ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

TIPS FOR CONSUMERS

ADRC
Aging Resource Center of Milwaukee County

MCDA
Milwaukee County
Department on Aging

Developed by the Assistive Technology Workgroup of the Milwaukee County Commission on Aging Advisory Council.

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Department on Aging

Assistive Technology Resource Manual Subcommittee
(2/2008)

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WHAT IS A GATEKEEPER?

Gatekeeper Organizations are four local non-profit resources with expertise in identifying and selecting adaptive equipment.

They can be contacted for ideas, information on local resources, help navigating the maze of funding options, equipment trial opportunities, and assessments.

This brochure was developed in 2008 and updated in 2011.

GATEKEEPER ORGANIZATIONS

★ Things to know before you call a gatekeeper:

- What is the consumer's diagnosis?
- What kind of insurance/funding is available?
- Are there any other conditions?
- Have they used this kind of equipment in the past?
- Is there any other relevant information such as:
  - evaluations
  - how the disability affects the person
  - homeowner/renter status
  - family composition

INDEPENDENCE*FIRST*

(414) 291-7520
www.independencefirst.org

540 S 1st St.
Milwaukee, WI 53204

Age Group Served: **All**
Target Disability Group: **All**

Assistive Technology Services:
Assessments, advocacy, information & referral, and equipment trials.

VISION FORWARD ASSOCIATION

912 N. Hawley Road
Milwaukee, WI 53213

(414) 258-9200
Toll Free (877) 258-9200
www.vision-forward.org

Age Group Served: **Adults**
Target Disability Group: **Blind/Low Vision**

Assistive Technology Services:
Assessments, advocacy, information & referral, training, equipment sales.

CENTER FOR DEAF-BLIND PERSONS, INC.

(414) 481-7477
V/TTY/Telebraille
www.deaf-blind.org

3195 South Superior Street
Milwaukee, WI 53207

Age Group Served: **Adults**
Target Disability Group: **Blind/Low Vision AND Deaf/Hard of Hearing**

Assistive Technology Services: Assessments, advocacy, information & referral, training.

CENTER FOR COMMUNICATION, HEARING AND DEAFNESS

(414) 604-2200 (Voice)
(888) 742-7651 (TTY)
(800) 755-7994 (Toll Free)
www.cdhhwi.org

10243 W. National Avenue
West Allis, WI 53227

Age Group Served: **All**
Target Disability Group: **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**

Assistive Technology Services: Assessments, information and referral, equipment sales and rental, training and installation.

CONSUMER TIPS

When you think about buying adaptive equipment ASK...

1. What funding source will be used? What costs are covered?
2. Does the person recommending the purchase have a financial interest in the equipment?
3. What are the benefits? Are there any draw backs? Is there a compromise?
4. Where and how will the device be used?
5. Will the equipment fit into the house, bedroom, bathroom, vehicle or other places it needs to go?
6. Can it be used on the bus, or in a paratransit van?
7. Will the device interfere with activities like eating, using the phone, rolling under a table, performing self care activities?
8. Can an attendant/caregiver lift it/move it without hurting themselves?
9. Will the user be comfortable using it?
10. Will training be required in order to use this device? If so, how much, who provides it, and is there a fee?
11. Does the device have a warranty or service agreement? What are the terms? What is covered?
12. Who is responsible for paying for repairs or service agreements?
13. How often will professional maintenance/service be required?
14. Is daily or weekly maintenance required? If so, what needs to be done?

WISE CONSUMERS CHECK THE BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU BEFORE BUYING

www.wisconsin.bbb.org

(414) 847-6000 (metro Milwaukee)

When you think about remodeling or building ASK...

1. Is the contractor or architect licensed and bonded?
2. Do they carry general liability and worker's compensation insurance?
3. Will they provide a written lien waiver?
4. Are they a members of NARI (National Association of the Remodeling Industry) or NAHB (National Association of Home Builder's)?
5. Will they pull all required building permits?
6. Do they guarantee their work and for how long?
7. Who will be in charge of the job?
8. Who is responsible for cleaning up?

When you think about buying a hearing aid ASK...

1. What are the credentials of the audiologist/hearing aid dispenser?
2. Do they fit a variety of hearing aid brands or just THEIR brand?
3. Is there a charge for the hearing evaluation or is it built into the cost of a hearing aid?
4. What technology is best for the user? (analog or digital)
5. What style of hearing aid will best suit the users hearing needs and lifestyle?
6. What features does the hearing aid have (directional microphones, a telecoil, multiple program settings)?
7. What services are included in the price of the hearing aid?
8. What is the return/exchange period for the hearing aid?
9. What is the warranty for the hearing aid?
10. What assistive devices or accessories can be used with the hearing aid?