A Single Case Study

On the

Impact of Technology as a Tool in Supporting

Self-advocacy

Commissioned by the National Platform

National Platform Of Self Advocates

"Stand Up...Speak Out"

May 2017

Contents

Summary of Study

The National Platform is an independent self-advocacy organisation. It was set up to ensure that the voices of people with intellectual disability are listened to and heard.

Due to the wide range of actions that the National Platform Steering Committee have been asked to carry out, their work has become increasingly busy and demanding.

Therefore in December 2016, the National Platform's Research and Evaluation Sub Committee suggested carrying out a study on how technology could assist National Platform members in doing their advocacy work. One self advocate agreed to participate in this study and to work with a researcher who recorded word for word his experiences of using technology and to see if the use of technology helped him in carrying out the advocacy work of the National Platform and in his personal life.

The purpose of the single case study was to examine the impact(s) of the introduction of a technology tool and assistive technology on the advocacy work and personal life of a self-advocate.

This report is the story of that study that took place over a four month period of time.

How the Study was Carried Out

The self advocate was provided with an iPad which is a mobile technology devise and access to the Browsealoud service which reads words to the user. He met with the researcher four times over a period of four months.

The researcher looked at some reports written about the use of technology and self advocacy. There was very little information about the use of technology in self advocacy but some reports did say that there were barriers to accessing technology including a lack of information about technology devices and how

such devises could support people with intellectual disability, and that these devices were expensive to buy.

Other barriers included poor access to information on assessments for using technology, limited training on how to use devices and how complicated a device can be to use.

The Irish government has a policy and practice of supporting people with disabilities to live in the community away from group settings. However, the role that technology might play in supporting this process appears largely not to have been looked at.

Outcomes of the Interviews

This report shares the information and experiences gathered from four interviews with the self advocate.

1. Pre Use Interview

During the pre use of technology interview the self advocate spoke about how excited he was about using the iPad and the Browsealoud service and felt that it would *'open doors'* for him in carrying out his advocacy work. The self advocate clearly looked forward to the possibility that the technology would enable him to **depend less on others for support** and **accessing information, understanding the information in documents and providing information to others.**

At a personal level he felt that the technology would **support his own decision making and allow him to work towards his goals.** However he did say that he had some concerns about going into some websites and social media by accident.

2. Use after 1 month

The self advocate said that he became **familiar with the iPad** over the month and was gradually beginning to explore the use of the Browsealoud reading service. He had begun to use it for his advocacy work and enjoyed using the devise and exploring different websites. He felt that he was **less fearful of using it** which was demonstrated in his accessing of news websites and watching a movie.

The self advocate was very aware of the 'wifi/internet connection' issue at times and that this stopped him from accessing some websites, downloading photos etc. He felt that the **support provided by the National Platform Facilitator was very important in him gaining confidence** and becoming familiar with both the iPad and the Browsealoud service. He felt that the iPad screen was very small especially if he watched a movie so he decided that he would explore how to connect the devise to a TV, indicating **a real comfort with the technology** and taking the decision to gather information and seek options in addressing the problem.

3. Use after Two Months

After just two months, the self advocate felt that his self assurance in using the technology had grown a lot and technology had become a part of his everyday life. While his familiarity and confidence in using the devise and accessing documents was very positive it was the empowerment he had gained from using the technology in his advocacy work and personal life that he most reflected on and he saw this as very important. He felt that his dependence on others was less in supporting him to prepare for his advocacy work, his own independence and problem solving was greater over the two months. This was reflected in his confidence in the delivery of a speech at a major public event attended by other organisations, individuals and policy makers.

While support was necessary in respect to difficulties presented by the technology itself or internet connections the self advocate recognized that he learnt from others in addressing these issues and where they may occur again in the future he felt that he could deal with them himself.

4. Use after Three Months

The self advocate felt that his use and comfort with the iPad and Browsealoud reading service had increased over the month and he was really enjoying the experience. The benefits to him in his advocacy work and his personal life were very positive. The central benefit was his increased empowerment and confidence in engaging with documents to support advocacy work, websites and

leisure opportunities that before the introduction of the technology was not possible without the assistance of another person. He felt that he could now direct his own:

- Learning,
- Preparation for his advocacy work,
- Decision making, and
- Inclusion - *"it opens doors to connect more (socially) with people by being more informed and more confident"*.

Overall the self advocate went far beyond what he thought he would do when he set out on the technology study four months previously. This was due to the support he received but more importantly his enjoyment of the use of the technology and it ease of access to information and documents. Finally it is perhaps the empowerment outcomes and his lessening dependency on others to assist him therefore allowing him to make decisions for himself and direct his own learning, his own information gathering, his own wishes and the achievement of his own goals.

