

TD Pilot Feature Matching and Clinical Rationale



This clinical rationale guide is intended to assist the AT prescriber in understanding key device features and why they may or may not be important for a particular user. The points listed in this document are examples only and will not apply to every user. Emphasis has been placed on identifying individual and environmental factors that may influence the choice of one device over another, supporting long-term and sustainable use.

How to Use This Guide

Use this guide throughout the AAC trial process. From the list of features, select a device feature to explore what it is and why it may be important for the user.

Assess

During the assessment phase, use this guide in conjunction with the [Link Assistive Feature Matching Framework](#) and product comparison charts. [Eye Gaze Device Comparison Chart](#). This guide provides common examples of the practical application of features.

Compare

When comparing devices, prescribers and users can identify examples relevant to their needs. These examples may highlight why one device is more suitable than another for achieving communication goals.

Fund

During the AT prescription and funding application process, use this guide to build a clear rationale for device recommendations. The AT prescriber can highlight relevant examples to help build their rationale for recommending a particular device when completing applications.

Features of the TD Pilot

Select a device feature to explore what it is and why it may be important for the user.

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Dedicated Device

Specifics

The TD Pilot is designed to function as a dedicated iOS-based communication solution. One of the key features is that it does not require an iTunes or Apple ID account to operate.

Whilst it is possible to use an iTunes account on the TD Pilot, it is not necessary. The preinstalled TD software means that users can start using their communication device with no downloads from the Apple Store, and updates occur automatically. This makes the TD Pilot a truly dedicated iOS communication system.

Why this feature may be important for the user

Simplified Onboarding

- Users can begin using the device immediately out of the box, without needing to create or log into an Apple ID.
- This removes a common technical barrier for users, families, therapists, and support staff who may not be familiar with Apple's ecosystem or who wish to avoid linking personal accounts to a clinical device.

Reduced Risk of Misuse

- Without an Apple ID, users cannot easily download unrelated or recreational apps (e.g., games, YouTube), which helps maintain the device's identity as a dedicated communication tool.
- This reduces the likelihood of the device being repurposed or misused.

Immediate Access to Communication

- Users can begin communicating as soon as the device is powered on—no need to download or configure software from the App Store.
- This is especially valuable during trials or urgent deployments, where time and ease of use are critical.

Automatic Updates via MDM

- The software is managed through **Mobile Device Management (MDM)**, which allows for **automatic updates** and remote support without user intervention.
- This ensures the device remains up to date and secure, reducing the risk of technical issues that could lead to disuse.

Consistency Across Devices

- The preinstalled software is part of the broader Tobii Dynavox ecosystem, allowing for syncing and sharing of pagesets across devices using a myTobiiDynavox account.
- This supports continuity of use across environments (e.g., home, school, therapy), which is a key factor in long-term success.

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Operating System

Specifics

- Dedicated eye gaze device with an iOS operating system.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Likely to feel more intuitive and comfortable for someone already familiar with Apple products. The user doesn't have to learn a completely new system, which reduces cognitive load and frustration, speeds up skill transfer, and increases confidence, making the device more likely to be used consistently and integrated into daily life.
- User and/or support persons may be able to perform independent troubleshooting if they are familiar with the operating system, meaning less time resolving technical issues and less reliance on external supports.
- Support persons are more likely to explore all features of the device if they are already familiar with the iOS system.

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Weight and Portability

Specifics

- The TD Pilot is a lightweight (2 kg), durable speech generating device designed for augmentative and alternative communication.
- A travel bag is included.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- The TD Pilot is light enough for regular adjustment, transport between environments, and mounting to seating systems.
- The travel bag helps protect the device during transport.

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Screen Size

Specifics

- 13" display

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Text and icon size can be adjusted in iOS display settings to meet individual user needs.

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Volume

Specifics

- The TD Pilot has two 10 Watt closed box speakers designed specifically for clear, high-quality voice output.
- Speaker placement is optimised to project sound toward the communication partner, ensuring messages are heard clearly.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Supports communication in a wide range of environments, including pubs and cafés, without limiting where the user can communicate.
- Ensures the user's voice is heard and responded to, which is essential for meaningful interaction, communication development, and reinforcing that their communication efforts are valued.
- Promotes engagement, motivation, and confidence, as consistent feedback from communication partners encourages continued device use.
- Supports effective communication exchanges, reducing communication breakdown and frustration for both the user and their communication partners.
- Supports social participation across a wide range of activities and environments despite background noise.
- Being able to communicate clearly and be understood enhances confidence, social connection, and emotional well-being, encouraging sustained use of the device.

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Partner Window

Specifics

- The communication partner window is a secondary screen located on the back of the TD Pilot. It displays the user's message for communication partners.
- It can be toggled on or off, with options such as "show text while speaking" or "ellipsis while typing", giving the user control over what communication partners can see.

Why this feature may be important for the user

Enhanced Visibility of Communication

- Helps the communication partner recognise when the user is constructing a message and needs time to finish.
- Supports face-to-face interaction and discourages communication partners from looking over the user's shoulder.
- Reduces misunderstandings by displaying the typed message.
- Helps avoid frustration caused by partners looking over the user's shoulder or missing cues that a message is coming.

