

ATANZ is excited to host

Rethinking AAC and AAC practice

a 4-hour workshop suitable for SLPs, OTs, and school AAC coaches

Whānau and clinical students are also welcome

Presented by

Erin Sheldon and David Niemeijer

Time: 9.30 am – 2.30 pm with 1 hour lunch break. Lunch will be provided

Locations and dates:

Auckland 24 February 2025

Venue: Jetpark Hotel Auckland Airport, Conference & events centre, 63 Westney Road, Mangere, Auckland 2022

Wellington 25 February 2025

Venue: Mercure hotel Wellington, Abel Tasman, 169 Willis street, Wellington 6011

Christchurch 26 February 2025

Venue: Russley Golf Club, 428 Memorial Avenue, Burnside, Christchurch 8053

Dunedin 28 February 2025

Venue: To be Confirmed

About this event:

This 4-hour workshop will start with a data-informed review of what we can learn from current AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) use in New Zealand and internationally.

Next we will look at the potential of AAC beyond supporting expressive communication. We will show how AAC can be a tool not just for expressive communication, but, equally important, for supporting receptive communication as well as learning and language development. We will look at how we can leverage the inherent properties of well-designed AAC systems to more effectively support language development and education. We will explore the importance of dual-coding and motor-learning and look at how AAC can support teachers and students in the classroom.

We will also reflect on and challenge existing language modelling practices, drawing lessons from early language development and the ways parents speak to very young children. Based on this, we will propose new, updated guidance regarding modelling language and communication.

Finally, we will share how the new Proloquo communication app was designed to overcome many of the limitations of existing AAC systems while promoting communication, thinking, learning, and teaching.

Full disclosure - this presentation is by two representatives from AssistiveWare, which is the company behind Proloquo, Proloquo2Go, Pictello, and other assistive technology options to support communication. However, three-fourth of this workshop is device agnostic and focused on research and AAC implementation practices rather than on any specific product.

About the presenters:



Erin Sheldon is Director of Learning Design at AssistiveWare. She earned her graduate degree studying the needs of students with significant disabilities included in regular classrooms. Erin is a specialist in emergent literacy and vocabulary development. She has authored multiple book chapters, articles, and internet modules on AAC implementation and has presented at major international AT conferences around the world.



Dr. David Niemeijer is the CEO and founder of AssistiveWare. With over 20 years of experience, David is a pioneer in the field of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and assistive technology. He has created software for people with physical, vision and communication challenges, including the award-winning Proloquo2Go and Proloquo software. David has presented at international Assistive Technology and Augmentative and Alternative Communication conferences on five continents.

Minimum numbers:

Events require a minimum number of participants to proceed. We'll confirm 2 weeks before the date of each event and offer the option to attend at a different location or full refund of your ticket if we do not have sufficient numbers. Please keep this in mind when booking any travel and accommodations.

Who can attend?

This workshop is designed for professionals with medium to advanced AAC knowledge. That said, AAC users, family members, and others with strong AAC knowledge are very welcome too. Most of the content is geared towards supporting AAC users who are still developing language (vocabulary, syntax, and grammar), irrespective of their age.

Cost:

- \$120.00 for ATANZ members
- \$145.00 for non-members (remember membership is \$110)
- \$50.00 for whānau of an AAC user
- \$50.00 for clinical students (SLT/OT/student teachers)

Registrations close 17 February 2025 or when sold out – places are limited!

Register online on the ATANZ website – <https://atanz.org.nz/events>

Ensure you log in with your ATANZ membership to access the member discount rate!

Questions:

Please contact us with any questions at events@atanz.org.nz
