Queensland Health

Voice Amplification Devices Explored

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme

4 March 2026

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND

Queensland Government

Administrative Eligibility for Communication Aids

Queensland Health

- Queensland resident
- Concession/Qld Seniors/DVA Card Holder

- Home Care Packages (3 and above)
- Hospital in-patient
- Resident in an aged care home
- Persons in receipt of compensation in respect of disability
- Already receiving funding through another government scheme e.g. DVA, NDIS, NIISQ, CDC

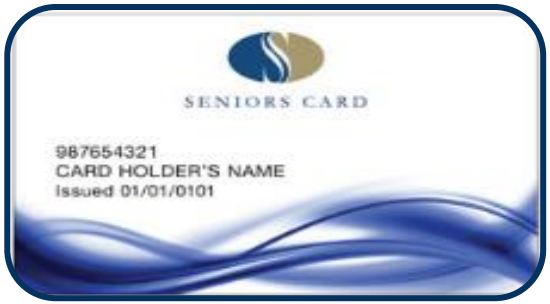
DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND | Queensland Government

Eligibility for Communication Aids

Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card

Centrelink Health Care Card

Department of Veterans' Affairs(DVA) Pensioner Concession Card (conditions apply)



Queensland Government Seniors Card

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND | Queensland Government

Voice Amplification Devices

Voice Amplification Devices Subsidised	Maximum MASS subsidy	May be subsidised when
Voice Amplification Device, including amplifier, microphone and accessories (waistband, carry case etc)	$475	Voice volume is insufficient for successful communication and client can achieve appropriate voice volume with device

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.

Communication aids | Queensland Health

MASS-eApply online applications

Loans of Voice Amplification Devices

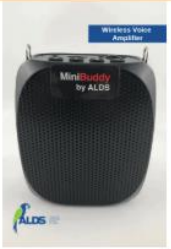
Queensland Health

MASS loan pool for eligible applicants:

- Zavox Reo Voice Amplifier
- Spokeman Voice Amplifier
- SHIDU Voice Amplifier
- MiniBuddy Voice Amplifier

EchoVoice EV7 Voice Amp

Voice Amplifiers



MiniBuddy Voice Amp

Voice Amplifiers

Spokeman Voice Amp

Voice Amplifiers

WinBridge S278 Voice Amp (Bluetooth)

Voice Amplifiers

WinBridge WB001 Voice Amp

Voice Amplifiers

Zavox Reo Voice Amp

Voice Amplifiers

KimTech
Communication
Assistive Technology

Hire costs range from $50 - $100/month

Zyteq: Zavox Reo Voice Amplifier

Andreetta, M.D. et.al. (2016). Evaluation of Speech Amplification Devices in Parkinson's Disease. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 25, 29- 45.

- 11 participants with Parkinson's Disease
- Trialed seven voice amplification devices (Sonivox, ADDvox, Amigo, ChatterVox, Spokeman, Voicette and BoomVox)
- Devices improved SNR, speech intensity and transcribed intelligibility of speech compared to unamplified speech in moderate background noise
- Discrepancy between speech performance-based measures and experience-based preference ratings
- Possible explanations for results:
  - Large influence of appearance and size of device
  - People with PD may have difficulty with the accurate perception of their own speech production

Knowles, T. et. al. (2020). A Comparison of Speech Amplification and Personal Communication Devices for Hypophonia. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*, 63, 2695 – 2712.