Improved Responsiveness

- By making communication output easy to see and read, it supports timely responses from others, even in noisy or group settings.

Natural Interaction Flow

- Allows for face-to-face engagement during conversations.

Inclusive Social Engagement

- Promotes active participation in conversations across various environments—classrooms, workplaces, meetings, and social gatherings—by reducing barriers to interaction.

Acknowledgment and Value

- Reinforces that the individual's message contributions are important, fostering confidence and social presence.

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Wake on Gaze

Specifics

- The Tobii IS5 eye tracker includes a Wake on Gaze function.
- When the user looks toward the screen, the built-in eye tracker detects their presence and automatically wakes the device from sleep mode without requiring physical touch or partner assistance.
- The user can independently place the device in sleep mode.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Provides immediate and independent access to communication whenever the user is ready to engage.
- Reduces reliance on others to power on the device, supporting autonomy and minimising frustration and waiting time.
- Supports safety by ensuring immediate, independent access to communication in any situation.
- Promotes spontaneous, reliable communication across all environments.

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Battery Life

Specifics

- ~10-hour battery run time

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Supports access to communication device for full work/school day or daily outing.
- Reduces the risk of the device running out of power, preventing communication breakdowns and frustration.
- Sufficient battery supports independence and participation, allowing the user to communicate whenever and wherever needed.

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Durability

Specifics

- The TD Pilot is a dedicated communication device built into a rugged protective case.
- Protected against dust and spraying water (IP53 rating).

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Allows the user to confidently use the device across multiple environments, including outdoor and community settings, without fear of damage.
- Reduces the risk of damage in busy or high-activity environments (e.g., home, classroom, workplace). May suit users who spend time in environments with individuals who may cause unintentional damage to the device, e.g., pulling cords.
- Ensures consistent, dependable access to communication across all settings.
- Reduces the likelihood of the device being damaged or unavailable due to repair needs.
- Improves cost-effectiveness by extending the lifespan of the device and reducing repair or replacement needs.
- Durability is important for devices that will be mounted to a wheelchair and may sustain impact, e.g., knocking into walls.
- May suit users who will be regularly out of the house or participating in activities where there may be increased exposure to dust or moisture.

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Access Options

Specifics

- Eye gaze device with integrated Tobii IS5 Eye Tracker, designed for both indoor and outdoor use, with a track box size of 20 × 15 cm to 35 × 30 cm.
- The TD Pilot can also be operated by touch.
- Compatible with Bluetooth accessories, such as alternative mouse and joystick options.
- Hardware includes two ports for wired switches.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- The Tobii IS5 Eye Tracker ensures reliable tracking even with natural light.
- The track box size allows accurate gaze detection across a wide area, even when the user shifts position or moves within their seating system. This reduces the need for constant repositioning and recalibration, minimising fatigue and frustration.
- The in-built eye tracker reduces setup time and complexity, minimises errors in alignment and positioning, and decreases training demands for communication partners.
- Multiple access options provide flexibility and adaptability for the user's physical needs and environment.
- Offers alternative access options when one access method is not available, supporting consistent use.
- The TD Pilot may suit users requiring dual access, e.g., eye gaze to control cursor and switch to select.
- Switch ports mean that wired switches can be plugged directly into the device for seamless and reliable connection.
- May suit users planning to change access method over time as physical needs change.
- Increases cost-effectiveness and sustainability by meeting both current and future access needs in a single device.

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Robust Vocabulary

Specifics

- TD Talk
- TD Snap (Text, Aphasia, Express, Core First, Motor Plan, PODD, Gateway)
- Option to utilise iOS keyboards for different languages.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Provides communication software and page sets suited to a wide range of users.
- Options for text and symbol communicators.
- Customisable page set options to match the person's linguistic, cognitive, sensory, and motor abilities support communication success and motivation to keep using the device.
- May suit users who already use TD Talk or TD Snap on their iPad.

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Distance Communication

Specifics

- Wi-Fi
- Bluetooth for iPhone
- The TD Pilot allows full access to the whole iPadOS and installed apps through eye gaze access.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- The user can make phone calls and send text messages when their iPhone is nearby, helping them maintain social connection and independence for longer.
- The user can continue to use iOS apps for SMS, MMS, social media, and email that they are already familiar with. It's not new software for them to learn.
- Provides easy access to mainstream apps used by the wider community, which may increase use when friends and family also use those platforms.

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Computer Access and Recreation

Specifics

- Full eye gaze control of the iOS environment and familiar apps through the Assistive Touch menu.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- The user can continue to use familiar iOS apps such as Safari, as well as third-party apps such as Instagram.
- Provides easy access to mainstream apps used by the wider community, which may increase use when friends and family also use those platforms.
- Reduces cognitive load from learning new software.
- Reduces change and disruption to routine.