Recommendations:

The self advocate recommended the following based on his experience over the four months of the study:

Recommendation 1: That each member of the National Platform who wants and needs the technology used in this study should have access to it - *"it's like a pen and paper to others, it's a basic thing that is needed to do advocacy work"*.

Recommendation 2: Each advocate should be asked what their needs are to help them with the advocacy work and the technology should be adjusted to meet their needs.

Recommendation 3: Each advocate either on his or her own or together with others should be given some training before and during their introduction to the technology.

Recommendation 4: Barriers to people with intellectual disability engaging with technology should be lessened in the following ways:

- 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.

- More support to buy the technology that is needed to support independence and to make your own decisions.

- More training in using technology for people with intellectual disabilities.

Introduction

The National Platform is an independent self-advocacy organisation. It was set up to ensure that the voices of people with intellectual disability are listened to and heard.

A core goal of the National Platform is *"making the lives of people with a disability better[1]"*.

The National Platform has members from all over Ireland and elects members to a Steering Committee that represents them on lots of different issues including advocacy, housing, transport and employment.

The National Platform represents persons with intellectual disability on a range of committees including government committees.

Due to the wide range of actions that the self advocates have been asked to carry out, their work has become increasingly busy and demanding.

Therefore in December 2016, the National Platform's Research and Evaluation Committee suggested carrying out a study of how technology could assist them in carrying out their advocacy work.

Purpose of the Study:

This report is the story of that study that took place over a four month period of time.
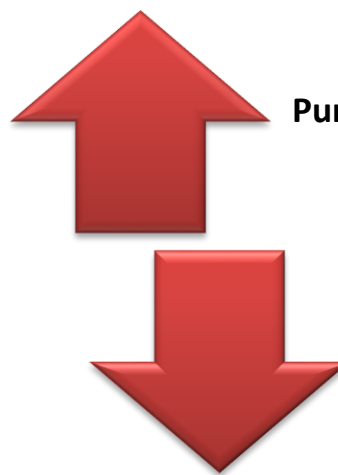
To examine the impact(s) of the introduction of a technology tool and assistive technology on the advocacy work and personal life of a self-advocate.

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[1] *National Platform of Self Advocates (NPSA) Strategic Plan January 2015 – December 2017*

Part 1: Background to the Study

This study report tells the story of a member of the National Platform who agreed to participate and share his experience of using a technology tool and assistive technology in his advocacy work and his personal life.

The National Platform purchased an iPad and an assistive technology service (Browsealoud) in December 2016.

The self advocate was provided with an iPad which is a mobile technology devise and access to the Browsealoud service which reads words to the user.

The following part of the study further describes the devise and service.

An **iPad** is a small, compact and mobile tablet computer. It has a multi-touch screen, including a virtual keyboard. The iPad has built-in Wi-Fi and can shoot video, take photos, play music, play movies and perform Internet actions such as web-browsing and emailing. Other things that can be carried out on it include games, GPS navigation, social networking, etc. and can be set up by downloading and installing apps.

Browsealoud is the assistive technology service used by the self advocate during this study. Browsealoud adds speech and reading support tools to online content to extend the reach of websites for people who require reading support.
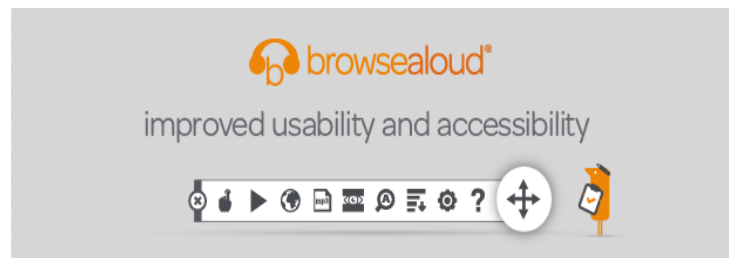
This includes those with dyslexia, learning difficulties, mild visual impairments and those with English as a second language.

Methodology – How the Study was Carried Out

The National Platform Research and Evaluation Sub Committee engaged a researcher with a clear brief of recording the experiences of the self advocate in his use of the technology devise and service over the four months of the study. The self advocate agreed to take part in the study and a consent form and a confidentiality agreement was signed.

One to One Interviews

The self advocate agreed to take part in four one to one **interviews** and share his experience of using the technology devise and reading service in his self advocacy work with the National Platform and his day to day life.

The self advocate received the devise and assistive technology service in mid December 2016. The self advocate was interviewed on the same day that he received the iPad and that interview lasted for one and a half hours.

The purpose of the first interview was to record *'where the self advocate was starting from'* (a baseline measure) in terms of his level of information technology knowledge and skills as well as his literacy and numeracy skills before he began to use the devise and reading service. This helped to see how the technology changed or did not change the way he carried out his self advocacy work and day to day life.

