



TOOLKIT

THANKS A BUNDLE

Improving support and access
to online telecommunications
products for consumers with
cognitive disabilities

Yvette Maker, Jeannie Marie Paterson, Bernadette McSherry, Lisa Brophy,
Anna Arstein-Kerslake, Alex Callahan and Eugene Teo



Toolkit for suppliers

Toolkit: Easy English factsheets for consumers

Having a cognitive disability can affect a person's ability to learn, concentrate on, process, remember or communicate information. Having a cognitive disability may also affect a person's ability to make decisions. Information available online, over the phone, and in-store is often inaccessible to consumers with cognitive disabilities.

Providing written information in an Easy English format is one way to improve the accessibility of information. This can also help suppliers meet their obligations under the Telecommunications Consumer Protections Code.

This toolkit comprises templates of Easy English factsheets on four key consumer issues:

1. Things to know when buying or signing up for a phone, tablet or internet service
2. Things to know about the cost and how to pay for a device and/or service
3. Things to know when you can't pay for your phone, tablet or internet
4. Things to know when your phone, tablet or internet is not working

Each factsheet is accompanied by a glossary or 'hard words' section, which gives definitions of technical or complex terms.

The content and formatting of the factsheets was developed by the Intellectual Disability Rights Service ('IDRS'). IDRS also arranged testing of the factsheets by four people with intellectual disability. The research team also sought multiple rounds of feedback on the content and readability of the factsheets from People with Disability Australia, the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council ('VMI-AC') and members of the project Advisory Board.

How to adapt the factsheets: four easy steps

The factsheets are designed to be adapted with the specific details and offerings of the company, and to the specific circumstances of the consumer.

1. Add company-specific information

Insert the appropriate telephone number, web address, and other company-specific information where marked with red font and square brackets.

2. Seek image permission

The factsheets use images that are licensed for use by Photosymbols and Shutterstock. Companies should apply directly to Photosymbols and Shutterstock for permission to use the images prior to publication.

For more information, visit <https://www.photosymbols.com> or <https://www.shutterstock.com> or contact the Melbourne Social Equity Institute at social-equity@unimelb.edu.au.

3. Write customer-specific information on the factsheets at the point of sale or other contact with the customer

For example, a salesperson can print factsheet 2 ('how to pay') and write in customised information about the total monthly cost to the customer and how and when the customer can pay.

4. If making major changes to the content, consult an organisation that specialises in Easy English drafting

Intellectual Disability Rights Service: <http://www.idrs.org.au/home/index.php>

Scope: <https://www.scopeaust.org.au/service/accessible-information/>

Tips for making the factsheets as useful as possible

The following steps will ensure that the factsheets are accessible and useful for consumers:

- Add useful information to the factsheets. For example, add phone numbers that lead directly to the appropriate team and/or a staff member with good communication skills and the authority to escalate matters.
- Add clear, easy-to-find links to the factsheets on your website.
- Advise all staff about the availability and purpose of the factsheets.
- Assign responsibility for updating the factsheets to a particular position in the organisation.
- Consult people with cognitive disabilities when making changes.

Other accessibility measures

People with cognitive disabilities are a diverse group with an equally diverse range of needs and preferences. It is important to remember that Easy English information will not meet the needs and preferences of all consumers. For instance, some people might find Easy English information patronising or overly-simplistic. Others may not want written information at all. Alternative formats, such as captioned videos, audio versions and posters, should also be developed to cater to the widest possible audience.

About the toolkit

This toolkit was created by a research team at the University of Melbourne to support good outcomes for consumers with cognitive disabilities by providing practical guidance for telecommunications suppliers to produce accessible information about selecting a phone, tablet or internet service, managing the cost, and what to do when problems arise.

The project was funded by a grant from the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN). The operation of the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.



This work is copyright, licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence, except where indicated above. You are free to cite, copy, communicate and adapt this work, providing you attribute it to the authors and “the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, supported by a grant from the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network”. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Melbourne Social Equity Institute

Website: <https://socialequity.unimelb.edu.au/>

Email: social-equity@unimelb.edu.au

Australian Communications Consumer Action Network

Website: www.accan.org.au

Email: grants@accan.org.au

Telephone: 02 9288 4000

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service: www.relayservice.gov.au.

