



**Georgia Department  
of Human Services**

Division of Aging Services



# Using Assistive Technology to Reduce HCBS Costs

**Georgia Department of Human Services  
Division of Aging Services**

06/04/2019





*stronger families*

FOR A STRONGER GEORGIA





# Division Vision and Mission

## Vision

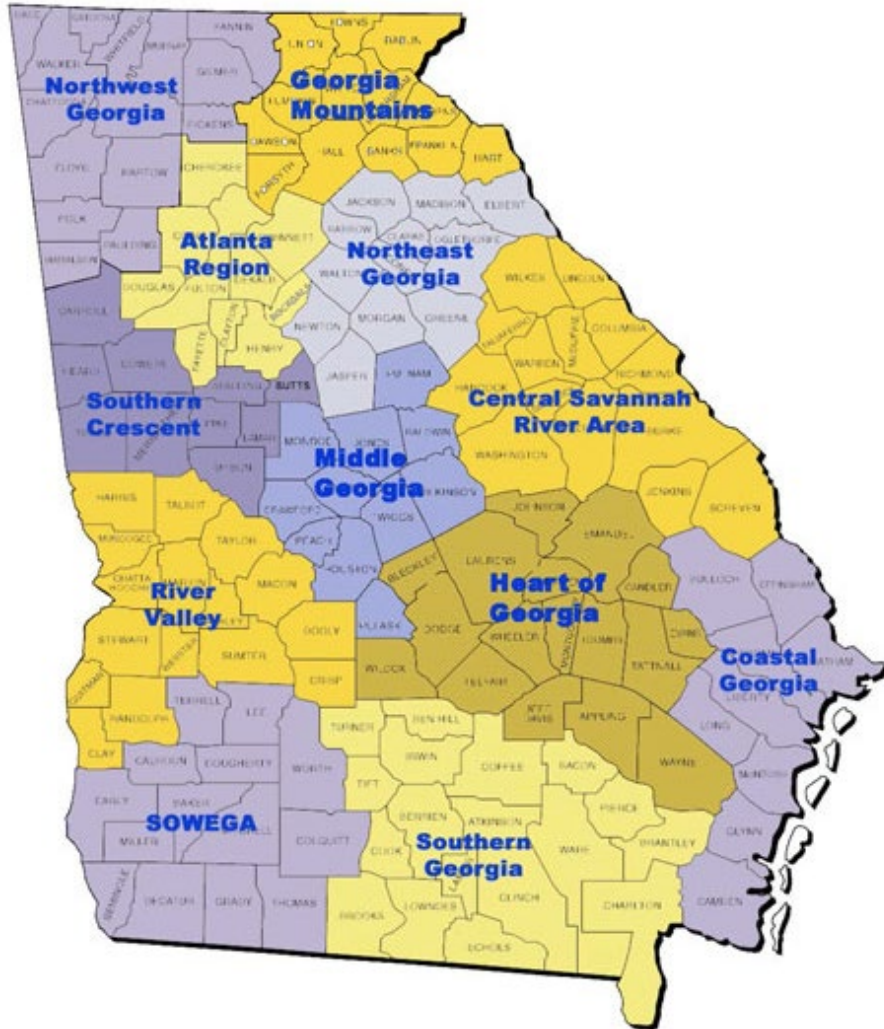
*Living longer, Living safely, Living well*

## Mission

The Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Division of Aging Services (DAS) supports the larger goals of DHS by assisting older individuals, at-risk adults, persons with disabilities and their families and caregivers to achieve safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant lives.



# Assistive Technology



- Any item or piece of equipment that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of an individual in all aspects of life, allowing individuals to continue with daily tasks independently



