

# I HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY: STAYING CURRENT WITH MOBILE APPS TO ENHANCE COMMUNICATION AFTER STROKE

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# In just 60 minutes, you will...

- Explore the never-ending possibilities of mobile technology and communication
- Discover the potential for integrating mobile technology to make your life easier and to enrich the lives of those you care for – along each point of the stroke care continuum
- Build up your (CF) "coolness factor" with your family, colleagues, patients/clients and their families when they see you whipping out your tablet or phone to come up with a novel way of stimulating or supporting communication
- Feel free to share with me the apps that YOU have used in your practice

# The New Normal

- Electronic documentation is nearly everywhere
- The latest and greatest technology is getting into the hands of young and older alike
- New websites and mobile apps get developed faster than you can say "Stroke prevention"
- Chances are, most of the information I give you will be dated by next week (but at least you will have a head start...)

# True Confession #1 – I am an iPad addict

- I am very comfortable with technology, and always eager to learn the next best thing available
- I have no Conflict of Interest to disclose – Apple has paid me nothing, and I apologize to all Android users out there. I only can afford one device, and this is it. Many of the apps are compatible with both systems.
- I also lean heavily on apps that have the inviting word FREE next to them in the iStore (but there are definitely a few that are worth shelling out a few dollars for)

# I am, however, not under the spell totally

- These are TOOLS, not substitutes for quality, SUPPORTED conversation
- They can act as supports in themselves, but they should never be seen as THE THING that absolutely everyone needs
- It is very easy to get lulled and seduced by technology
- So rather than say this over and over, before each slide, I will say it once – these are pieces of the puzzle that must take into account the person with communication impairment, their preferences, their needs, and the environment that surrounds them

## True Confession #2: This is MY stroke

If you are interested,  
search Care that matters  
to you: Audrey's Story on  
YouTube



# And now to the apps

- This is not to be treated as an all-inclusive list. There are hundreds of resources out there.
- My goal is to introduce the apps that my colleagues and I have used, and to group them into their into some coherent manner
- It is also important to note that everyone on the interprofessional team can use these resources – this is not the sole domain of speech-language pathologists (but definitely feel free to consult with one so that you can identify the apps that best suit the needs of the individual stroke survivor)
- I also gravitate to adult resources (lots of kids' stuff out there)

In the ED (and later...) What if they have aphasia, dysarthria, or other communication barrier...

- SmallTalk ICU (Lingraphica)
  - Free
  - Easy
  - Voice output (male or female)
  - Fully customizable (can select the messages to limit the amount of scrolling)
- SmallTalk Pain (visual pain scale)



# AAC – Augmentative and alternative communication tools

- A treasure trove and a minefield
  - Many options at a variety of price points for a variety of abilities
  - Decisions to purchase depend on an exhaustive assessment of the person and their social environment

# AAC Options (with all the cautions)

- **Proloquo2go** - \$219.00
  - Highly customizable and likely most comfortable for those of us who were trained on dedicated speech output devices
- **Proloquo2text** -159.99
  - Intact literacy required
- **TalkRocket** (\$99 this week on sale) and **RocketKeys** (\$159.99 text app – have heard raves about it))
  - All Canadian and great customer support
  - TalRocket has a built-in GPS feature and customizes vocabulary to the types of businesses that are detected
- **Predictable** (\$159.99)
  - Social media linkages; funky interface that appeals to the younger set

# Budget options

- **ClaroCom** - \$2.99 for lite version; \$13.99 for PRO version
  - Handy phrases, can be deleted to include just a few in each category or saved into "favourites"
  - Cannot add any phrases in lite version
- **Speak It!** - \$1.99
  - Requires good literacy/cognition
  - Someone else can load any content, but very small piece of it is readable for searching
  - Can customize accent, speed and font; limitless storage
  - Can upload any text from the Internet, and it will read it out (for those with reading difficulties)

# Therapy Helpers

- **Language TherAppy** – free lite sample
  - Variety of app bundles \$59.99-\$129.99 or from \$14.99-\$34.99 for individual modalities (categories, reading, writing, comprehension, etc.)
- **Lingraphica** – free sample, or sign up for account
  - Listening, speaking, reading, writing activities for independent practice
- **Bitsboard** (free to start)
  - Includes flash cards, true and false, memory, odd one out, letter tracing, etc. (surprisingly adult-friendly)
- **MyScript Memo** (free) – for writing practice PLUS converts it to print for saving/sending

