

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS)

# Application Guidelines for Speech Generating Devices

## **Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) - Application Guidelines for Speech Generating Devices**

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An electronic version of this document is available at [health.qld.gov.au/mass](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass)

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# Aim of MASS

The aim of MASS is to provide endorsed aids and equipment (assistive products) to eligible Queensland residents with a permanent and stabilised condition or disability. Assistive products are selected to enable people to live in their home environment and avoid premature or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation. To meet this aim, the assistive products subsidised by MASS must be required for use within the home environment. MASS acknowledges that assistive devices may be used for some community access, although the MASS subsidy is not provided for this purpose as it is outside the scope of the scheme.

If a suitable device is held in MASS stock, MASS will allocate this item and arrange delivery to the requested address.

## Speech Generating Devices

Speech Generating Devices Subsidised	Maximum MASS subsidy	May be subsidised when
Static Display device Dynamic Display device Spelling based device	\$7,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Severely restricted or non-verbal communication</li><li>• Device meets language, communication and access needs</li><li>• Device has capacity to meet developing/changing needs</li></ul> <p><b>Exclusions</b></p> <p>Funding not provided for mobile internet devices e.g. iPad</p>
Static Display device Dynamic Display device Spelling based device	\$7,000	<p>Client meets criteria above AND is determined by MASS to have “high needs”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clients with complex physical impairment/s who require very specific and adjustable access options e.g. switch/scanning; head pointing, eye gaze, etc. This group may include those clients with deteriorating, progressive conditions</li><li>• Clients with sensory impairment/s, who need options such as large displays/keyboards, zoom magnification, audio prompts, auditory scanning, etc</li><li>• Clients who have (or show potential to develop) high level language skills that require sophisticated vocabulary sets/storage to be able to generate spontaneous, novel and grammatically accurate messages.</li></ul>

<b>Basic Accessories for Speech Generating Devices</b>	<b>Maximum MASS subsidy</b>	<b>May be subsidised when the purpose is</b>
Carry Case	Fully funded	Protection of device.
Moisture guard	Fully funded	Protection of device from spillage, saliva etc.
Basic accessing devices/switches x 2 (max)	\$160 each	To allow alternative access to a device via a scanning display.
Key Guard	Fully funded	To improve accuracy of direct access to device.

**Note: The below equipment requires assessment and clinical justification from an Occupational Therapist.**

<b>Specialised Accessories for Speech Generating Devices</b>	<b>Maximum MASS subsidy</b>	<b>May be subsidised when the purpose is</b>
Mounting system	\$1,000	To mount a speech generating device onto a wheelchair. Funding can also be for a table mount or floorstand (only one mount can be chosen)
Switch mounting system	\$350	To mount a switch that operates a scanning display on a speech generating device.
Specialised switches (non mechanical)	\$500	To access a scanning array on a speech generating device where a mechanical switch is not effective.
Head operated accessing devices	\$1,500	To access a communication display on a speech generating device where switch access or other means are not effective.
Eye gaze access devices	\$4,500	To access a communication display on a speech generating device where switch access, head operated access or other means are not effective.
Joystick, for control of SGD	\$500	To access a communication display on a speech generating device where switch access, head operated access or other means are not effective.
Integrated wheelchair controller	\$2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To capitalise on a single access method and controller to operate a speech generating device and a wheelchair</li> <li>• Funding for this item is also offered in the Mobility Aids area of the scheme and will only be provided for one application</li> </ul>

NB: For eligible applicants, MASS will fund one communication aid (e.g. speech generating device, artificial larynx, voice amplification device or AAC software) as a primary means of communication every five years. There is some flexibility for clients who experience functional change.

## Co-Payment

Where a speech generating device exceeds the maximum subsidy funding, a co-payment arrangement may be entered into with MASS. For further details, refer to the Subsidy Funding section of the [MASS General Guidelines](#).