Over the following four months the self advocate was interviewed a further three times. Interviews lasted between one hour and one hour and forty five minutes.

The purpose of the interviews was to hear the self advocates' experience of using the iPad and the reading service over that period of time.

The role of the researcher was to write down word for word the experiences of the self advocate and check back with him if the words were an accurate account of what he said. The researcher did not prompt or direct the outcomes of the self advocates' experience in any way.

The core interview questions were:

What has worked well?	**What has not worked well?**
What changes have happened in carrying out advocacy work due to the use of technology?	**What changes have happended in own personal life due to the use of the technology?**

Literature Review

The researcher looked at some research that has been carried out on the use of technology and assistive technology services. The reason for this was to gain an understanding of what learning already exists on the subject.

An important starting point is the overall shaft in support policy and practices for people with disabilities in Ireland. In June 2011, the HSE published the Report of the Working Group on Congregated Settings[2]. The report sets out what is now the agreed national policy where people with disabilities are supported to move away from residential type settings to a community/home living environment.

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[2] *Health Services Executive (2011).* Time to Move on from Congregated Setting – A Strategy for Community Inclusion. *Accessed on-line at http://www.hse.ie*

Therefore, Irish government policy now has at its centre a process of change from residential services to more person-centred services. In order to support this process many changes in practice and policy have happened and more needs to happen including how best to support individuals in this move to more independent living. The role of technology in supporting this process appears largely not to have been looked at.

While there was a lot of research on the use of assistive technology by people with disabilities there was limited research on the role of technology and assistive technology in supporting self advocacy. However what could be seen from other research about the use of technology in supporting people with intellectual disability was that it can have very good effects on supporting people to carry out day to day tasks as well work and education activities.

Some of the research documents looked at how technology can benefit people with intellectual disabilities.

One report[3] (Kelker 1997) outlined how assistive technology in particular is useful when it does any or all of the following things:

- Helps a person to **do things** that cannot be done using any other means.
- Helps a person develop a level of **success** that could not be achieved by any other means.
- Provides **access for participation in activities** which otherwise would be closed to the individual.
- Increases ability **to keep going and complete tasks** that otherwise are too difficult to be tried on a routine basis.
- Helps a person to **concentrate on learning or employment tasks**, rather than mechanical tasks.
- Provides greater **access to information**.
- Supports normal **social interactions** with peers and other adults.

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[3] *Kelker, K.A. (1997). Family Guide to Assistive Technology. Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK). Accessed on-line at http://www.pluk.org/AT1.html*

Other research also talked about some of the barriers to technology use by people with intellectual disabilities. A survey[4] in 1998 carried out in the United Kingdom said that the main barriers were:

- Lack of information about the availability of the technology devices, and
- Cost of devices.

Other barriers included poor access to information on assessments for using technology, limited training on how to use the device and how complicated the device was to use.

Structure of the Study Report
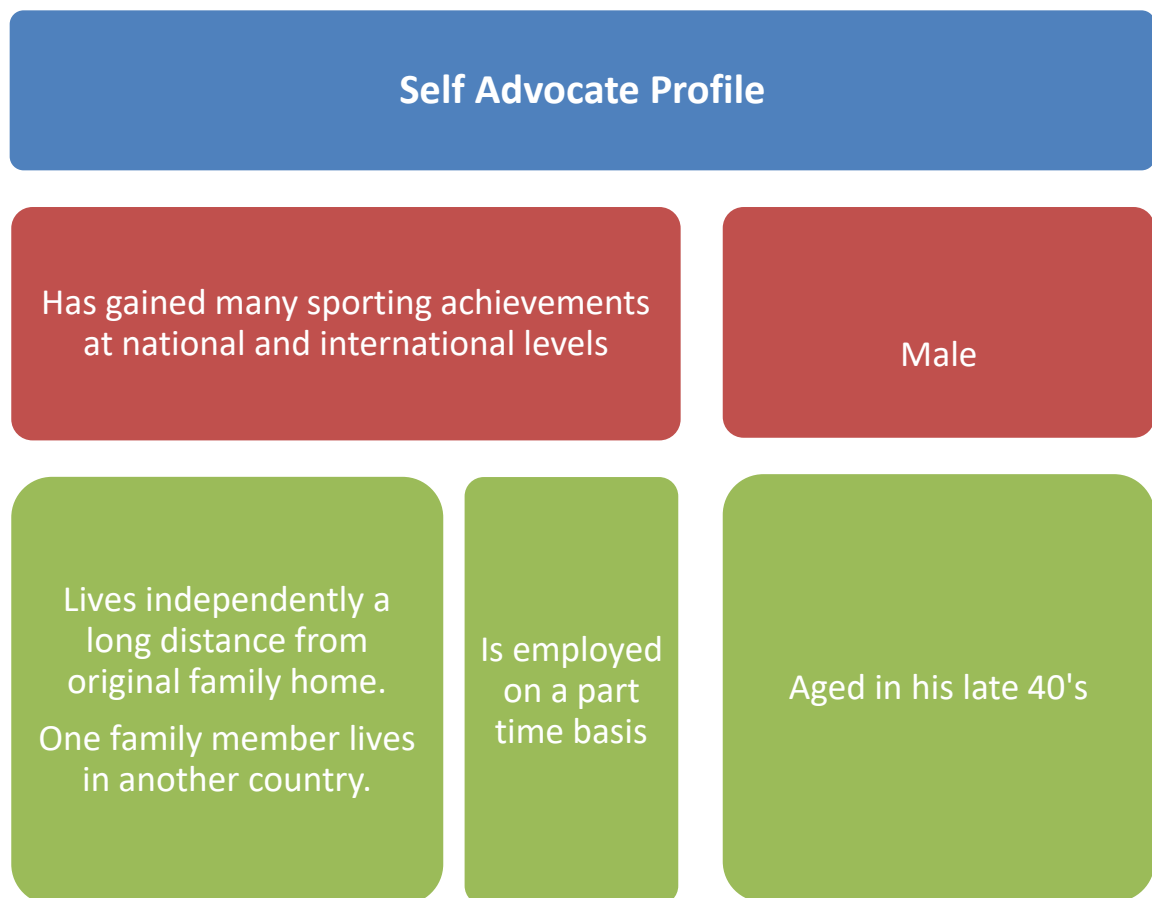
There are 3 parts in this study report:

1. The first part tells you about background to the study, why the study was carried out and how the study gathered the information in report.

2. The second part tells you about what the study found out about the impacts of the use of the technology devise and assistive service on the work of the self advocate and his day to day life experiences over four months.

3. The final part tells you what the self advocate felt were the main benefits of using the technology devise and the reading service and his recommendations for the NPSA on how such technology could support other member's future work.

An important feature of this report is to present the experiences of the self advocate using his own words to describe his experiences of using the techonology therefore direct quotes from the interviews are using through the document to ensure that his voice is documented and shared through this study.

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[4] *Wehmeyer, M.L. (1998). National survey of the use of assistive technology by adults with mental retardation. Mental Retardation, 36, 44-51.*

Part 2: Outcomes of the Study

The first interview set out to capture a 'picture' of the self advocate's life experiences while ensuring confidentiality. The interview allowed the self advocate to share what he thought would be the impact of using the iPad and Browsealoud on his life as well as any concerns he have had about using the technology. The following picture provides a brief profile of the self advocate to give a sense of his life experience to date.

Self Advocate Profile

Has gained many sporting achievements at national and international levels

Male

Lives independently a long distance from original family home.
One family member lives in another country.

Is employed on a part time basis

Aged in his late 40's

Interview 1: Pre-Use of iPad Devise and Reading Service (December 2016)

As the study set out to look at how the use of an iPad and the Browsealoud reading service supports self advocacy work and participation in the National Platform Steering Committee work, the self advocate anticipated that the main support that the devise and reading service would provide to him included:

- Reading documents such as reports of meetings that the self advocate had taken part in or may have been absent from.
- Reading documents that are important in providing him with information that would help him to prepare for meetings, contribute to meetings and events that the National Platform were involved in.
- Contribute to collective National Platform Steering Committee decisions, and
- In his officer role within the National Platform support him to give clear facts and presentation of documents and financial accounts to help his National Platform colleagues make informed decisions about the running of and actions associated with the organisation.

Therefore improving reading and numeracy skills were at the centre of the self advocate's willingness to explore the use of the devise and reading service.

Many people with intellectual disability have problems reading. The reasons for this are varied. It is not as simple as saying that the person does not have the capacity to read. The self advocate identified a number of things that can stop a person from reading, including:

- Until recently adequate educational supports were not in place to support persons with an intellectual disability in reading.
- Poor educational experiences at school.
- For some who entered workshop based work or residential care reading and writing skills were not further supported.
- Issues such as the size of fonts, words compacted too closely together, text on the page too close together.

The self advocate spoke further of his personal experience of reading and numeracy skills saying that it preventing him engaging in things that interest him such as sports:

"I am very interested in things out there I miss out on reading up on the Olympics and sport".

Emotionally the self advocates' level of reading and numeracy skills also has had a negative effect in his self advocacy work when he sees others reading documents and contributing to discussions because their reading and writing levels are higher.

