

# Augmentative & Alternative Communication

## What is AAC?

*Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is any method other than verbal speech that is used for communicating with another person. Some examples include sign language, picture exchange communication, gestures, topic boards, and speech-generating devices. Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) and Occupational Therapists (OTs) at LifeScape specialize in identifying the most efficient and effective mode of communication for people with communication needs.*

### Skill Areas Targeted in Therapy for AAC Users Include:

- Making requests
- Greetings and conversation
- Communicating about medical needs
- Gaining attention from others
- Humor, telling jokes
- Asking and answering questions

## Who Can Benefit?

Anyone who has limited verbal speech can benefit from AAC – no prerequisite skills are needed! AAC can even supplement verbal speech for people who say some words. Using AAC can sometimes help people to develop more spoken language. Limited motor skills are not an issue – some AAC is accessible through eye gaze or other small movements.

## What to Expect

- An AAC evaluation with an SLP and OT to determine a mode of communication
- Access to the most up-to-date communication devices and applications to trial and for training
- The area's most-experienced team of Assistive Tech/AAC specialists
- Follow-up intervention to teach the use of an AAC system
- Training for caregivers regarding use of the system throughout the day
- Computer access evaluations are also available
- Voice banking services available for those with declining speech

## Funding

- SD, MN, IA, NE, WY Medicaid/Medicare
- Sanford Health Plan
- Avera Health Plans
- Wellmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield
- Dakotacare
- Cigna
- Aetna
- School Districts



### For more information:

- **In Sioux Falls** Call 605.444.9700 or Toll-Free at 800.584.9294
- **In Rapid City** Call 605.791.7400 or Toll-Free at 800.584.9298
- **Online** Visit [LifeScapeSD.org](http://LifeScapeSD.org)