

# Public Comment Request: Wisconsin's State Plan for Assistive Technology

Response ID:2 Data

## 1. (untitled)

### **1. Do you support the goals, and strategies to achieve these goals, listed in the State Plan for Assistive Technology?**

Yes

### **2. Do you have any comments related to Goal 1: Awareness (Increase awareness of assistive technology and the WisTech program)?**

I think this is the most essential piece of the plan, is increasing awareness and referrals. I see the current measure of success is for an increased number of referrals to the WisTech program, but my suggestion is that this goal of building awareness goes beyond only referrals to WisTech, but also referrals for tech assessments through school districts, other assistive tech programs (e.g., AAC programs like CASC), and loan programs (e.g., Katie's Closet) across the state.

### **3. Do you have any comments related to Goal 2: Sustainability (Ensure sustainability and quality of assistive technology services supported by the WisTech program)?**

I believe the collaborative partnerships referenced in this goal are essential. I work in AAC specifically, and the cost of providing services and supports is extremely high, leading to fewer providers being able to sustain services in this area (as evidenced by Green Bay's CP Inc. discontinuing services related to AAC). Partnerships and advocacy are essential to keep these services viable and increase the number of professionals across the state able and willing to provide these services. I'm sure overall AT experiences similar issues. We are very interested in partnering with other groups around sustainability and increasing capacity.

### **4. Do you have any comments related to Goal 3: Knowledge (Provide professional training opportunities through the WisTech program)?**

Again, this is such an essential area of development. The need for skilled evaluation and intervention around AT and AAC is growing exponentially and waiting lists are very prohibitive for clients and families to obtain these essential services. Increasing capacity of providers across the state to allow for greater access is essential.

### **5. Do you have any comments related to Goal 4: Universal Accessibility (Ensure universal accessibility of the WisTech program)?**

Excellent goal and plans for ensuring involvement of stakeholders in AT.

### **6. Are there additional underserved populations that were not identified in the State Plan for Assistive Technology that should be addressed?**

### **7. Are there any additional unmet assistive technology needs that were not identified in the State Plan for Assistive Technology, that should be addressed?**

I think we see our clients who cannot speak and utilize augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) as a group with many unmet needs. Our program has a waiting list of up to a year which significantly impacts individuals' access to these essential services. The CP Center in Green Bay used to provide AAC evaluation and treatment as well but have discontinued that practice due to the prohibitive costs associated with this area of practice. The number of providers for specialized AAC care across the state seems to be diminishing, and we are very interested in partnering with other groups to support expansion of this practice area, access to essential services, advocacy related to the prohibitive costs, and increasing capacity of providers across the state to provide more AAC supports and services. This would be one area that might be beneficially to specifically address within the State Plan for AT.

**8. Please provide any additional comments, suggestions, or strategies to achieve our desired outcomes as identified in the 2018-2020 State Plan for Assistive Technology.**

Please feel free to contact me in follow up to any potential for our group to partner within implementation of the State AT plan. Abygail Marx, MS, CCC-SLP (Communication Aids & Systems Clinic, Waisman Center). 608-263-0528, [abygail.marx@wisc.edu](mailto:abygail.marx@wisc.edu).