

## **Show Me The Money: Funding For Assistive Technology**

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Previous articles in this series on assistive technology have highlighted various categories of devices and equipment. As a reader and potential user of assistive technology products, you may be wondering about how to pay for the technology you need. There are a range of potential funding sources that may help seniors purchase assistive technology. Eligibility for these programs depends on a number of factors including the type of equipment, where and how it will be used, issues of medical necessity, insurance coverage, income, etc. Contact the agencies listed below for specific information about the type of assistive technology funding that their programs support and their eligibility requirements:

### **Medicaid/Medicare**

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) and Medicare programs provide a comprehensive package of health care services. AHCCCS offers several low or no cost medical coverage programs to Arizona seniors with limited incomes. To participate in these programs, all individuals must be U.S. citizens or qualified immigrants and meet income requirements.

Medicare is a Health Insurance Program for people 65 years of age and older, some disabled people under 65 years of age, and people with End-Stage Renal Disease (permanent kidney failure treated with dialysis or a transplant). Both AHCCCS and Medicare do not necessarily cover all the health-related needs of eligible persons but both programs include a range of Assistive Technology/Durable Medical Equipment and supplies (AT/DME) including powered wheelchairs; grab bars, hospital beds, patient lifts, walkers, hand-held shower equipment, prosthetic devices, etc.

Medicare: Any Social Security Administration (SSA) Office, or the

SSA Regional Office (800) 772-1213 Voice, (800) 347-1695 TTY (Arizona Relay Service), [HYPERLINK "http://www.medicare.gov/"](http://www.medicare.gov/) <http://www.medicare.gov/>

Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System Administration: (800) 654-8713 toll free, (800) 347-1695 (Arizona Relay Service), [HYPERLINK "http://www.ahcccs.state.az.us/site/"](http://www.ahcccs.state.az.us/site/) [www.ahcccs.state.az.us/site/](http://www.ahcccs.state.az.us/site/)

### **Veteran's Health Administration**

The Veteran's Health Administration (VHA) is a federal agency that provides medical assistance to former servicemen and women who file a disability claim for service-connected benefits.

The VHA will pay for a variety of assistive technology including driving and transportation aids, medical equipment, wheelchairs, hearing aids, prosthetic devices, speech devices and assessment services

National VA Benefits Hotline: (800) 827-1000, HYPERLINK "[http://www1.va.gov/health\\_benefits/](http://www1.va.gov/health_benefits/)" [www1.va.gov/health\\_benefits/](http://www1.va.gov/health_benefits/)

### **Reverse Mortgage Program**

In the same way that a mortgage loan is paid back in monthly installments over a number of years, the Senior Reverse Mortgage Program makes payments back to the homeowner. The program is insured by the Federal Housing Administration and backed by the Federal National Mortgage Association. It is designed as a solution to meet the financial needs of individuals over 62 years of age who face the daily challenge of living on a fixed or limited income.

Funds may be used for essentials including health care, food, home repair or modification, taxes, insurance, assistive technology devices and services, or prescriptions. Reverse Mortgage Program: (800) 234-0344, HYPERLINK "<http://www.hud.gov/buying/reverse.cfm>" [www.hud.gov/buying/reverse.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/buying/reverse.cfm),

HYPERLINK "<http://www.seniorjobbank.org/rm/index.html>" [www.seniorjobbank.org/rm/index.html](http://www.seniorjobbank.org/rm/index.html)

### **Arizona Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (AzTEDP)**

In 1986, the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing was given the responsibility for making sure that people with disabilities and seniors have access to the public telephone systems. Since then, AzTEDP has provided a large selection of free telecommunication devices for deaf, hard of hearing, deaf blind, and speech impaired Arizona residents. Devices include TTYs, amplified telephones, alerting/ringing devices and speech generating devices.

Arizona Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program: 602-364-0990 (Phoenix area TTY/Voice); 866-223-3412 (520 and 928 area codes) TTY/Voice; Website: HYPERLINK "<http://www.aztedp.org>" [www.aztedp.org](http://www.aztedp.org)

### **Division of Aging and Community Services/Aging and Adult Administration - Home & Community Based Services**

Limited home improvement services for repairs and adaptations are available to older persons who meet income eligibility guidelines. Such activities include roofing, ramps, and insulation.

Department of Economic Security, Aging and Adult Administration, (602) 542-4446; (800) 347-1695 (Arizona Relay Service), HYPERLINK "<http://www.azdes.gov/aaa/>" [www.azdes.gov/aaa/](http://www.azdes.gov/aaa/)

### **Arizona Loan\$ for Assistive Technology**

Arizona Loan\$ for Assistive Technology (AzLAT) is a consumer driven, statewide

alternative financing program offering affordable loans to persons with disabilities and older individuals with functional limitations who want to borrow money to purchase assistive technology devices. AzLAT is targeted to borrowers in low and to middle income brackets.

AzLAT: (602)-776-4670; (800)-477-9921; (602)-728-9536 (TTY), HYPERLINK "http://www.azlay.org" [www.azlat.org](http://www.azlat.org)

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> in a series of articles designed to educate people about assistive technology and its benefits to older Arizonans. For more information, contact Edward Myers, Policy and Funding Specialist for the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP). Ed can be reached at 602.776.4699 Voice, 602.728.9536 TTY or toll free at 800.477.9921. The AzTAP website is HYPERLINK "http://www.nau.edu/ihd/aztap" [www.nau.edu/ihd/aztap](http://www.nau.edu/ihd/aztap).

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**DES, Aging and Adult Administration: Aging, if it's not your issue...it will be.**