# Assistive Technology Labs in GA

SFY16 = Blue

- Coastal

SFY17 = Red

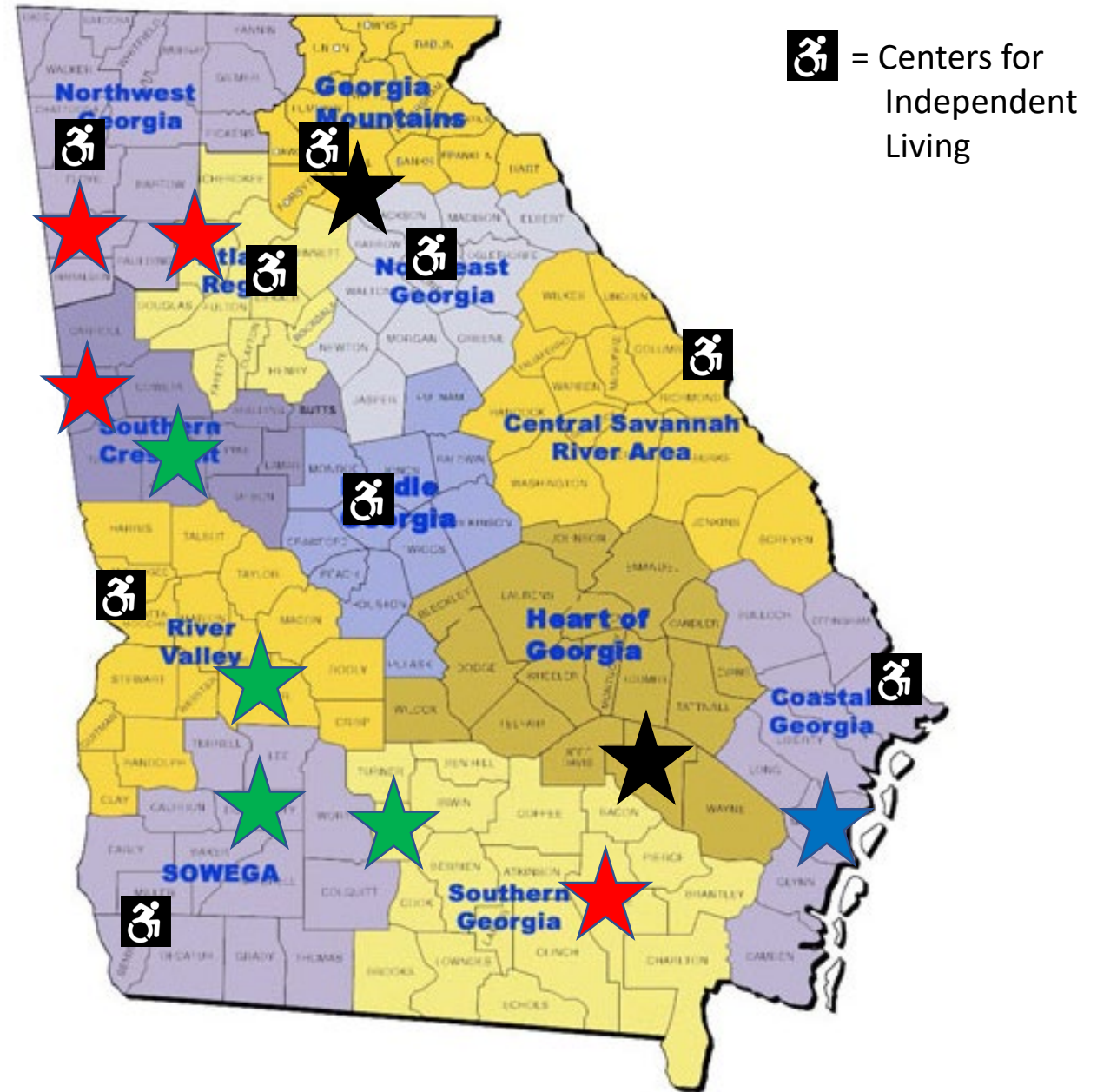
- Cobb County Senior Services (ARC)
- NWGAAA (Cedartown)
- SGAAA (Waycross)
- Three Rivers AAA (Franklin)

SFY18 = Green

- River Valley AAA (Americus)
- SGAAA (Tifton)
- SOWEGA AAA (Albany)
- Three Rivers AAA (Warm Springs)