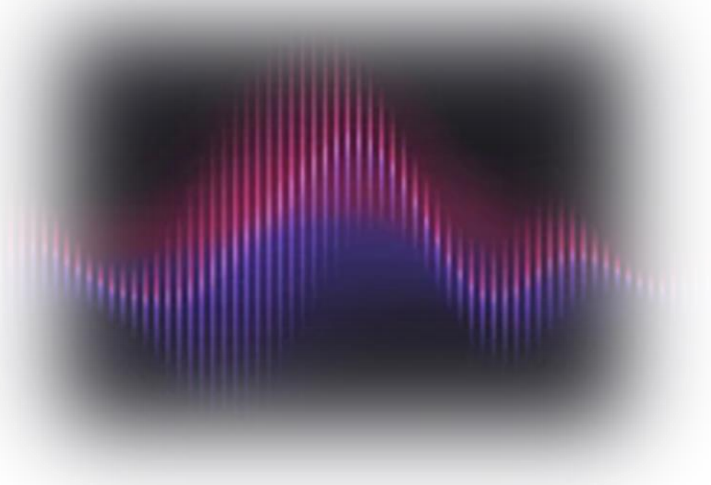
- 22 participants with hypophonia (PD or MSA), plus control group
- Trialed three different speech amplification devices: A) a wired amplifier, B) a wireless stationary amplifier and C) a one-way personal communication system (personal FM system)
- All three devices improved SNR and speech intelligibility of speech compared to no device
- Device preferences did not reflect objective device hierarchy i.e. option C) had the best objective results, whereas A) was more preferred
- Home trials give the client time to gain experience with devices to make an informed decision

Page, A. et. al. (2023). A Comparison of Voice Amplifiers and Personal Communication Systems for Hypophonia: An Exploration of Communicative Participation. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 32, 1850 -1865.

- 17 participants with hypophonia, plus primary communication partners (PCP). Age range 54 – 78
- Trialed three different speech amplification devices: A) a wired belt-pack amplifier, B) a wireless stationary amplifier and C) a personal frequency modulation (FM system)
- Speech amplification improved acoustic, perceptual, and participation-based aspects of communication
- Device B and Device C produced the highest ratings of communicative effectiveness in comparison to baseline, but may depend on environment and number of communication partners
- Persons with hypophonia and PCPs rated these measures similarly
- ?non- selectors of devices had a more severe dysarthria

Gates, K. et. al. (2023). Clinical Insights Into the Use of Speech Amplification Devices for Managing Hypophonia: Interviews with Speech-Language Pathologists. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 33, 1639 – 1661.

- 10 speech-language pathologists in US/Canada were interviewed re usage of speech amplification devices with people with Parkinson's Disease and hypophonia
- Three main themes emerged:
  - Clinicians described amplification devices as a potential treatment option
  - Highlighted that device selection depends on individual needs and preferences
  - Importance of involving family members in all stages of device use and other health care team members as necessary



Assad, J. P. (2019). The Effects of Amplification on Vocal Dose in Teachers with Dysphonia. *Journal of Voice,* 33(1), 73 – 79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2017.09.011

Bovo, R. et. al. (2013). Voice Amplification for primary school teachers with voice disorders: a randomized clinical trial. International *Journal of Occupational Medicine and Environmental Health*, 3, 363 – 372. https://doi.org/10.2478/s13382-013-0115-1

Cantor-Cutiva, l.C. et.al. (2025). Bibliometric analysis, systematic review of literature, and meta-analysis of the effect of amplification on voice production among teachers. *Journal of Communication Disorders*, 117, 106544. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcomdis.2025.106544

Teixeira, L. C. & Behlau, M. (2015). Comparison Between Vocal Function Exercises and Voice Amplification. *Journal of Voice*, 29(6), 718 – 726.

Voice amplification devices were effective in preventing damage to vocal cords for teachers with dysphonia or at at-risk of developing dysphonia.

