



PROMOTE ACCESS TO, AND COVERAGE OF, ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Support Assistive Technology Act funding and reimbursement policies

DID YOU KNOW?

- Assistive technology (AT) devices and services, such as mobility aids, voice recognition programs, screen readers, robotic arms, and adaptive pencils and utensils, greatly increase functional capabilities and enhance work participation for individuals with disabilities when they are properly prescribed, and the user receives proper training. (Source: [National Academy of Sciences](#))
- Every state and U.S. territory receives federal funding to operate a statewide AT program to increase AT awareness and access. State AT programs annually loan approximately 43,000 AT devices and host more than 25,000 new device demonstrations for individuals with disabilities. (Source: [Center for Assistive Technology Act Data Assistance](#))
- Access to, and coverage of, AT devices and services were among the top priorities identified by individuals with spinal muscular atrophy (SMA). (Source: [Cure SMA](#))
- Children and adults with SMA and other disabilities often face coverage barriers and other challenges that limit or delay access to breakthrough technologies and AT devices, such as seat elevation systems in power wheelchairs. (Source: [NIH](#); [NAS](#))

CURE SMA POSITION

Congress should meet the assistive technology needs of individuals with SMA and other disabilities.

- Fully fund the [State Grant for Assistive Technology Program](#) and other Assistive Technology Act programs that help expand knowledge of and access to AT devices, services, and new technologies.
- Support legislation or policies aimed at expediting coverage and streamlining access to AT devices, including newly released and approved breakthrough technologies and devices, to ensure that all individuals with disabilities can fairly access and benefit from these innovations, which can greatly improve their health, independence, and quality of life.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ACT

Technological advances in devices and services have helped individuals with SMA and other disabilities to achieve greater independence and to live, work, and learn in their communities. Recognizing the significant impact AT devices and services can have on individuals with disabilities, Congress passed the Assistive Technology Act ([Public Law 108-364](#)) to fund statewide AT programs focused on training, technical assistance, and AT device borrowing and reutilization programs. However, individuals with disabilities struggle to access the AT device or technology that would best meet their needs due to coverage restrictions, a lack of available providers, and outdated policies that fail to keep up with breakthrough technologies. A [National Academy of Sciences](#) report found that

these barriers represented a significant impediment for transition-aged youth with disabilities related to independent living, vocational readiness, or further education. The challenge is even greater for individuals with disabilities in rural or underserved communities and from lower socioeconomic or educational backgrounds.



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[Cure SMA](#) is a national organization that advocates for individuals with spinal muscular atrophy, a progressive neurodegenerative disease that robs people of physical strength, taking away their ability to walk, swallow, and breathe.