1 Shopping for a new phone, tablet or internet service

Things you need to know

In this fact sheet **hard words** are in **bold**

You can find the meaning of hard words at the end of the factsheet

It is important to get the right information
to get what you need



phone



tablet



internet service



You do not want to be stuck in a **plan** that costs too much



It can be hard to get out of a plan once you sign for it



Before you sign up to a plan



- talk to more than 1 company



- look around in different stores



- look on different websites



You **do not** have to sign up for something today



Before you decide



- ask questions like



how much will it cost



what will I get

how many calls

how much **data**



- think about it at home



- talk about it with a **support person**

You can ask your **support person** to



- help you look around at different stores or websites



- help you ask questions



- help you decide what you want to buy

If your **support person** isn't doing what you want you can



- choose someone else to support you
- make the decision without any help



If you feel stress, tell the sales person



- you need more time



- you need to talk to your **support person**



- you need more information

If you still feel stress you can



- hang up



- walk out



You can get information about what you want to buy



- talk to someone in our shop



- phone us *[supplier to add how to get through to a helpful person]*



- look at our internet site *[supplier to add internet link]*



- send us an email or talk on our website *[supplier to add internet link]*



- ask for a printed copy of any information that we tell you



You can ask us to contact your **support person** and explain things to them

Hard words



internet service

you pay for this so you can use the internet
at home



plan is a **contract** you sign to agree to buy
phone or internet



- usually paid monthly

you can ask to pay weekly or **fortnightly**

fortnightly is every 2 weeks



support person is someone you trust
to help you



tablet

a flat, hand held device like

- iPad
- Samsung Galaxy
- Microsoft Surface



data

amount of internet you can use for

- watching TV or movies
- listening to music
- reading emails

like: 15GB of data

2 Paying for a phone tablet or internet service

Things you need to know

In this fact sheet **hard words** are in **bold**

You can find the meaning of hard words at the end of the fact sheet

When you sign up for a



- phone
- **tablet**
- **internet plan**

you have to pay for



- calls



- texts
- **data**

You may also have to pay for



- phone



- tablet



- internet modem

When do I pay



- most people have to pay every month



We will send you a

- bill
- email
- text

so you know when to pay

Paper bills cost extra money



How do I pay

You can pay in different ways *[supplier to include all available options.]*



- **Direct Debit** – we will take money from your account every month

direct debit only works if you have enough money in your account to pay



- pay through our *supplier* website or app



- **BPay** – online banking



- phone *[supplier to add phone number]*



- at the post office



- other ways – check with us



If a **guardian** or **administrator** manages your money you will need to talk to them

How much can I pay



Before you decide to buy an item or sign up for a **plan**, it is a good idea to make a **budget**



A **budget** is a list of things you need to pay for like

- food
- clothes
- rent
- bills



A **budget** also says how much money you get each month so you know how much to spend



