



## A new approach to Travel Training

### Using technology to deliver sustainable results

#### What you already know.....

The need for travel training has never been greater. A wealth of reports on achieving independence has identified the need to be able to travel independently.

*Making the Connections: Transport and Social Exclusion* recognised that transport problems can be a significant factor in social exclusion. The report also identified that certain sections of the community experience difficulty in travelling by public transport due to lack of skills and confidence. Travel training is a means of overcoming this. The groups who could benefit from the delivery of this training and support include:



- Children – including special school attendees or those with a *Statement of Special Educational Needs* covering behavioural and learning difficulties
- Adults with a Learning Disability– who wish to access further education or employment may currently have to rely on support staff to accompany them to and from their destination
- People with Acquired Brain Injury – where poor short term memory can prevent learning new routes
- Mental Health – for those with Mental Health issues it has been recognised that social isolation is an important risk factor. A lack of transport (or the lack of ability to use public transport) can be a major barrier to improving the life chances of mental health sufferers.



#### The Training Challenge

Knowing the benefits of implementing a travel training program, we at Halliday James also understand the practicalities of what is involved. Training can be very labour intensive requiring significant one to one support.

This support can cover:

- Route assessment – identification of safety hazards and steps to mitigate these

- Recognition of cue points – identifying where the trainee needs to make a decision on direction (turn left or right) or action to take (cross road, catch bus)
- Road safety – road awareness skills

Additional support may also be needed to help the trainee to develop skills in the areas of:

- Understanding appropriate behaviour – e.g. when travelling on a bus, what is acceptable and what is not.
- Money skills – counting and handling money
- Personal safety, locking doors and taking keys with them
- Communication skills – asking for a ticket, ask for help, use of mobile phone
- Concept of time – can they tell time, can they understand 24 hr clock

Finally, it may also be necessary to help with developing coping strategies should unexpected situations arise. Some of which could include:

- Trainee has boarded wrong bus or metro
- Trainee has missed their stop
- Bus/train is late
- Trainee feels unwell
- Trainee gets lost
- Trainee has something stolen or loses something
- Trainee forgets bus pass



### **A new approach?**

Although not exhaustive, the above does give an indication of the effort required to deliver a travel training program. Until now much of this support has been “one to one” focused on helping the trainee memorise the route to be undertaken. Although for some trainees, travelling the selected route a few times under supervision will be enough for them to undertake it independently, for others there will be a need to make multiple trips, which can be a heavy

drain on support resources and even then, some trainees may never be able to memorise a route.

However, for these clients, help can now be provided by utilising a new range of cognitive support technology. This technology is based around smart phone technology running a unique suite of software programs which have been developed to help support persons with cognitive deficit. This suite can be supplied as individual programs or as a fully integrated pack.

These programs include:

## Schedule Assistant

This is a diary program which uses a combination of pictures and spoken words to remind a person when they should do something, ideal if they have limited literacy. By having their daily schedule on a Smart Phone which, can be taken with them wherever they go, they can be reminded of events throughout the day, reducing the need for supervision.

Schedule Assistant can also launch other programs, so for instance if the reminder was to go to college or place of work, a travel guidance program could be launched.



### Applications:

- Clients who have difficulty with initiating tasks and currently need constant reminders to do so
- Clients who have difficulty understanding time
- Reminding clients as they leave the house of the need to lock up and take keys with them

## WayFinder

This is a custom travel guidance program that provides the ability to create personalised routes for the user based on “landmarks” or points of interest that they can relate to. Utilising the latest GPS technology the user follows their chosen route by receiving audio and visual prompts from the Smart phone which will help them move from point to point. The prompts required for each route can be as simple or as detailed as required. Each route can include walking and/or public transport. Once a user has acquired the skill to follow these types of instructions, introducing them to new routes becomes easier.



An additional valuable feature of WayFinder is the ability to send automatic SMS text messages to a carer when the user has safely reached their destination. The carer also has the opportunity to “text” the device to receive updates of where the client is as they travel a particular route, providing re- assurance that all is well.

### Applications:

- Provides cue point reminders for the client along their chosen route and action they need to take
- Provides reminders of action to take at road crossings
- Provides re-assurance for the carer that the client has reached their destination

## Visual Assistant



This program provides the ability to create custom prompts for tasks at home or in the workplace to help people who find sequencing difficult. This program will run on a Smart Phone to give individualised, step by step instructions using a combination of images and spoken instructions. The instructions use photographs of the user doing the task in the actual location and recordings can be of a familiar voice.

### Applications:

- Detailed actions a client needs to take at a particular location – for example buying a ticket
- Providing support with coping strategies should something go wrong on route



### **Pocket ACE**

This is a Smart Phone application which uses a picture based phone book. Voice prompts reinforce the process. Incoming and outgoing calls can be limited to just those people in the address book, so its use can be limited to work based or emergency calls.

Applications:

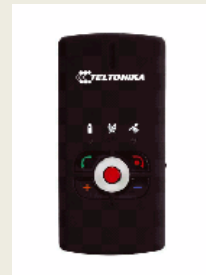
- Allows simple contact with support staff
- Opens up the use of mobile phones to clients who normally have difficulty making and receiving calls.

### **And finally.....Shadowing of clients**

Following the process of training to travel a specific route, then begins the process of “letting go”. This usually results in shadowing of the trainee as they undertake travelling by themselves. Additionally, there may also be the fears of the guardian or carer to deal with as their loved one takes these first steps towards travelling independently.

Halliday James recognises these needs and can help support trainee, trainer and carer through this process by the provision of its **St. Bernard Emergency location Service (SBLs)**.

Trainees using this service are provided with a location device which incorporates both a GPS receiver (like the SatNavs in cars) to determine their location and a mobile phone for data communication and to allow voice calls where appropriate.



The location device connects every few minutes with our location servers via the mobile phone network using GPRS data communication. If the trainee presses the panic button, their carer will receive a text message giving their location in post code and street format. This information can also be displayed in a map and progress along the route monitored if the carer has access to the internet.

The carer can also be alerted if the user enters or leaves predefined areas (Geofences), if they go above a certain speed or if the device's battery needs charging.

This provides the trainee with a safety net should they become lost or disorientated when travelling alone. For the trainer it also provides a cost effective solution to monitoring a number of trainees independently.

### **Company background**

Halliday James is committed to providing solutions to the challenges associated with maintaining independent living. We are committed to developing the most innovative, user friendly and non intrusive ways to keep people safe and happy in the homes that they love. For the elderly, those with learning difficulties and individuals with conditions resulting from acquired brain injury, we offer a range of devices that can make independent life easily achievable for the user, yet reassure the carer that at all times an appropriate level of help and support is readily available.

**For further information on how we can help contact us on:**

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