

>> Welcome to our webinar, and this is life-changing results, digital step-by-step instruction. My name is Samantha and I'm going to kick things off. Hi, everyone, and good afternoon or maybe good morning to you. It's afternoon where I'm. Over the past eight years, I've worked in various roles supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in Alabama and Colorado. I've worked in early intervention, but mostly in supported employment as an employment consultant. Most recently, I was an employment supervisor for a non-profit in Denver, Colorado. We supported and provided services such as paid internships, job development, customized employment, and long-term job coaching through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Over the past year, my life has brought me to Buffalo, New York, which is where I'm right now. Through the Colorado DVR office and their partnership with the avail assistive technology tool, I had the opportunity to join the avail team. With that, I would like to introduce you to two people with the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation that I've had the pleasure of working with for over the past 4.5 years. Tracy, I'll kick it off to you first to introduce yourself.

>> Thank you, Sam. My name is Tracy Rushing and I work for the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. For those of you that may not know we're a program that helps people with disabilities pursue their employment goals that have barriers to employment. I currently I'm a supervisor, considered a district supervisor. I supervise nine counselors and three admins. I've worked for the division for 20 years and have been a counselor, have been a [inaudible 00:01:53] also worked with the blind union for a few years, which was really enlightening for assistive technology for sure. I'm excited to be here. I love avail and excited to share our experience with that. Thank you.

>> Up to you Charlyna.

>> Yes, I'm Charlyna Johnson-Stark also with DVR, Tracy is my boss. Hopefully, we do great today so Tracy can put it on my performance view. My background a little bit is, I have a bachelor's degree in communicative disorders, speech topology, and a master's in rehabilitation counseling. I worked in Illinois at an agency that was a day program, vocational program, I mean also a school for individuals with intellectual and developmental disability. Then, when I came here to Colorado, I worked as an IPS job developer for individuals with significant mental health needs and then started my beautiful journey at DVR about six years ago where I work as a vocational counselor. Right now currently I am the lead counselor for supported employment individual with intellectual and developmental disabilities and subject matter expert for the Denver Golden-Aurora in Centennial offices.

>> Thank you. This is just our agenda for today. Before we get started, first, we're going to discuss the difference between assistive technology and technology to assist. For some of you, this may be a little bit elementary, but it's important that everyone here understands the difference so that you know the options available to you and how each one can help an individual that you're supporting. First, we are going to take a poll with the group by asking, when you hear about assistive technology, what comes to mind? How would you define assistive technology? This

poll is anonymous and so the options are a piece of equipment that is used to increase or maintain or improve functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. A Light mid or high-tech tool or device that helps people with disabilities perform tasks with greater ease. A software accommodation that enhances learning, working in daily living. All of the above or none of the above? Just give it a few minutes. The poll looks like it disappeared for a couple of people. Can you see it again? No?

>> We're going to relaunch it.

>> Okay.Thank you. There we go.

>> We're going to end it and share the results.

>> Perfect. All of the above. I'm going to exit out of that now. That was perfect and so these may have been some of the types of images that popped into your mind. A tangible piece of equipment or a physical item used to help support an individual with a disability. This is definitely the common perception. When learning about assistive technology options out there, it's important to understand that it's not just a device or a piece of equipment made for an impairment or a specific disability. It could also be technology that assists in individuals such as educational software, software accommodations, and curriculum aids designed to build confidence in learning new skills, provide reassurance and help achieve independence at home, in the workplace, and in the community. Really, different people require different assistive technologies. The biggest obstacle is knowing what's out there and how it can truly assist to impact the lives and how to achieve the financial support needed to embrace that technology. I'll turn it to Tracy and Charlyna if you could just talk about how would you define assistive technology and how people can better understand some of the less common known tools.

>> Sure, I can take that a little bit and just say, especially when I worked at the blind unit, assistive technology is so commonly used within that disability group and it's in people become very educated about it. I think there's a lot of other areas where we can use the assistive technology that maybe we haven't thought about it. We think about only looking at maybe something that's physically bond like the blind, you can't use your fingers and things of that nature. What we're going to talk about today is things like memory cognition and executive functioning and how we can have the assistive technology to assist with some of those areas. That's a little underutilized, I think than other areas.