Voice Ampilifer Considerations

- Speech clarity of person
- Comfort, aesthetics
- Preference of user
- Microphone options
- Environments e.g. dusty, dirty – option with pouch may be best
- Activities the person is engaged in whilst wearing the device
- Options for securing amplifier
- Weight
- Medical devices that the person may be using
- Size of head
- Position of head
- Dexterity
- Available help for charging and maintenance
- Music playback

Zavox Reo Voice Amplifier

- Leather pouch for amplifier
- Strap to wear around waist
- Microphone options: headset, unilateral, lapel, gooseneck and transdermal (throat)
- Available from Zyteq

Zyteq - Starting with Voice Amplification

Zyteq - Voice Amplification | Selection Guide

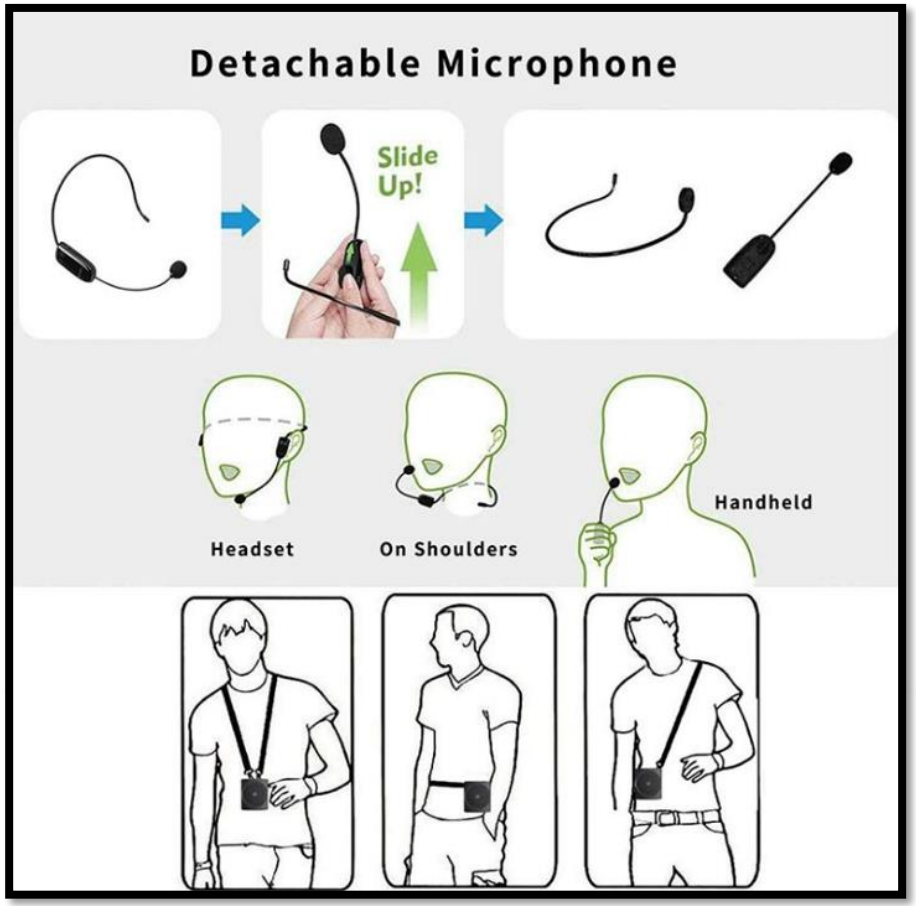
Zyteq - Considerations for using a voice amplifier

Spokeman Voice Amplifier

- Recommended by patients of John Costello (US SPL specialising in MND)
- Headset microphone
- Straps, no pouch
- Simple to operate
- Low cost
- Available from Technical Solutions Australia

SHIDU Voice Amplifier

Queensland Health



- Wireless and wired options
- Belt clip and shoulder straps, no pouch
- Detachable microphone with three different configurations – headset, on shoulders or handheld
- Music playback feature
- Available through Spectronics

DELIVERING FOR QUEENSLAND | Queensland Government

MiniBuddy Voice Amplifier

- Headset boom and ear hook microphones
- Carry case
- Integrated belt clip
- Audio cable for connection to other audio sources
- Lightweight
- Available through ALDS Australia

