AT Training at IHE’s - What’s Happening?

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TED/TAM Conference
San Diego, CA
November 10, 2006
NATRI

- Overview of NATRI
- Training of AT Practitioners
- Institutes of Higher Education Study
  - Methods
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  - Summary & Questions
Overview of NATRI

What is NATRI?

National Assistive Technology Research Institute
NATRI

Background

- Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
- Cooperative Agreement
- Funded October 1, 2000
- 4 year project - extended for 18 months
- $2.8 million award
- Jane Hauser - Project Officer
NATRI

Project Goals

• To examine factors related to the planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of AT services in schools

• To disseminate the findings of the research in ways that will assist school personnel to develop or improve AT policies and practices for students with disabilities
7 Proposed Research Areas

1- Status of AT use in schools and the role it provides in education

2- Policies & procedures in the development and delivery of AT services

3- AT decision-making by IEP teams

4- Integration of AT use in learning environments (facilitate instruction, access to curriculum)

5- Effects of AT use on academic, social, functional performance of students

6- Training and technical support needed by persons implementing AT

7- Extent to which IHEs are developing AT knowledge and skills
State Case Study
Subjects

AT Service Providers

- 216 AT Service Providers
- Served as NATRI data collectors
- Representing 9 states
- 41 school districts
Education of AT Personnel

Areas of Study

- 43% Special Education
- 29% Speech/Communication
- 28% General Education
- 25% Occupational Therapy
- 17% Other - Unrelated
- 6% Education Administration
- 5% Instructional Technology
Job Titles

Percent of AT Service Providers by Position

N = 216

- AT/AAC
- Teacher
- SLP
- OT
- Tech
AT Certification

Certification

• 15% Have an AT Certificate
• 4% Working Toward AT Certificate

Professional Development Activities

• 69% belong to professional organizations
• 32% belong to listservs
Additional Education

Professional Development Activities

- Conferences (CSUN, CTG)
- Local/state workshops
- University courses
- Device-specific training
- Vendor training
Assistive Technology in Higher Education Survey
Subjects

Chairpersons of SE, OT, PT, SLP programs

- 1489 surveys mailed with reminder postcards sent 10 days later
  - 15 Undeliverable
  - 43 Returned - None of the Target Programs
- 1441 surveys
  - 231 Completed the Survey
  - 16% Completed Return Rate
Demographic Information
Program

Percent of IHEs by Discipline

N = 231

- Special Ed.
- SLP
- OT
- PT
- Other
N = 231

Institution

Percent of Public/Private

- Public
- Private
- No Response

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Question 1  Types of Degrees

What degrees are offered in this program?

Program as identified in the demographic information - Special Education, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Speech Language Pathology
Degrees

Percent of IHEs by Degree Type

N = 231

Associate
Bachelor
Master
Specialist
Doctorate
Question 2  Status of AT Instruction

Check the item that most accurately represents the status of AT instruction in this graduate and undergraduate program.

• We do not see the necessity
• Not providing & no plans in the next 5 years
• Not providing but plans are underway
• Not in this program - in other departments or units
• We are offering some instruction about AT
• Strong instructional offerings in AT
Status of AT Instruction

Percentage of Responses for Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

U = 136  G = 1

- **No Need**
- **NP/No Plans**
- **NP/Plans**
- **NP/Other Dept**
- **Some AT**
- **Strong AT**
Question 3 AT Devices

Check the item that best describes the availability of AT devices for use in proving instruction about AT in your curricula

- No AT devices
- A limited number of AT devices
- An adequate number of AT devices
- An optimum number of AT devices
Availability of AT Devices

Percentage of Responses for Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

- **U = 137**
- **G = 1**

- **None**
- **Limited**
- **Adequate**
- **Optimum**
Question 4 Instructional Materials

Check the item that best describes the availability of instructional material containing information AT that can be used when providing AT instruction.

• No instructional material
• A limited number AT instructional materials
• An adequate array of AT instructional materials
• An optimum array of AT instructional materials
Availability of AT Materials

Percentage of Responses for Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

U = 140  G = 1
Question 5  AT Courses

Check the items that best describe the courses in which AT instruction is provided. Instruction about AT is:

- Not being provided to our students
- Provided in stand-alone courses
- Integrated into existing courses
- Provided in both stand-alone and integrated courses
AT Courses

Percentage of Responses

N = 222

Not Provided

Stand-Alone

Integrated

Both
Question 6  AT Specialization

Do you offer your students an AT emphasis (specialization) within their degree program?

Undergraduate Level

Graduate Level
AT Specialization

Percentage of Responses

N = 228

- Undergraduate
- Graduate
- Neither
Question 7  Functional Areas

Which of the following functional areas are likely to be addressed as students learn about AT devices in your program through courses or practicum experiences.

Selecting or making equipment to aid with:

- Daily living
- Body support
- Communication
- Mobility
- Access to environment (including computer)
- Access to the curriculum
- Sports, recreation, fitness
AT Instruction by Function

Percentage of Responses for Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

N = 231

- Daily Living
- Body Support
- Communication
- Mobility
- Access Environment
- Access to Curriculum
- Sports/Recreation
Question 7 Functional Areas

Following is a list of possible barriers to the implementation of instruction about assistive technology in the higher education curriculum. Check the box that best reflects your perceptions of the current situation at your institution. Use the following key:

N - Not a problem at this institution
M - Minor problem; could be overcome
S - Significant problem; may be overcome with difficulty
I - Irresolvable problem; don’t see how it could be overcome
Faculty Attitude

Percentage of Responses

N = 223

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable

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Administrator Attitude

Percentage of Responses

N = 222

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable

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Lack of Faculty Knowledge

Percentage of Responses

N = 224

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable

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Lack of Room in Curriculum

Percentage of Responses

N = 225

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable

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Lack of Fiscal Resources

Percentage of Responses

N = 224

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable
Lack of Facilities

Percentage of Responses

N = 225

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable
Upgrading Technology

Percentage of Responses

N = 219

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable
Lack of Time to Learn AT

Percentage of Responses

N = 220
Lack of AT Support

Percentage of Responses

N = 220

- Not Problem
- Minor
- Significant
- Irresolvable
Summary & Questions
The majority of the respondents indicated that they are providing “some” instruction in AT. However, few institutions, especially at the undergraduate level indicate “strong” instructional offerings in AT.

How much AT instruction is necessary?
Summary & Questions

Fewer than 30% of IHEs address AT to access the computer or access the curriculum in the undergraduate program and about 50% address the topics in their graduate programs.

Are new teachers and graduate students prepared to implement AT?
Summary & Questions

Over half (58%) of undergraduates and about half (49%) of graduates have access to “no” or a “limited” number of AT devices during their program. Similarly, 47% of respondents reported that lack of fiscal resources to purchase AT devices was a “significant” or “irresolvable” barrier.

How can students gain access to devices?
Summary & Questions

From previous studies, we know that most AT skills are being developed outside of higher education, often on specific devices and vendor driven.

What problems does that model pose?
There is an opportunity for higher education programs to offer courses and certification programs at both the pre-service and in-service training level.
University of Kentucky

Kentucky Assistive and Rehabilitation Technology Training -- KARTT

• AT Specialist’s Degree
• AT Certificate Program

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