If you have questions about



- how much money you can spend



- your **guardian**
or **administrator**



call **Financial Counselling** Australia on
1800 007 007



You can get information about how to pay in many ways



- talk to someone in our shop



- phone us *[supplier to add how to get through to a helpful person]*



- look at our internet site *[supplier to add internet link]*



- send us an email or talk on our website *[supplier to add internet link]*



- ask for a printed copy of any information that we tell you



You can ask us to contact your **support person** and explain things to them

Hard words



BPay

online bill payment with
bank

you have to pay every time

this is different from direct debit



data

amount of internet you can use for

- watching TV or movies
- listening to music
- reading emails

like: 15GB of data



direct debit

we take money out of your bank account
every month

direct debit only works if you have enough
money in your account to pay

this is different from BPay



financial counsellor

someone who helps you manage money



- budgets
- spending money
- saving money



guardian or administrator

a person who can legally make decisions for you including about money



internet modem

a device that lets you connect to the internet using telephone wire



internet service

you pay for this so you can use the internet at home



plan is a **contract** you sign

to agree to buy phone or internet



- usually paid monthly

you can ask to pay weekly or **fortnightly**

fortnightly is every 2 weeks



support person

someone you trust to help you

tablet

a flat hand held device like

- iPad
- Samsung Galaxy
- Microsoft Surface



3 When you can't pay for your phone tablet or internet

Things you need to know

In this fact sheet **hard words** are in **bold**

You can find the meaning of hard words at the end of the fact sheet



You should tell us if you are having
money problems



if you don't tell us we might cut off
your phone or internet



We might be able to help you



- put you on a **payment plan**

this means you pay little amounts
each week



- change your **plan**



- put limits on your phone or
internet

this might mean people can only
call you



- give you the name of a group who can pay part of your bill



If you need more help call

Financial Counselling Australia

1800 007 007



They might be able to

- tell you what to do if you have money problems



You can get information about money problems and how to pay in many ways



- talk to someone in our shop



- phone us *[supplier to add how to get through to a helpful person]*



- look at our internet site *[supplier to add internet link]*



- send us an email or talk to us on the website *[supplier to add internet link]*



- ask for a printed copy of any information that we tell you



You can ask us to contact your
support person and explain things to them



If you are not happy with our help
you can contact



**Telecommunications Industry
Ombudsman**

You can make a complaint about
phone or internet suppliers



- phone 1800 062 058



- use the **National Relay Service** if you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment

<http://www.relayservice.gov.au>



- write a letter

PO Box 276

Collins Street West

Victoria 8007



- online

<http://www.tio.com.au/making-a-complaint>

Hard words



financial counsellor

someone who helps you manage money

- budgets
- spending money
- saving money



internet service



you pay for this so you can use

the internet at home



payment plan

you only pay little amounts each week

and only what you can afford



plan

plan is a **contract** you sign

to agree to buy phone or internet



- usually paid monthly

you can ask to pay weekly or **fortnightly**

fortnightly is every 2 weeks



support person

someone you trust to help you



tablet

a flat hand held device like

- iPad
- Samsung Galaxy
- Microsoft Surface



Telecommunications Industry

Ombudsman

where you can make a complaint
about phone or internet suppliers

4 When your phone tablet or internet is not working

Things you need to know

In this fact sheet **hard words** are in **bold**

You can find the meaning of hard words at the end of the fact sheet



If your phone **tablet** or internet is not working
call us on *[supplier to add phone number]* and
we will try to



- fix the problem
- give you a new phone or **tablet**
- give you your money back



If you need more help call

**Australian Competition and Consumer
Commission (ACCC)**

1300 302 502



they have an Easy English fact sheet

Your Rights When You Buy Something

[https://www.accc.gov.au/publications/your-
rights-when-you-buy-something](https://www.accc.gov.au/publications/your-rights-when-you-buy-something)



If you have a problem



- talk to someone in our shop



- phone us *[supplier to add how to
get through to a helpful person]*



- look at our internet site *[supplier to add internet link]*



- send us an email or talk to us on the website *[supplier to add internet link]*



- ask for a printed copy of any information that we tell you



You can ask us to contact your **support person** and explain things to them



If you are not happy with our help
you can contact



Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman



you can make a complaint about
phone or internet suppliers



- phone 1800 062 058



- use the **National Relay Service** if
you are deaf or have a hearing or
speech impairment

<http://www.relayservice.gov.au>



- write a letter

PO Box 276

Collins Street West

Victoria 8007



- online

<http://www.tio.com.au/making-a-complaint>

Hard words



Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC)

where you can get information about your rights when you buy something



internet service

you pay for this so you can use the internet at home



plan

plan is a **contract** you sign to agree to buy phone or internet



- usually paid monthly

you can ask to pay weekly or **fortnightly**

fortnightly is every 2 weeks



support person

someone you trust to help you



tablet

a flat hand held device like

- iPad
- Samsung Galaxy
- Microsoft Surface



Telecommunications Industry

Ombudsman

where you can make a complaint
about phone or internet suppliers