Other Voice Amplification Device Options

Chattervox Voice Amplifier Kit from Technical Solutions Australia $530

EchoVoice EV7 Speech Amplifier from Spectronics $870

Devices aimed at teachers and tour guides:

Chiayo iTour Personal Voice Amplifier from Sound Gear $249

Winbridge Bluetooth Voice Amplifier for Teachers WB002 from Woolworths $161.95

ZOWEETEK Voice Amplifier Wireless for Teachers- Rose Gold from BIG W $197.95

SpeakEasy Portable Voice Amplifier from TechXpress $170

Voice Amplifier - Black (Platinum Wireless) from thincproducts $268

Outcome Measures

Patient Reported

- Communicative Effectiveness Survey (CES)

Donovan, N.J. et.al.(2008).The Communicative Effectiveness Survey; Preliminary Evidence of Construct Validity. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 17, 335 -347.

- Voice Activity and Participation Profile (VAPP)

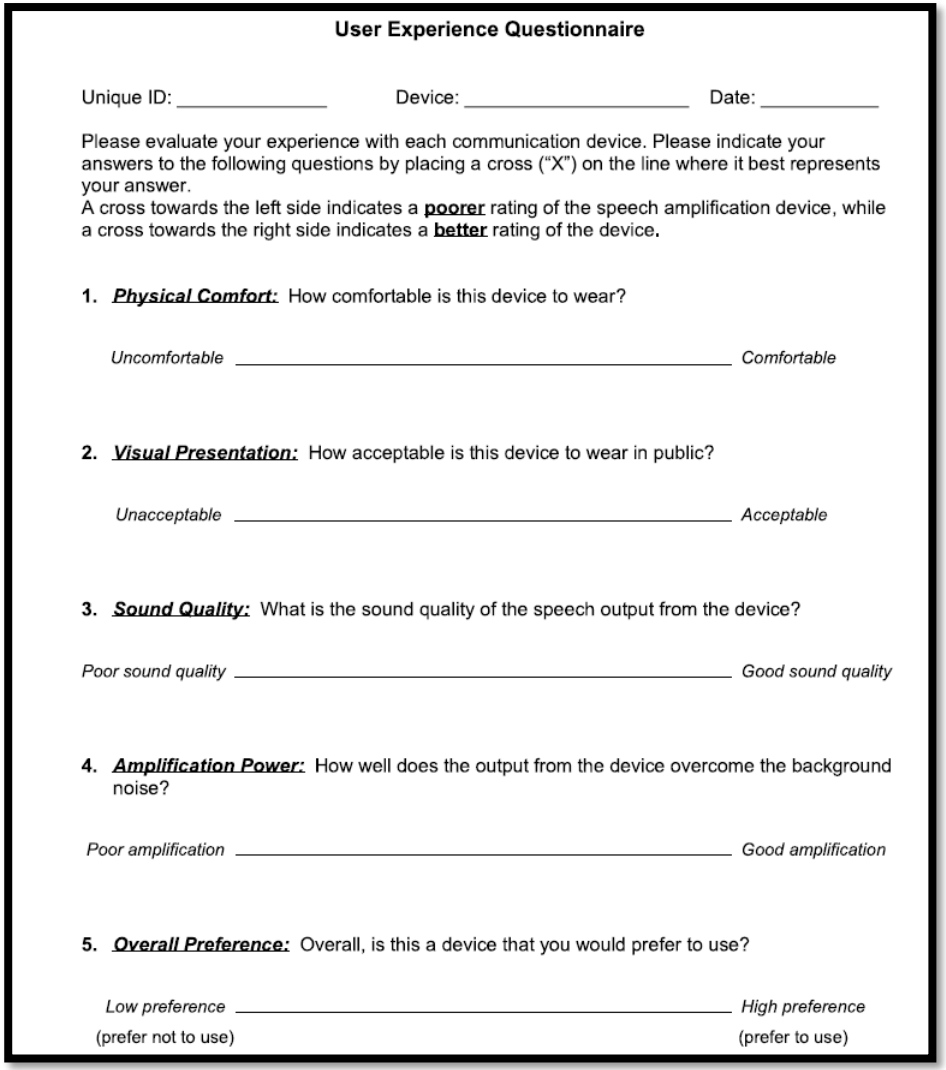
Ma, E.P-M. & You, E. M-L. (2001). *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 44, 511-524.