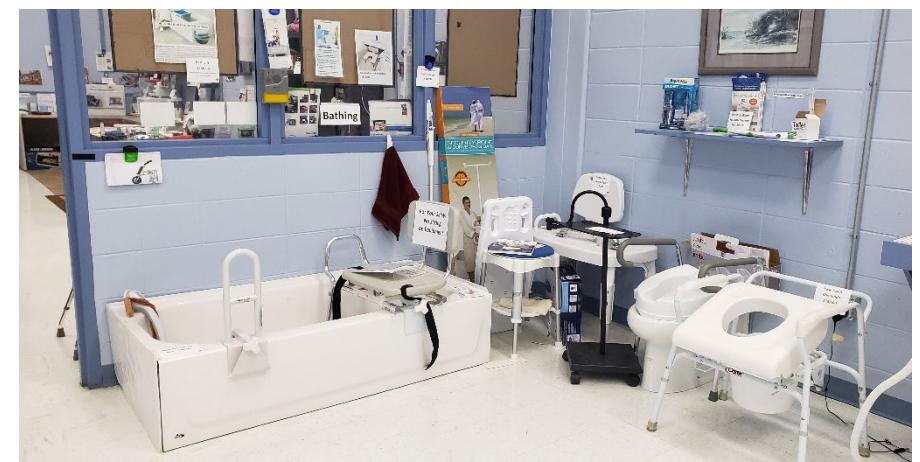
AAA Self-Funded = Black

- Legacy Link, Inc. AAA (Gainesville)
- Heart of Georgia AAA (Baxley)





# AT Labs at a Glance



# Tools for Life

Tools for Life (TFL), Georgia's Assistive Technology Act Program, provides Georgians of all ages and disabilities the opportunity to gain access to and acquisition of assistive technology devices and assistive technology services so they can live, learn, work, and play independently in the communities of their choice.



# Guiding Principle and Public Law



...disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to:

- (A) live independently;
- (B) enjoy self-determination and make choices;
- (C) benefit from an education;
- (D) pursue meaningful careers; and
- (E) enjoy full inclusion and integration in the economic, political, social, cultural, and educational mainstream of society in the United States.

Public Law 108-364



# Started with an AT Toolkit!



### Assistive Technology Access Points

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# ADRC Programs and Assistive Technology Working Together to Help Others

- Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)
- Money Follows the Person (MFP) or Community Transitions (CT)
- Nursing Home Transitions (NHT)





# **ADRC Programs and Assistive Technology Working Together to Help Others**

The Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) and the Assistive Technology (AT) Lab work together to help those individuals who call in requiring additional assistance.

Process is simple:

- ADRC counselors send client referrals to the Assistive Technology (AT) Lab coordinator.
- A call or an appointment is made with the individual to determine the need.
- Research begins to find resources to acquire the assistive device.

# Why Assistive Technology?

We are aging-well advocates!

Types of AT:

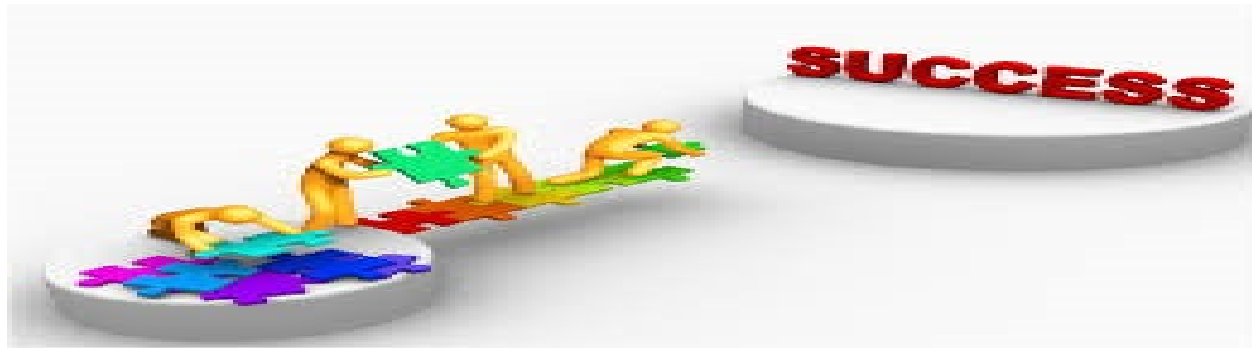
- A shower bench, walker, or cane can ensure mobility independence.
- A simple gadget like Reminder Rosie can remind individuals when to take their medicine or to call their doctor.
- A Robo-Twist jar opener can allow older adults to prepare their own meal without having to wait for assistance.





