

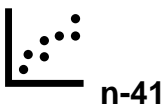
Summary: GAATO Scoping review of quality guidelines for Assistive Technology provision



Who we are and what we did: GAATO conducted a rapid scoping review of guidelines for quality AT service provision in the first quarter of 2023. The research team comprised Dr Natasha Layton (Australia), Dr Alice Spann (Austria), Dr Mehedi Khan (Japan), Ms Silvana Contepomi (Argentina), Mr Evert Jan Hoogerwerf (Switzerland) and Prof Luc de Witte (Netherlands). This work was **funded through AT2030**, a programme funded by UKAid, and led by the Global Disability Innovation Hub in consultation with the World Health Organisation.



Why this scoping review? *Assistive technology* is both *assistive products* and the *services* or actions necessary for the safe and effective provision of assistive products to people who need them. International standards and specifications exist for assistive products, but currently no widely useable and accepted AT provision guidelines exist. Given the huge need for AT, the broad range of different types and uses of AT, variety of service delivery models across different countries, and the shortage of trained personnel in this field, it is important to develop globally useable guidance.



The yield: we screened 8,626 records, extracting data from 17 publications identified within a systematic search of 4 academic databases; and 18 publications from consulting with assistive technology organisations. Six additional references were included after a secondary screen for the term 'quality'.






What did we find?

- Most documents are national commentaries on what good processes and quality indicators might be for different types of assistive products.
- Of the 35 publications, 20% were written with some sort of systematic guideline process, 40% were commentaries, and the rest used various qualitative methods. Publications spanned 40 years, with most published in the last 15 years.
- Two Global Guidelines address specific assistive products for mobility.
- National guidelines about service provision in particular nations or regions were usually written by AT organisations.
- We found publications providing guidelines for AT in general, as well as for assistive products for mobility, cognition, communication. Some publications focused on function, for example local guidelines about provision for education and vocation or work.
- Target groups were some or all of the AT ecosystem stakeholder groups (AT people, personnel, providers, policy, funders).



AT provision and AT service delivery steps are mentioned in many different types of documents. This demonstrates they are both **important** and **hidden**. There are mentions of steps within **policy** documents and within the competency standards of different professions for **personnel**. Within the ISO **product** standards, again, elements of service **delivery** can be found within sections such as clinical evaluation and useability. Commissioning frameworks such as the National Health Service in UK, mention service steps



	<p>within the context of the purchase of professional services.</p>
	<p>What did we learn?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no 'real' established guidelines/standards in this field, with some exceptions for specific assistive product categories. • Many authors state it is important to develop guidance for practice. • Most authors in this field suggest guidance includes service delivery processes and criteria for service delivery quality; as well as guidance regarding the broader provision contexts. • There is strong consensus on the key steps in the process (although some different terms are used and there is some variability regarding the number of steps). • There is strong consensus on quality criteria for service delivery and on the importance of broader elements of AT provision.
<p>CONCLUSION</p>	<p>There is a strong case for globally applicable AT provision guidelines. The literature provides a firm foundation for their development.</p>