" It is annoying to me having to ask somebody else to read things, like a menu or a page at a meeting, it affects my confidence. When I'm in a group and see others taking part and understanding what is going on I wish I could do it... since I was born there has been a block in trying to read. One to one (literacy support) *didn't really work for me and I didn't want to go to a class* (as an adult) *because I think it's a bit babyish"*

When asked to identify what his difficulties in reading and numeracy were he explained that:

"Reading is very difficult for me, sometimes pictures shake as well".

When asked what he thought helped him in reading and numeracy he said that:

"Listening, having things repeated, signs (gestures) *and pictures ...but sometimes I prefer is there are no pictures".*

The self advocate was very aware of his high level skills such as having:

"A very good memory (like an elephant!) and I'm good at reading signs and finding my way around".

Reasons for Not Using Technology Supports Previously

The self advocate said that he owned a laptop computer but did not use it very much *("I didn't like it very much"*) except to Skype his sister who lives in another county. Skype was set up for him by another person.

When asked why he never explored using an iPad and the reading support service before, he said that he did not have the information about it in the way it was presented to the National Platform (a member of the support team researched and raised the possibilities of the iPad and reading service with the self advocates).

The self advocate said that the cost while did not entirely stop him from using technology it did have an impact. Most of the all he felt that *"thinking in your head might be easier than using computers"*.

In addition, the self advocate said that he had a *"fear of face book and websites, I think it can be dangerous and (I) might get into trouble by accident… going on to something by accident and not knowing how to get out of it"*. This fear was largely influenced by media reports.

Anticipated Changes

A key set of questions at this stage of the study centred on how the self advocate felt that the use of the iPad and the Browsealoud service would change his advocacy work and personal life.

When asked if he felt others made decisions for him in his personal life or in his advocacy work he said:

"Yes, in my personal life, like medical people make decisions for me. Working with the Platform…I'm good with information and if I have a question I ring the Chairperson and the Facilitator and the support is there so I think I make decisions for myself because there is support there to do it".

But the self advocate felt that to do the work of the National Platform better he would like to do things himself rather than others doing it for him:

"I love the Platform work… talking up for people and working altogether and getting information out there. But I would love to be able to send an email to follow up on Platform work…I would love to read a letter instead of having it to be done by different people. It will make work better and easier and I can do it on my own".

The self advocate felt the use of the devise would help him to achieve his own personal goals and dreams:

"I have a lot of stories in my head. I would like to write a book about the Olympics …this (technology) will open doors for me… I'm very excited about it. I'll get information about things I'm interested in".

Anticipated Uses of iPad and Browsealoud

The self advocate was asked what he planned to use the iPad and Browsealoud for and he identified the following:

PLAN TO USE	WILL NOT USE
• Read documents and letters • Prepare for meetings and events • Typing • Skype • TV • Listen to Music • Audio books • Link with family and friends • Look some things up	• Games • Social Media like facebook • Some Websites

Summary of Pre Technology Use: Interview 1

During the pre use of technology interview the self advocate spoke about how excited he was about using the iPad and the Browsealoud service and felt that it would *'open doors'* for him in carrying out his advocacy work. The self advocate clearly looked forward to the possibility that the technology would enable him to **depend less on others for support** and **accessing information, understanding the information in documents and providing information to others.**

At a personal level he felt that the technology would **support his own decision making and allow him to work towards his goals.** However he did say that he had some concerns about going into some websites and social media by accident.

Interview 2: Outcomes after One Month (January 2017)

After one month of using the iPad and Browsealoud the self advocate said that he was getting familiar with the devise and the reading service *"bit by bit"*.

Problems had occurred over the previous month largely around internet connection, accessing documents, navigating and getting familiar with the devise:

"Got stuck sometimes … (screen) was always going back and (I was) getting mixed up, I tried to do with myself but got stuck".

The self advocate said that the support from the National Platform facilitator was a really important part of *"getting to know the iPad"* and helped in solving any problems that he experienced with the devise.

In the first month, the self advocate became familiar with different aspects of the iPad and the different things that he could access including news programmes and leisure activities such as watching movies. However the screen size was raised by the self advocate as a problem:

"I can get into (RTE) playback and Netflix but I find it difficult watching programmes on the small screen".

The self advocate was determined to explore options in addressing this issue of the small screen with IT providers.

"Looking at the small screen is hard so I have to go and find out if there is a wire that can connect the iPad to the TV".

Overall the experience in the first month was very enjoyable for the self advocate and he felt he was managing the security aspects of having an iPad:

"I enjoy it…easier (to use) than the laptop and the touch screen is great.

I have the passwords in my head…"

Over this period the self advocate became familiar with the Browsealoud reading service and he had read one set of minutes through using the service in advance of the interview. His plan for the next month was:

- To read National Platform letters in respect to advocacy work.
- To prepare to give a speech at the launch of a National Platform research project.
- To explore websites such as newspaper websites, and.
- To explore audio books.