## Permanent Loan, Repairs and Maintenance, Ownership

Speech Generating Devices are most often provided on permanent loan, with repairs and maintenance funded by MASS. For further details, refer to the following sections of the [MASS General Guidelines](#):

- Permanent Loan Aids
- Permanent Loans – Repair and Maintenance
- Changes to ownership of an aid – this section includes information and the implications where equipment is either transferred from MASS to the client, or MASS takes over the ownership of equipment (e.g. similar equipment provided by interstate agencies)

NB: All permanent loan items are expected to be serviceable for at least five (5) years.

## How to Apply

Applicants should consult with an eligible prescriber/s to assist with assessment and selection of appropriate device and any required accessories. The prescriber/s will complete [MASS-eApply Communication Aids Application](#) or the [MASS 21 Communication Aids Application Form](#), including the Speech Generating Device Application Appendix and any extra documentation required; then submit the completed application to MASS – please refer to the list of application forms and documents required below.

## Trial and follow up requirements

In addition to the information in the [MASS General Guidelines](#) (section, Prescriber Role), the following guidelines are provided specifically for the funding of speech generating devices:

- Prescribers should ensure a team approach to assessment including the applicant, family/carer, speech pathologist prescriber and occupational therapist.

- Trials of devices need to gather information that will demonstrate that the speech generating device will accommodate the person's body structure and function, activities, participation, environmental and personal needs and can be adapted to suit their current life stage and future needs.
- Prescribers should adequately trial several speech generating devices and any accessing equipment in the home environment, or it must be demonstrated that the device and accessories will be used functionally in the home. The minimum requirements are to trial two devices and any accessing equipment for two (2) weeks each.
- Specialised accessories must be trialled with an occupational therapist who will provide clinical justification for this category of equipment.
- A MASS [Request to Trial MASS Stock Communication Aids](#) and [Communication Aids Trial Information and Pro Forma](#) are available on the MASS website to assist and guide prescribers with documentation of the trial objectives / outcomes.
- A post delivery check to ensure all items are delivered as quoted.
- A post delivery follow up visit is to be provided by the prescriber, or this is referred on to another health professional, to ensure the client and carer are familiar with the operation and effective use of the equipment; assist with initial set up and customisation of the vocabulary; provide information to assist the client pre-plan for occasions when they might be without their communication aid; and ensure they are aware of maintenance and repair processes.

## Allocation of aids

- Prescribers and applicants will be notified of the outcome of the application.
- If approved, and the conditions for co-payment are met (e.g. statutory declaration is signed and returned to MASS) an order will be placed with the supplier/manufacturer for supply directly to the prescribing speech pathologist, OR
- If a suitable aid is held in MASS stock, it will be delivered directly to the prescribing speech pathologist.

## Eligible Prescribers

Applicants wishing to apply must consult a:

- Speech Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist for Specialised Accessories

## MASS-eApply Online Application

MASS-eApply is the preferred method of application for all Speech Generating Device requests to MASS. Online applications are designed to work across multiple platforms:

computer/laptop, iPad, Android tablet or smartphone and across all MASS service areas. As part of the MASS-eApply process, applicant's eligibility will be confirmed electronically.

- Further Information: [health.qld.gov.au/mass/eapply](http://health.qld.gov.au/mass/eapply)
- To register: [forms.health.qld.gov.au/#/vault](http://forms.health.qld.gov.au/#/vault)
- To login: [forms.health.qld.gov.au/#/login](http://forms.health.qld.gov.au/#/login)
- For enquiries and technical assistance contact: [MASS-eApply@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:MASS-eApply@health.qld.gov.au)

## Application forms and documents for non MASS-eApply Applications

Application Type	Documents
Speech Generating Device (and any accessories)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">MASS 21 Communication Aids Application Form</a>, including the Speech Generating Device Application Appendix</li><li>• Signed <a href="#">MASS 84 Proxy Access to Centrelink Information Form</a> or photocopy of both sides of the applicant's concession card</li><li>• Quote for device and any accessories</li><li>• <a href="#">MASS Request to Trial MASS Stock Communication Aids</a> (optional)</li><li>• <a href="#">Communication Aids Trial Information and Pro Forma</a> (Optional)</li></ul>