



National Platform Of
Self Advocates

"Stand Up...Speak Out"

Single Case Study

Impact of Technology as a Tool in Supporting
Self-advocacy

Good Morning

My name is David and I am a member of the National Platform's Steering Committee.

I am going to tell you about a study that was carried out by the National Platform on how technology might help us in doing our work.

What was the Study about?

Because the National Platform members have been asked to carry out lots of work, their work has become very busy and demanding.

In December 2016, the National Platform's Research and Evaluation Sub Committee suggested carrying out a study on how technology might help the National Platform members to do their advocacy work.

I agreed to take part in this study and to work with a researcher. She wrote down word for word my experiences of using technology.

The aim of this study was to look at how the use of an iPad and Browsealoud reading software helped me in doing my advocacy work and in my day to day life.

How was the Study carried out?

I met with the researcher four times in December 2016 , in January 2017, in February 2017 and in March 2017. She wrote down what I said and did not direct my answers to the questions.

The National Platform facilitator and administrator helped me use the iPad and Browsealoud reading service when I needed help.

The Study questions were: What worked well? What didn't work well?

What recommendations did I have for the National Platform on the future use of technology in advocacy work.

Other research was looked at too but there is not a lot of information on the use of technology in advocacy. Research found that the lack of information on how technology can help and not knowing how much it will cost are 2 of the things that stop people with disabilities from trying technology.

Also, the Government policy is to move people with disability to more community and home settings but the possible use of technology in supporting this has not really been looked at.

What were the Results of the Study?

The results were very positive for me.

Using the iPad and the reading service helped me to:

Prepare for meetings by reading letters and documents that were talked about at the meetings.

Make speeches at National Platform events.

Give a presentation on independence at the World Congress in Birmingham and at a National Federation of Voluntary Bodies conference in Tullamore.

I felt more included and I was able to make decisions for myself because I was prepared and was able to check things.

It also helped me feel more confident, more independent and better about myself as I didn't have to ask others to help me prepare for meetings and discussion.

“it's like a pen and paper to others, it's a basic thing that is needed to do advocacy work”.

Recommendations- What should happen next?

Because of my very good experience of using the iPad and the Browsealoud reading service.

I recommend that the National Platform Steering Committee should:

1. Look for funding to buy iPads and the Browsealoud reading service and get some training for members of the Steering Committee to support them in their self advocacy work and work with and on behalf of others.
2. Make people aware of the barriers that exist that stop people with intellectual disability in using technology :

There should be **more information** about how the technology can help in advocating for yourself or others, promoting independence in education, work, communication and social inclusion.

There should be **more support to buy** the technology that is needed to support independence and making your own decisions.

There should be **more training in using technology** for people with intellectual disabilities.