Summary of Interview 2:

The self advocate said that he became familiar with the iPad over the month and was gradually beginning to explore the use of the Browsealoud reading service. He had begun to use it for his advocacy work and enjoyed using the devise and exploring different websites. He felt that he was less fearful of using it which was demonstrated in his accessing of news websites and watching a movie. The self advocate was very aware of the 'wifi/internet connection' issue at times and that this stopped him from accessing some websites, downloading photos etc. He felt that the support provided by the National Platform facilitator was very important in him gaining confidence and becoming familiar with both the iPad and the Browsealoud service. He felt that the iPad screen was very small especially if he watched a movie so he decided that he would explore how to connect the devise to a TV, indicating a real comfort with the technology and taking the decision to gather information and seek options in addressing the problem.

Interview 3: Outcomes after Two Months (February 2017)

After two months of use the self advocate described his experience of the using the iPad and Browsealoud service as *"great"*. Real progress in using the Browsealoud reading service took place. This happened especially in preparing to deliver a speech at the launch of a National Platform Research Report on Transport and Housing which was attended by the Minister for Disability. He felt that his confidence and his delivery of the feedback from the Housing and Transport Research were as a result of his use of the iPad and the Browsealoud reading service.

The self advocate explained how he used the iPad and reading service to prepare:

"I listened to the presentation over and over, (browsealoud) has made such a difference (in preparing). Before, I was fed up going to others and asking people to read to me".

The work of the National Platform was also supported by the self advocate's use of the devise and reading service because he was able to listen to minutes of meetings and he became very familiar with what went on at meetings, who said what and what actions and decisions were taken. He felt that this really helped him prepare and take part in discussions at National Platform meetings and other events:

'I listen to National Platform work minutes on it… before I had to get someone to read it to me"

At a personal level he continued to enjoy accessing TV, in particular news programmes and talked about the support he got from family and the National Platform that helped him learn more about what he could do on the iPad and how to deal with problems that occurred:

"News programmes are really good… now I can access the stuff myself like movies and documentaries (but) sometimes connection is a problem… my niece helped me to log onto it in the house in Dublin and got the link to website and saved it. (The National Platform facilitator) really helped with the work before the launch, talked to her on the phone about a problem with it (the devise) it was sorted and I was back online again".

The self advocate found that the "*the speed of the iPad is a bit fast"* but felt that he would get used to this too.

Overall the self advocate was very positive about the experience and felt that the use of the technology had brought real changes to his confidence, ability to work more effectively and gave him a feeling of directing his own life without other making decisions for him:

"I was fed up with having to ask people and I was worried about them judging me… it did affect my independence and made me more dependent on others. It did stop me being included. Using the iPad is part and parcel of my everyday life now".

Summary of Interview 3:

After just two months, the self advocate felt that his self assurance in using the technology had grown a lot and technology had become a part of his everyday life. While his familiarity and confidence in using the devise and accessing documents was very positive it was the empowerment he had gained from using the technology in his advocacy work and personal life that he most reflected on and he saw this as very important. He felt that his dependence on others was less in supporting him to prepare for his advocacy work, his own independence and problem solving was greater over the two months. This was reflected in the confidence in his delivery of a speech at a major public event attended by other organisations, individuals and policy makers.

While support was necessary in respect to difficulties presented by the technology itself or internet connections the self advocate recognized that he learnt from others in addressing these issues and where they may occur again in the future he felt that he could deal with them himself.

Interview 4: Outcomes after Three Months (March 2017)

Over the previous month the self advocate continued to increase his engagement with the technology both in terms of his advocacy work and his personal use and spoke about the level of enjoyment he experienced from using the technology:

"Now I get things up on the iPad and use the reader it's easier to do the advocacy work I don't need anyone to read it ….very helpful for the launch… the iPad is 10 times easier to use than the laptop".

The self advocate said that as well as continuing with his day to day advocacy work he will be speaking at the National Platform Conference to be held in May 2017 and he will use the technology in preparing for this important event. His use of the technology continued to go from strength to strength including looking up articles on the Olympics, books on sporting achievements and his sporting heroes.

The self advocate's interest in current affairs has been further enhanced due to him being able to access TV news websites and newspapers.

In addition the self advocate is less fearful of accessing the internet while his concerns about face book were still present they are less strong that before his participation in the study. He felt that he may overcome this fear in time once he has learnt to deal with privacy settings but felt that this will require support.

When asked how this experience with technology had changed his advocacy work the self advocate said **his confidence had increased, he had experienced increased independence and was less dependent on others and now was able to access information that makes his advocacy work better and more effective.** He commented that he felt more included at meetings and doing what other people do:

"Sometimes at a meeting with other people who are writing stuff down and I got annoyed with myself for not doing that or not being ready for the meeting because I had to have someone to read it to me… sometimes I felt like crying…it hurt me. Now it is completely different and using the iPad I have become more confident. I now know what the meeting is about by preparing for meetings, reading the documents to myself".

