

Barriers and Facilitators to Implementing Workplace Accommodations for Adults Who Require AAC: A Systematic Review



Employment has personal and financial benefits, and can contribute to quality of life.

Individuals who require AAC face additional challenges in employment and experience lower employment rates than the general population and general disability community.

There are several barriers to employment for people who use AAC, including societal attitudes, physical environment, and challenges related to communication.

Many supports, including workplace accommodations, are needed to enable participation in employment for people with disabilities including those who use AAC.

Blackory & Wagner, 1996; Blackstone, 1993; Bryen et al., 2006; Bryen et al., 2007; Carey et al., 2004; Light et al., 1996; Lindsay et al., 2018; McNaughton & Bryen, 2002; McNaughton et al., 2002; Odom & Upthegrove, 1997; McNaughton et al., 2001; Padkapayeva et al., 2017; Soloveiva et al., 2011



to analyze research evidence on barriers and facilitators to implementing workplace accommodations for adults who require AAC
identify implications for future research and practice

any personal or environment factor that prevented or negatively impacted the implementation of workplace accommodations

any personal or environmental factor that supported access to and use of workplace accommodations

an adjustment to a work environment that enables an individual to perform their job duties
specialized equipment, modifications to work environment, adjustments to schedules or responsibilities (US Dept. Of Labor, n.d.)

AAC-related terms AND
Workplace accommodations-related terms

Individuals over 19 years of age who use AAC
Perspectives and Experiences
Workplace Accommodations

CINAHL, EMBASE, Engineering Village,
Global Health, HAPI, MEDLINE, PsycINFO,
REHABDATA, and Web of Science

(a) peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings published in English up to February 2021;
(b) explore or describe the barriers and facilitators of workplace accommodations for adults who use AAC;
(c) studies about internships, paid jobs or mandatory work programs;
(d) the perspectives and experiences of employees who use AAC, employers, employment specialists, job developers, or coaches or similar
(f) individuals seeking jobs, have been employed, or returning to work, and
(g) employees with new or changing accommodations during their employment.

studies imported for screening



studies screened



full-

2 independent raters used the Oxford level of evidence and the Grading of Recommendations Assessment, Development and Evaluation (GRADE) system (Guyatt et al., 2009).

17 qualitative studies with small number of participants; most addressed employment experiences based on diagnosis, type of employment or assistive and communication technologies.

More research is needed to address the implementation and effectiveness of workplace accommodations for people who require AAC.

Barriers and facilitators to workplace accommodations exist both of the workplace.

Examples of external factors: preparation for employment, support services, societal attitudes, and transportation

Examples of internal factors: availability of resources, access to technology, workplace policies, employers and co-workers

It would be beneficial to increase supports in the areas of career preparation, training, and transition to adulthood.

Technology was commonly identified as a facilitator however technological issues, unreliability, and ineffectiveness were barriers.

To reduce technological barriers, it is important for manufacturers, designers, and consultants to understand the technological issues faced by adults who require AAC in order to improve accessibility and functionality of assistive technology accordingly.

The findings of this review illustrate that personal factors seem to be shared by most people but some environmental factors are unique to people who require AAC. The interaction between personal and environmental factors is critical to consider.

Addressing barriers and facilitators to implementing workplace accommodations is complex and therefore addressing both environmental and personal factors requires a holistic, interdisciplinary approach from career preparation to employment and through employment.

Reference List available as a Google document: <https://bit.ly/3rxQ17i>