- Voice Handicap Index

Jacobson, B. H. et.al. (1997). The Voice Handicap Index (VHI): Development and Validation. *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 6(3), 66 – 70. https://doi.org/10.1044/1058-0360.0603.66

Objective

- Signal to Noise Ratio
- Speech Intensity
- Speech Intelligibility



User Experience Questionnaire

Unique ID: _____ Device: _____ Date: _____

Please evaluate your experience with each communication device. Please indicate your answers to the following questions by placing a cross ("X") on the line where it best represents your answer.
A cross towards the left side indicates a **poorer** rating of the speech amplification device, while a cross towards the right side indicates a **better** rating of the device.

1. ***Physical Comfort:*** How comfortable is this device to wear?

Uncomfortable _____ *Comfortable*

2. ***Visual Presentation:*** How acceptable is this device to wear in public?

Unacceptable _____ *Acceptable*

3. ***Sound Quality:*** What is the sound quality of the speech output from the device?

Poor sound quality _____ *Good sound quality*

4. ***Amplification Power:*** How well does the output from the device overcome the background noise?

Poor amplification _____ *Good amplification*

5. ***Overall Preference:*** Overall, is this a device that you would prefer to use?

Low preference _____ *High preference*
(prefer not to use) (prefer to use)

Patient Reported Outcomes for Voice Amplifiers

Andreetta, M.D. et.al. (2016). Evaluation of Speech Amplification Devices in Parkinson's Disease. American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology, 25, 29-45.

Knowles, T. et. al. (2020). A Comparison of Speech Amplification and Personal Communication Devices for Hypophonia. Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research, 63, 2695-2712.

Free Voice Amplifier Apps Linked with a Speaker

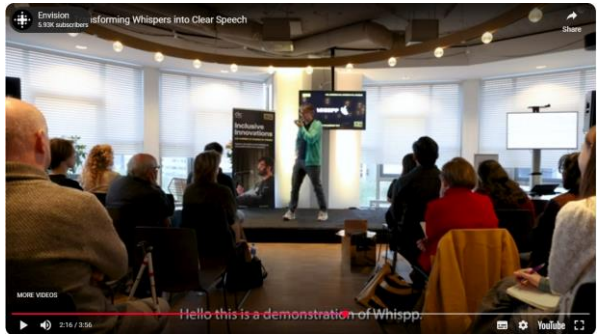
Queensland Health

- Volume Booster
- Mic to Speaker
- Microphone
- Simple Megaphone
- Volume Booster and Sound Booster
- Volume Booster – Sound Booster

Samsung Smartphone

MegaBoom 3 Speaker

Whispp app



[Whispp: Transforming Whispers into Clear Speech - YouTube]

[Assistive Voice Technology – Whispp]

- Free app available on Apple phone and Android phone
- Need an Internet connection
- Uses audio-to-audio based AI
- ‘Converts soft or affected speech into loud and clear speech in a voice of your choice’
- Making calls with Whispp is not an option at the moment in Australia

Trial:

- Voices were American (but can make a personalised voice)
- Recording took 2 ½ minutes to speak

Transcription Apps

Live Transcribe & notification

Speech Recognition solutions for people with non-standard speech

Project Relate - a Beta App from Google

voiceitt

Stand alone Web app

Certificate of Attendance

Thank you!

Complete the webinar feedback form to receive a certificate of attendance.

MASS-Education@health.qld.gov.au

MASS-SpecialisedServices@health.qld.gov.au