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Environmental Control

Specifics

- Wi-Fi
- Bluetooth for iPhone
- TD Snap has smart home integration, allowing the device to be connected to smart home appliances

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Provides the user with independent control of their environment, promoting autonomy and reducing reliance on others for everyday activities and tasks.
- Supports access to leisure and daily routines, supporting engagement and quality of life.
- Encourages consistent device use by integrating communication and environmental control in one system, making it more relevant and motivating.
- Enhances participation across settings (home, work, school), supporting functional independence and self-determination.
- Reduces caregiver burden and increases safety, as the user can independently manage aspects of their environment or call for help when needed.
- Adds long-term value and cost-effectiveness by reducing the need for additional assistive technology equipment.

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Mounting and Positioning

Specifics

- The TD Pilot comes with a Readapt mounting plate for attaching the device to Rehadapt mounting systems.
- A DAESSY mount plate can be added for use with DAESSY mounting systems if preferred.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Accurate eye gaze access is only possible when the device is mounted correctly. Inconsistent or inappropriate positioning can disrupt calibration and reduce accuracy.
- Relevant mounting systems ensure the user has continuous access to communication across different environments and seating systems.
- Promotes communication autonomy and safety by maintaining stable and consistent positioning for eye gaze use.
- Reduces the risk of device drops, misalignment, or injury during transfers or repositioning.
- Simplifies setup and handling for caregivers, reducing physical strain and saving time when moving or adjusting the device.

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Technical Support and Warranty

Specifics

- Tobii Dynavox dedicated devices such as the TD Pilot come with a full 5-year care package, including coverage for accidental damage. This helps minimise ongoing costs and provides greater certainty that the client will have a reliable, long-term solution.
- The devices arrive already set up, minimising the amount of setup time required.
- The devices are set up under a Tobii Dynavox MDM system, which allows them to be reset and apps reinstalled, minimising the risk of users being locked out of the device.
- A direct company presence in Australia and New Zealand, together with an accredited repair centre in Australia, allows faster access to repairs and support.

Why this feature may be important for the user

5-Year Warranty

- Minimises financial risk for families and organisations by covering repair or replacement costs for five years.
- Ensures continuity of use, as devices can be repaired or replaced without significant delays or unexpected expenses.
- Encourages adoption by reducing concerns about long-term viability and maintenance costs.

Authorised repair centre in Australia

- Quicker repair times, reducing the duration a user is without their communication device.
- Less disruption to communication routines, which is critical for users who rely on AAC for daily interaction.
- Increased trust in the device's reliability and the provider's commitment to local support.

Ongoing Assistance

Technical support is available via phone, email, and online booking through Head Office in Adelaide. This includes:

- Device setup and troubleshooting for both trial and purchased devices.
- Support throughout the full warranty period, ensuring users and support teams are never left without help.
- Flexible access to support via multiple channels, including scheduled sessions that allow for better preparation and efficiency.

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Clinical Support

Specifics

- Each TD Pilot device includes a 1-hour remote setup session with a clinical team member. This session provides personalised assistance to set up the device to meet the user's individual communication and access needs.
- Clinical team members can share relevant resources, training, and implementation materials to help the user, communication partners, and therapists use and maintain the device with confidence.
- Eye gaze accessible manual within TD CoPilot.
- Access to the Tobii Dynavox Learning Hub through a myTD account.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Builds confidence in using and supporting the device.
- Promotes consistent use by reducing the learning curve.
- Enables proactive troubleshooting, reduces frustration, and supports continued use and long-term outcomes.

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Companion License

Specifics

- Each TD Pilot device comes with two companion licences for TD Snap®, allowing the software to be installed on additional devices such as a family member's iPad or a therapist's tablet. These licences are part of the broader Tobii Dynavox ecosystem and are designed to extend access to communication tools beyond the primary AAC device.

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Family members, educators, and therapists can install the same software on their own devices. This enables them to model language, customise vocabulary, and provide real-time support, which is essential for successful AAC implementation and user engagement.
- When communication partners are equipped with the same tools, they are more confident and proactive in supporting the user. This collaborative environment fosters a sense of shared ownership and supports meaningful connection with communication partners.

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Software for Emergent Users

Specifics

- Compatible with Sensory Eye FX for iOS

Why this feature may be important for the user

- Provides engaging activities to help users learn cause-and-effect, tracking, targeting, and exploring with their eyes.
- Gives therapists and educators insight into a person's visual attention, preferences and eye gaze skills.
- Supports engagement with the device through fun and motivating activities.
- Makes early eye gaze use fun, engaging, and low-pressure.
- Allows users to explore cause-and-effect, develop control, and build confidence with eye gaze before communication demands are introduced.
- This positive, motivating experience helps users associate the device with success and enjoyment, increasing willingness to keep using it as their access and communication skills grow.

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Voice & Message Banking

Specifics

- TD Snap - Acapela MOV, Eleven Labs, The Voice Keeper, Apple Personal Voice (under iOS voices)
- TD Talk - Acapela MOV, Eleven Labs, ModelTalker, The Voice Keeper, Apple Personal Voice

Why this feature may be important for the user

- The user maintains their individual voice and identity.
- Family and friends get to hear a familiar voice.
- May support motivation by making the AAC system feel more authentic and emotionally meaningful to the user and communication partners.

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