# Building the Bridge

Working within an Area Agency on Aging (AAA) or Center for Independent Living (CIL) allows for “building the bridge” between resources and individuals in need.



The AAA mobile Assistive Technology lab travels within the region to educate people about AT with hopes of enabling older adults to live at home for as long as possible thereby postponing or eliminating more-costly assisted living scenarios.

# Building the Bridge

Many community partnerships have been identified and cultivated in our region to help spread the word about AT, creating the “AT Domino Effect.” One event can initiate a chain reaction that can build the bridge between the healthcare and community resource silos.

Partnership examples:

- Local schools, colleges and universities
- Churches
- Hospitals
- Doctor’s Offices
- Caregiver Support Groups
- Home Health Care Providers
- Libraries
- YMCA
- Senior Centers
- Continuing Care Facilities
- 55+ Active Adult Communities
- Expos



# Educating the Community about AT

Education plays a huge role in the success of sustaining an AT Lab and providing resources to the public.

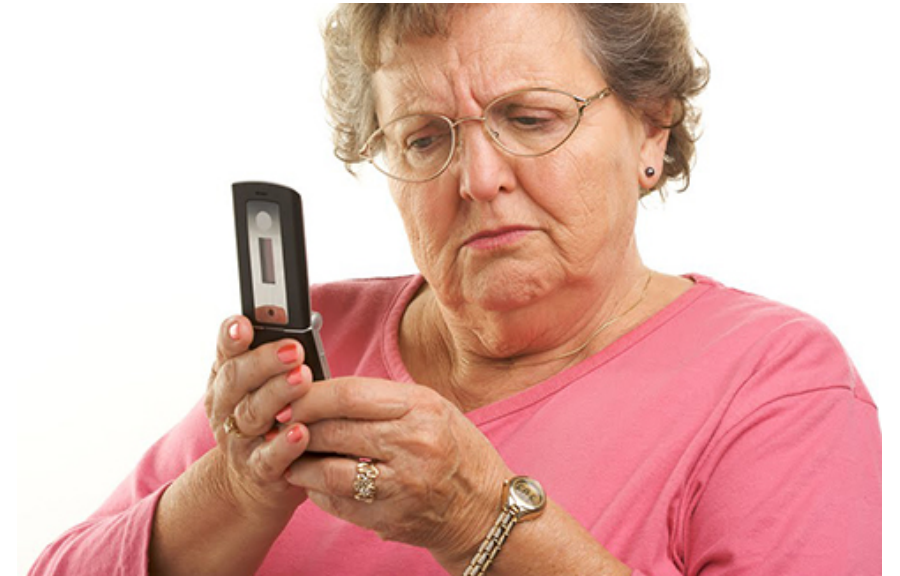


As George Washington Carver said, “Education is key to unlocking the golden door of freedom.”

Different challenges require different assistive technologies. The ideas for use of assistive technology tools to support independence are endless!

# Don't be afraid of what you don't know!

- Be curious – surf the internet for new equipment
- Identify “Reverse Mentors” in a persons life
- Don't assume people won't pay for items that will keep them independent





# Serving More Populations Offering More Options!

Our AT Program has Changed the Way We Assess People

- Eating
- Homemaking
- Bathing
- Toileting / Incontinence
- Automobile
- Telepresence
- Medication Management



# **Using Older American Act funding (III-B and C1 and C2) to assist 60+ population with AT**

- Helped to serve people without putting them on the waiting list.
- Started by giving away bathing equipment
  - Have individuals work with their Doctors to get an PT evaluation. Work with those providers
  - Check to see if you can partner with a home health agency who might deliver for you
  - Expanded to homemaking devices

# AT Versus Traditional Services Under HCBS – Cost Savings

FY 2017

14 Transfer Benches @ \$60 each =	\$840
6 Bath Chairs @ @40 each =	\$240
24 Tub Safety Bars @ \$30 each =	\$720
<u>21 No Contract Alert Systems @ \$70=</u>	<u>\$1,470</u>
41 Total Consumers	Total= \$3,270