At a personal level real benefits for the self advocate were beginning to emerge such as increased access to information, feeling better informed and this led to him feeling more confident socially:

"Using it (iPad and reading service) to see what is in the newspaper is an opportunity to be informed and have a better social life… I can talk to people about what's going on".

Summary of Interview 4:

The self advocate felt that his use and comfort with the iPad and Browsealoud had increased over the month and he was really enjoying the experience. The benefits to him in his advocacy work and his personal life were very positive. The central benefit was his increased empowerment and confidence in engaging with documents to support advocacy work, websites and leisure opportunities that before the introduction of the technology was not possible without the assistance of another person. He felt that he could now direct his own:
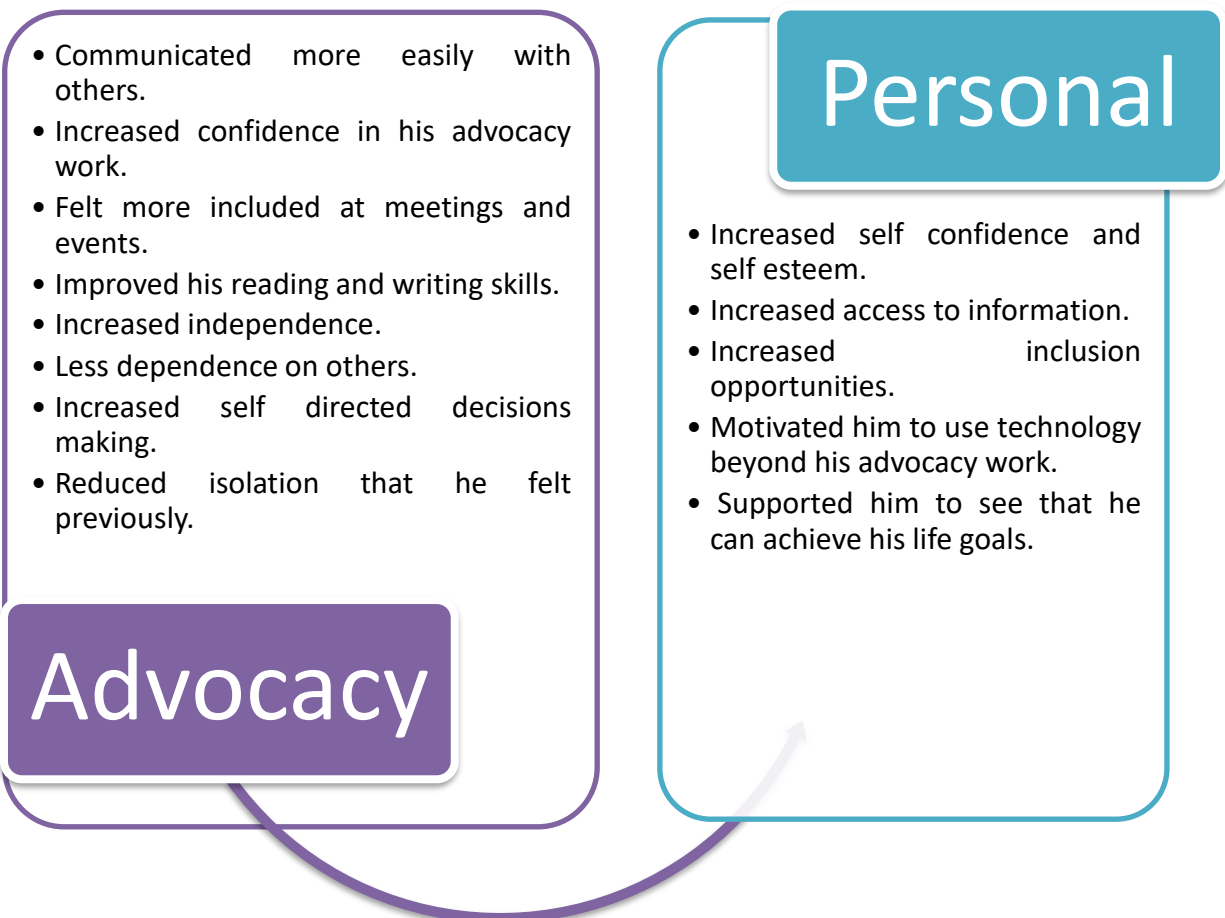
- Learning,
- Preparation for his advocacy work,
- Decision making, and
- Inclusion *- "it opens doors to connect more (socially) with people by being more informed and more confident".*

