

The MCA code of practice makes it clear that IT must now be part of any adequate service to people with communication issues, especially ASDs (autism spectrum differences).

From the MCA Code of Practice, Ch 3:
Some people may prefer to use non-verbal means of communication and can communicate most effectively in written form using computers or other communication technologies. This is particularly true for those with autistic spectrum disorders.

Communication is a key part of effective capacity - think about it
- & think about IT!

IT can
Be used by anyone
Boost communication
Put people on an equal footing
Give scope for interaction
Give scope for exploration of issues
Give time for processing
Make use of familiar symbols and objects
Develop creativity – verbal, musical, visual
Deepen social understanding

Please see Getting IT - Using information technology to empower people with communication difficulties by Dinah Murray & Ann Aspinall (Jessica Kingsley 2006) for some inspiring case studies and some practical ideas.

See overleaf for the service Dinah is now offering in relation both to the MCA and to the forthcoming Independent Living Act (its 2nd Reading was unopposed late last year).

Autism & Computing - Getting IT re MCA

Wendy Lawson says: "My life moved from being the mundane, inaccessible, confused state of non-understanding, fear and constant conflict, to feeling life could make sense and I could access a future because IT opened doors for me. Dinah Murray's work and commitment to enabling this to happen for others is outstanding, as is her understanding and experience of ASDs. I recommend her and her work most highly to all those working in this field"

Wendy Lawson: www.mugsy.org/wendy

Dr Dinah Murray can help your key managers understand

- **Why** the government is imposing this new obligation
- **How** to meet that obligation
- **Why** it is worth investing in the hardware
- **Why** the support needed will pay for itself
- **How** to use IT to help people make **Choices**
- **Why** using IT also promotes **Rights, Independence & Inclusion**

Dinah will entertain as well as inform, using videos to illustrate key points and giving people a chance for hands-on exploration of some reactive software.

*For fees and availability, contact Dinah direct on gettingitremca@gmail.com
Bookings confirmed in 2007 will be at current rates.*

If you book Dinah with Wendy Lawson they will share travelling and accommodation expenses. They also offer joint consultations about individual cases.

Dr. Dinah Murray has worked for many years with individuals with ASD of all ages and levels of ability and so has a wealth of experience and knowledge on gaining their perspective and the approaches which are effective in engaging with them. ICT has been a part of this work and so Dinah is extremely well placed to advise on this area. In addition, she is a tutor and has written course material for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in ASD at the University of Birmingham, and is a very effective and enthusiastic teacher.

- Dr Glenys Jones