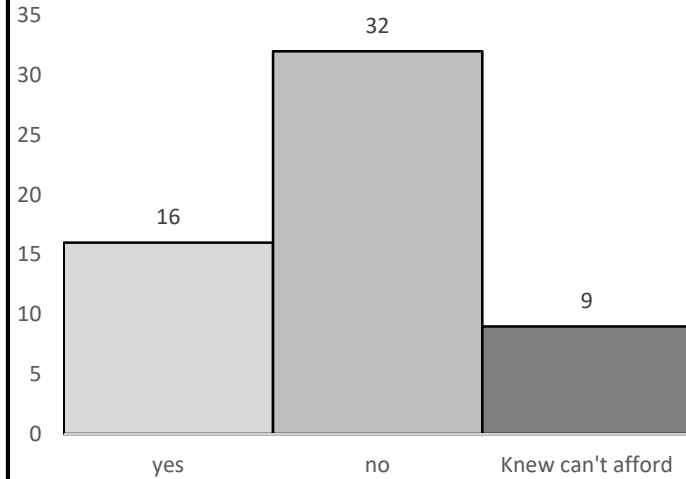
# AT Versus Traditional Services Under HCBS – Cost Savings

- Average Cost Personal Care in GA \$20.27
- Average Cost Homemaker in GA \$20.43
- Average Cost Meal in GA \$7.39
  
- No Rinse Body Wash \$7
- Sponge on a Stick \$12
- Grabber/Reacher \$17
- Can opener (electric) \$20
- Adaptive Utensils \$20
- Robo Twist Jar Opener \$20

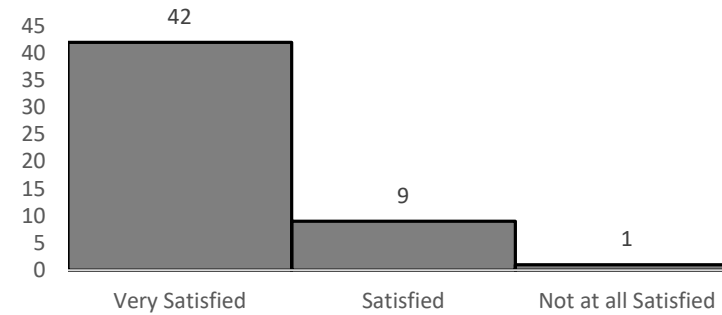


# Consumer Satisfaction Data

Were you aware this equipment existed before talking to us?



How satisfied are you with the equipment you received?



How has this equipment helped you?

- 33** = It has helped me to bathe independently
- 19** = It has helped me to transfer independently
- 25** = It has helped me in other ways

April 2018-April 2019

- 144 people received equipment
- 57 returned Surveys (39.58%)

## **Responses to “how this equipment has helped you”**

- The no rinse body wash has helped between showering.
- Having the help with these pads are a blessing (for 90 year old father).
- I feel clean and refreshed after using each product. How can I get more? (no rinse soap)
- Able to clean myself after using the bathroom.
- Now I can clean my apartment better. I feel I don't have to depend and wait for some one to come over.
- My carpet is clean! Helped me to dust my house where I couldn't do too much bending. Helped me to reach things that way up high that I couldn't reach. Thank you, Thank you.
- I was so glad to receive these items. Reacher: able to get things even when sitting. The back brush not only soaps up well, it feels so good with just rubbing my back. (drew smiley face) Pads come in handy for those emergency Nights. I greatly appreciate them.
- This has helped me shampoo and bathe Mom without being messy and uncomfortable for her in doing so.
- Thank you for the grabber. It helped me so much in the kitchen.
- With neuropathy, in my hands and feet, showering has been frankly a bit scary the past few months. Thanks to the new grips, I'm much more at ease now.
- I love the robotic vacuum. It is the best thing since sliced Bread. Whenever I would vacuum before, I'd have to go straight to bed afterward. But the machine does all the work for me. What a wonderful invention. Thank you Thank you, thank you.
- The scrubber helps me to scrub my bathtub by myself. The reacher/grabber to pick up things, dropped stuff or reach in cabinets. Many Uses. The tub chair helps me feel safe when showering. Thank you so much. These are such a blessing.



# Questions?