Overall the self advocate went far beyond what he thought he would do when he set out on the technology study four months previously. This was due to the support he received but more importantly his enjoyment of the use of the technology and it ease of access to information and documents. Finally it is perhaps the empowerment outcomes and his lessening dependency on others to assist him therefore **allowing him to make decisions for himself and direct his own learning, his own information gathering, his own wishes and the achievement of his own goals.**
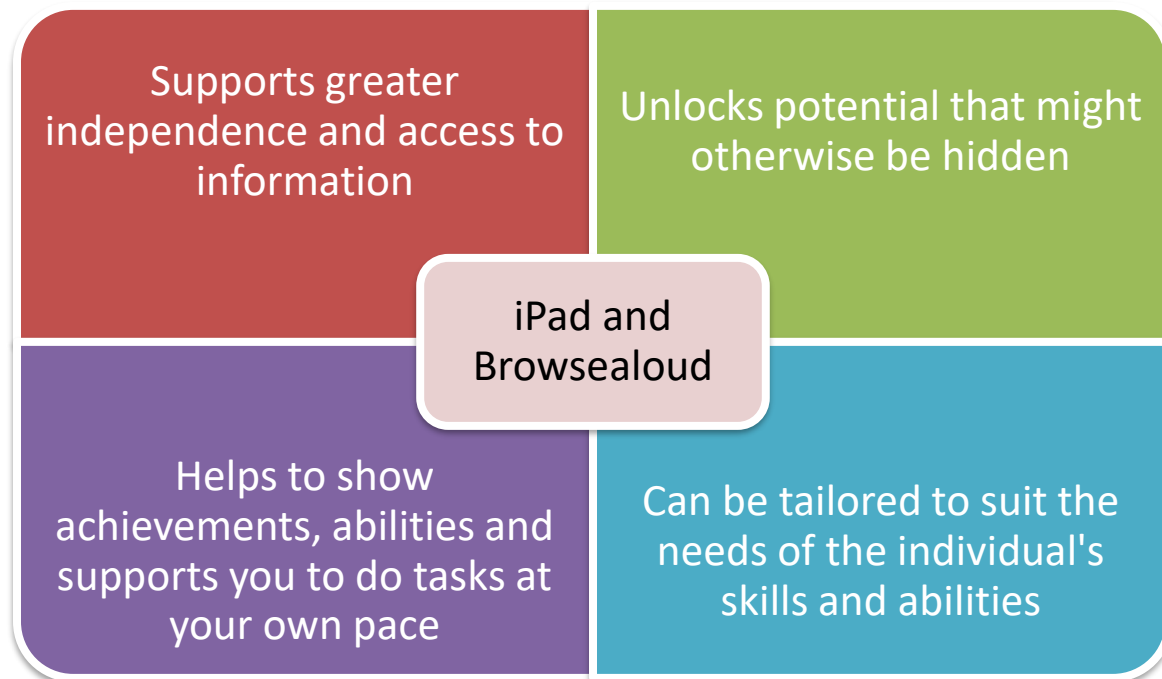
Part 3: Benefits of Technology Use and Recommendations

The final part of this study report talks about what the self advocate felt were the main benefits of using the technology devise and the reading support service and his recommendations for the National Platform on how such technology tools can support other member's future work and people with disabilities.

Firstly, the self advocate identified the main benefits for himself over the time of the study, these included:

- Communicated more easily with others.
- Increased confidence in his advocacy work.
- Felt more included at meetings and events.
- Improved his reading and writing skills.
- Increased independence.
- Less dependence on others.
- Increased self directed decisions making.
- Reduced isolation that he felt previously.

Advocacy

- Increased self confidence and self esteem.
- Increased access to information.
- Increased inclusion opportunities.
- Motivated him to use technology beyond his advocacy work.
- Supported him to see that he can achieve his life goals.

Personal

Secondly, he identified the general benefits for the National Platform members:

Supports greater independence and access to information	Unlocks potential that might otherwise be hidden
Helps to show achievements, abilities and supports you to do tasks at your own pace	Can be tailored to suit the needs of the individual's skills and abilities

iPad and Browsealoud

Recommendations:

The self advocate recommended the following based on his experience over the four months of the study:

Recommendation 1: That each member of the National Platform who wants and needs the technology used in this study should have access to it - *"it's like a pen and paper to others, it's a basic thing that is needed to do advocacy work".*

Recommendation 2: Each advocate should be asked what their needs are to help them with the advocacy work and the technology should be adjusted to meet their needs.

Recommendation 3: Each advocate either on his or her own or together with others should be given some training before and during their introduction to the technology.

Recommendation 4: Barriers to people with intellectual disability engaging with technology should be lessened in the following ways:

- 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.

- More support to buy the technology that is needed to support independence and to make your own decisions.

- More training in using technology for people with intellectual disabilities.