# Voice and Breath Support

- **Bla Bla Bla** (\$1.99)
  - Great for voice presence awareness and loudness feedback (has no marketing as such)
- **Free Candle** – blow candle on screen; **Bagpipes** (blow into microphone and play the bagpipes)
  - Blowing, lip rounding, breath support
- **Breathe2Relax** – free
  - Instruction for abdominal breathing and guided breath//relaxation practice

# Dysarthria: Guidance and Feedback

- **SmallTalk Phonemes** (free)
- **SmallTalk Oral Motor Exercises** (Free) – with your SLP guidance on use and efficacy
  - Great videos and a very wide range of exercises
- **Speech Trainer 3D** - \$7.99
  - Abounds with irony that the avatar who introduces you to the program has a bizarre accent/speech feature
  - Shows frontal and cutaway production of sounds in isolation, and allows for client to see self in the screen next to the avatar
  - Good for independent practice for very severe dysarthria

# Real World Conversation Helpers

- **Around Me** (free)
  - GPS locator
  - Lists services nearby
  - Links to useful information (e.g., movie listings, restaurant reviews)
- **Flipp** (free)
  - All the store flyers you could ever wish for – current and local
  - Excellent for vocabulary, categorization, and just useful information
- **SmallTalk Conversational Phrases** (free)
  - Lists and videos for use and for practice
- **EggTimer** – such an amazing little tool - free

# Self-Advocacy and Life History-Telling

- **SmallTalk Aphasia** (free)
  - Talking about stroke and its effects
- **SmallTalk Dysphagia** (free)
  - Describes diet textures strategies the individual requires
- **Keynote** (\$9.99) or **PowerPoint** (for Mac or Android, as part of Microsoft Office software)
  - Can be used to build autobiographical pages with pictures and stories
- **Pictello** - \$9.99
  - Personalize stories with pictures
  - Has word prediction for person to write their own narrative



# Calendars and other utilities that foster independence

- Calendar app that comes with device
- **Cozi** (free and upgrades)
  - Allows families to synch schedules, to-do lists, grocery lists, journals, etc.
- Built-in camera In devices
  - Use to take pictures of the menu from the restaurant you ate at, screenshots or clips of TV shows you watched

# Cognition and language - games and beyond (too many to name)

- **Lumosity** (free to start)
- **Word Wall, Word Stack, Word Ant, 94 Seconds, WordMania, Word to Word, Chicktionary, Hangman, Psychobabble, Red Herring, Word Association, Word Solitaire,, Chain of Thought** (my personal favorite)
- Executive function, visuospatial games: **Dots, 2048, Follow Me** (like the board game Simon)
- And on and on and on

# Other apps that can help clients reduce risk of stroke recurrence and work on reading/writing at the same time

- Diabetes App Lite (free)
  - Extremely easy to use
  - Charts blood glucose, meds, etc., throughout the day
  - Can improve compliance once at home
- QuitPro – smoking cessation tool – free
  - Allows person to take control of smoking, and to see how much money is saved
- Blood Pressure Companion Free
  - Allows one to record and track blood pressure

# Online Resource for Fatigue

- [www.healthywomen.org/article/fatigue-severity-scale-fss](http://www.healthywomen.org/article/fatigue-severity-scale-fss)
- Fatigue is a REAL and largely unexplored area in stroke research
- We need to not only recognize but help stroke survivors to cope with fatigue – this can be a vital link to communication and overall wellness

# Apps that can help you

- **Simple Whiteboard** (free)
  - Treeless way to draw and interact
  - NOT a great idea for Supported Conversation, as paper is infinitely better (messages are not saveable on whiteboards)
- **Choiceboard** creator (free)
  - You can store limitless choice boards

# And so many more!

- Still looking? Consult with your team. Contact me: [browna1@providencecare.ca](mailto:browna1@providencecare.ca)
- Use this list as a start and explore
- You are the link to expanding the knowledge and awareness of your patient and their families
- Stay up-to-date! It's a challenge! You can do it!