Beyond Limits provides policies and procedures to promote safe and consistent practice across the Organisation. The framework laid down within our policies and procedures lets everyone know how we work and reflects our values and mission statement. Our policies and procedures are written to help us, employees of Beyond Limits, to make good, safe decisions.

Beyond Limits expects all employees to be familiar with the contents of all policies and procedures relevant to their role and to understand how to apply them within their daily work.

None of these documents stand alone, all fit within the larger framework of the way we work and any associated policies which are particularly relevant will be directly referenced.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology Policy – what this means to Beyond Limits

Beyond Limits has a commitment to the people we support to find ways to improve their quality of life by reducing reliance on paid support, when other forms of support may enable a person to be more independent and valued in their community. All employees will be expected to keep up to date with the types of Assistive Technology (AT) available that may be of use to the person they support.

We all use AT in our everyday lives, if you think about it we will use technology to help us remember things (alarms, reminders on our phones), to help us get to places (Satellite Navigation), to make things work in our homes (remote controls to open curtains, close doors and alert us to risks) and now with applications on phones and other devices we are able to do a whole host of things without relying on another person to support us.

Procedure – what we should do:

When we are supporting people, we should always be thinking of how we can enable them to do things for themselves without relying on paid support. It is therefore vital that when planning and reviewing someone’s service, the use of Assistive Technology must be considered as a way of reducing a person’s reliance on paid support. People have an Individual Service Fund and this
money is to be used creatively to promote the person’s independence. The more innovative the team is the better.

We will always consider the full range of AT available to everyone (whether they have a disability or not). Many devices and apps are now ideal for someone with communication needs, but are not necessarily specifically for someone with a disability; for example, the iPad is easy to use and is a desired product.

There is of course some specialist AT that will help people with health or mobility problems become more independent which should not be discounted.

Some AT may require best interest decisions to be made before they are used as there may be consent and ethical issues, especially if it will in anyway restrict a person’s freedom, privacy or human rights. For example, some alarms restrict people’s movements. You should look at Beyond Limits Capacity Policy to check on the procedure and only spend the persons on AT once this has been agreed by all necessary parties.

Types of Assistive Technology Include:

- **Alarms and Pagers**: To monitor continence, epilepsy, falls, or where someone is in their environment. Also, to detect smoke, gas and alarms to alert that a cooker is still on.
- **In the Kitchen**: Hobs that cool down immediately, kettles that hold only a cup full of water, tipping aids, apps for boiling an egg, timers, digital photo frames or iPad for showing pictures or video recipes.
- **Bathroom**: Alarm to say when water is going to overflow, epilepsy alarms or alarms if a person goes under the water.
- **Communication Aids**: iPhones that have apps for texting, talking to people, showing people what you want, Skype, scanner readers, computers that have touch screens, FaceTime/Skype for long distance face to face conversations, speech to text and voice recognition or phones that have pictures on so that a person can speed dial.
- **Fingerprint or recognition locks**: For people who have difficulties with keys and locks.
- **Medication technology**: Pill reminder pots for the person, alerts to remind the person if they miss a dose, text or voice mail reminder to a mobile phone.
- **Telecare**: This is ruled by specific legislative requirements. If required, Beyond Limits would refer to a reputable company for advice.
- **Aids and Adaptations**: Bath aids to get in and out of the bath, stair lifts and hoists and slings, grab rails, ramps and lifts and adapted cars. All these types of aids and adaptations
would be discussed with an Occupational Therapist before purchase to ensure they are right for the needs of the person being supported.

- **General Smart Enabled Devices:** These include voice command devices like smart speakers, phones, tablets (Alexa, Siri, Google). Smart enabled devices such as Nest, Hive and Google Home. This is a constantly evolving area with new products and ideas being introduced on a regular basis so you should consider researching this area and discuss with your team, person you support and other professionals.