Assistive technology (AT) provision processes face challenges to meet peoples’ primary mobility, communication and daily living needs within context. Building sustainable infrastructures to support personnel to provide appropriate products requires policies that are owned and actionable within the resource setting. The Sustainable Community of Practice (SCOP) model provides a stakeholder-centred engagement framework, to generate such policies toward sustainable AT infrastructures.

The Sustainable Community of Practice Model (SCOP)

Contains four manifold dimensions (see figure 1)

I. Valued Management of the Place
II. Vital Meaning for the People
III. Viable Maintenance affecting the Pace
IV. Visible Mindfulness for effective Policy

Applying the SCOP model

Provision systems in Place: Understand past & current AT provision in context.

People & Personnel perspectives: Understand the perspectives of the key stakeholders individually and collectively.

Products provided appropriately paced: Identify the bottlenecks affecting the flow of the current system, impacting on the pace of product provision (see figure 2).

Policy produced, relevant and actionable within context: Generate a collective understanding among stakeholders, creating sustainable AT strategies to address:

- Access to services (criteria, contextual boundaries)
- Assessment and delivery process
- Tracing, tracking and taking care of AT products and services as part of follow up and management
- Education and research

The SCOP model as a universal framework

Imparts sustainability values at all levels of the AT provision process, promoting equitable, accountable, person-centred services.

Builds alliances through shared understanding, cultivating, integrating and applying knowledge collectively to address social, economic, environment and policy issues.

Works with sustainable community of practice concepts to create ownership for action within context.

Utilises organisational ethnography and critical participatory action methodologies including mixed methods such as participant observation, surveys, individual interviews and workshops.

Uses a political reasoning tool and a soft systems approach.

Generates a cosmopolitan narrative representing stakeholder perspectives as a collective voice.

Strategies to share and build global capacity based on this work

The SCOP model is transferable, easy to understand and can be applied in any context.

Consultation can be provided remotely and face to face.

Workshops to facilitate application of the model available on request.

Published examples are available.

Contact details

Rosemary Joan Gowran
BSc (Hons) OT, MSc OT, PhD
Lecturer in Occupational Therapy,
Dept. of Clinical Therapies, University of Limerick
Email: rosie.gowran@ul.ie
Twitter: @GowranRosie