages

Why is Incorporating Technology in Education so Important?

- Allows students with disabilities to access the curriculum
- Enables full participation in class
- Helps achieve learning goals by removing barriers to learning
- Promotes inclusivity in educational settings
- Facilitates personalized learning experiences
- Fosters greater independence for students
- Supports academic success for students who might otherwise struggle

DHS wants to increase access and usage

- Developed Remote support policy
- CMS approval for 25 waiver services approved for remote provision
- Rate is same whether in person or remote
- Monthly communications to lead agencies throughout 2022, providing information and resources on incorporating technology in support planning
- Updated Specialized Equipment and Supplies (SES) page to make it clear that SES includes AT
- Increased SES cap to \$10K annually last session
- Designated \$4M of ARPA funding that supported 13 grantees furthering the use of AT and RS

DHS wants to increase access and usage (cont.)

- Developed resource document for lead agencies on how to authorize AT and RS
- Made changes to T2029 code so that AT and AT assessments can bypass claims complex review process
- Partner with MN-NEAT to provide quarterly webinars focused on different AT and RS topics
- Partner with ARRM through their DHS Innovation grant, providing in-person comprehensive technology training to lead agencies, providers and people using services, state-wide
- As of January of 2024, community residential service providers no longer need an Alternate overnight supervision technology license (AOST)
- **During last year's session (2024), we officially became a Tech First State!**

What does it mean to be a Tech First state?

By committing to being a “Technology First,” a state makes a public commitment to integrating support technology into their reimbursable services

Upon service initiation and during on-going team meetings, people who access waiver services and their team members must explore and evaluate support technology options before enlisting in-person supports.

“Tech First” Legislation

Informed choice and technology prioritization in implementation for disability waiver services.

The commissioner of human services shall ensure that:

(1) disability waivers under sections 256B.092 and 256B.49 support the presumption that all adults who have disabilities and children who have disabilities may use assistive technology, remote supports, or both to enhance the adult's or child's independence and quality of life; and

“Tech First” Legislation (cont.)

(2) each individual accessing waiver services is offered, after an informed decision-making process and during a person-centered planning process, the opportunity to choose assistive technology, remote support, or both prior to the commissioner offering or reauthorizing services that utilize direct support staff to ensure equitable access.

MnCHOICES Assessment Informed choice: Assistive and monitoring technologies

Select the person's informed choice about the use of assistive and/or monitoring technology:

- Not interested in considering modifications, assistive/monitoring technology options
- Currently using assistive/monitoring technology options and does not want to make changes
- Currently using assistive/monitoring technology options and wants to make changes
- Interested in exploring modifications, assistive/monitoring technology options to address needs

Resources/More Information

- [STAR](#)
- [MN-NEAT](#)
- [ARRM Technology Resource Center](#)
- [Tech4Home](#)
- [Disability Hub MN](#)



Questions?

Please submit inquiries using the [DSD Contact Form](#) Disability Services Division
Response Center

If you cannot use the DSD Contact Form, please call 651-431-4300 or 866-267-7655.
We are available 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday

THANK YOU!!