## AT Device Classification

**Introduction**

AT (and sometimes mainstream) products are critical components of AT solutions that maintain or improve functioning and promote the well-being of persons with difficulties. Many studies have found however, that AT providers (across disciplines, disabilities, and contexts) while confident in AT assessment; lack confidence to identify, select, and obtain appropriate (effective, available, reimbursable, high quality, etc.) AT products. Internet based AT product inventories contribute to this problem, as they require AT providers to know a priori complex techno-centric standards; AT manufacturers or distributors; or the specific AT products being sought. The WHO Priority Assistive Products List (2016) includes AT products that should be available from countries that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). The APL is not restrictive, and appropriate AT products (perhaps many) will reflect social and environmental context. AT providers need internet based Information Systems that support efficient identification, selection, and acquisition of context appropriate AT (and mainstream) products and accessories. An ATDC based Information System would link AT assessment variables to context appropriate AT products listed in ISO9999 or GMDN based inventories (See L. Elsaesser’s ATSM Snapshot).

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

Use of ATDC-based Information Systems would...

- Help to assure that persons with difficulties receive context appropriate AT products.
- Help to improve AT provider efficiency to identify, select, and obtain context appropriate AT products.
- Support socially responsible allocation of public resources towards AT provision and products; insurance; product development, etc.
- Help to improve the quality and consistency of education for AT providers.

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<th>Implications for Products, Provision, Personnel or Policy?</th>
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<td><strong>Products</strong></td>
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<td>An ATDC based IS could be linked only to AT (and mainstream) products appropriate to each social and environmental context.</td>
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| **Provision** |
| An ATDC based IS would link AT assessment variables directly to AT products thereby avoiding many of the problems associated with current AT product inventories. The ATDC is hierarchical (e.g. products and accessories) and extensible. |

| **Personnel** |
| Use of an ATDC based IS in practice would help to improve the consistency and quality of AT services and associated outcomes. |

Use of the ATDC in education would link AT assessment variables to specific assistive (and mainstream) products and accessories and function(s) they provide. Having used the ATDC in graduate education, the student’s understanding of this critical relationship is greatly enhanced.

| **Policy** |
| The ATDC provides a standard framework against which to gather data on AT assessment and AT product identification, selection, and acquisition. Data analysis would help to inform the inclusion or exclusion of AT products in context specific AT product inventories, insurance policy, and public investment toward the development, refinement, or acquisition of AT products. |

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

The ATDC closely aligns to GATE Thematic Research Areas:

- (b) Assistive technology policies, systems, service delivery models and best practices” and;
- (e): “Standards and methodologies for the assessment of assistive technology needs and unmet needs [and the identification, selection, and acquisition of AT products]

The ATDC would positively impact all other GATE Thematic Research Areas.

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

Develop an International Guideline for use of the ATDC in internet-based Information Systems to support context specific AT provision and related applications.

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Suggested activities that logically follow the development of an International Guideline include to:

- Employ ATSM assessment variables to develop ‘AT assessment exemplars’. Link exemplars to AT (and mainstream) product(s) and accessories in ISO9999, GMDN, (or other) based product inventories. AT products in the APL list would be a great starting point. Test and trial AT assessment links to full listing of AT (and mainstream) products and accessories.
- Select subsets of AT (and mainstream) products and accessories appropriate to specific social and environmental contexts. Test and trial context specific, AT product subsets.
- Develop ATDC based IS linked to AT (and mainstream) products and accessories that are appropriate to specific social and environmental contexts. Test and trial the context specific, ATDC based IS.

### Contact point for global liaison

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