>> Charlyna, did you have anything to add to that?

>> No, I would just say, when we're thinking about assistive technology, like you were mentioning, not necessarily just some of those physical things, but also things like closed captioning, computer software and things like that that are not always the first thing that comes to our mind is are things that we utilize them.

>> Thank you.

>> We would love to share this video which highlights two individuals in Colorado who use assistive technology as a tool to learn and reach their goals with independent living and their unemployment. Charlene you worked with Lindsay and your colleague worked with Katrina as their counselors. Before we share the video, do you mind sharing a little backstory on both Lindsay and Katrina and then as well as how Colorado DVR became aware of Avail during the pandemic?

>> Absolutely. Katrina is currently 22 years old. She has a developmental disability and a mood disorder and uses a service animal in everyday life. She got a paid work experience at Redstone vet and before that, she had never worked before beyond just volunteering. Originally, some of the challenges with her employment were things like stamina. She was working a one hour shift per week, struggled with decision-making, taking initiative, routines, and really had low self-confidence and a lack of being sufficient and independent in everyday tasks without assistance from her mom. In addition, she also has some rights restrictions in place, and one of those being restricted access to the Internet. With Avail, Katrina was really able to be successful at Redstone vet, where she helps with grooming, laundry, cleaning, things like that. She was able to increase the stamina to four hours per week, which was great. Really supplemented some of her tasks that her service animals performing at home since she couldn't bring him to the vet with her for work. Outside of work, Katrina is actually still using Avail for things like medication reminders and her daily morning and night-time routine, doing alarm and doing some light cooking and home care, which were all things that she was not doing by herself before using Avail. Then Lindsay, she is 31 years old. She has CP and also an intellectual disability. She uses an augmentative communication device, an iPad for speech. She really had some difficulty controlling her fine and gross motor movements, struggled with things like comprehension, memory, and processing. She did have some work experience. She actually worked at ANP for quite a long time, but she really was doing the same things over and over. There was no room for growth. Her job was really stagnant, but she wanted something else that was a little more social, but she wasn't really sure how to go about doing that because she had just been performing the same job task for 12 years. With Avail, Lindsay was able to learn a bunch of new tasks at TJ Maxx, where she's still currently working. She got assistance with clocking in, getting her locker, sanitizing, and collecting cards, and using Avail for all of those things. In the last few months, there's been some staffing changes and there has been times in which Lindsay didn't have a physical job coach available to her and she's still able to maintain employment with using Avail even without that physical person there to help on the job. That's really awesome. How can we find out about Avail or how we started using it? It really came at the perfect time for DVR. We really needed to shift gears during the pandemic. Employers didn't want any extra staff. There's restriction on how many employees can be in the building. Job coaching agencies were trying to figure out how to do things virtually, not knowing, can we go in person, what's going on. Avail really allowed us to have that support that was needed on the job site without actually having a physical person there one-on-one with all those individual. View the video. [LAUGHTER]

>> Thank you. [LAUGHTER]

>> [MUSIC] The impact of the Avail software is changing our lives.

>> With Avail, it's easier for me to go through my day.

>> The confidence that comes from using the Avail software just goes out into the community and every aspects of her life,.

>> Avail has helped her with their time management. She's getting through things much quicker and getting through them with much more confidence.

>> I have seen her take more responsibility for herself and some tasks around the house.

>> Lindsay just started working at TJ Maxx. We are using Avail for her cleaning cards. She needs some of the reminders to know how many cards to have in each line.

>> I am good at using Avail. It can help me interact with customers. Avail helps me remember the little details.

>> We are using the avail software for Katrina to get her through her tasks, through work. How to do laundry, how to help in the grooming room with Miss Ashley, give a bath and what's awesome about that as since she's been on the software, she's been able to be more independent in those tasks.

>> It helps her be more independent. I've definitely seen an improvement. She's able to complete these tasks on her own. She can reference back to the software versus having a job coach there.

>> It also helps the employer and Lindsay's coworkers because she is more independent at her job and so if she has a question sometimes she can just refer to Avail.

>> Using Avail makes me feel really good and comfortable. I would really share it with my friends. They would really love it. [MUSIC]

>> These are some tools being used in place of assistive technology currently. Tracy or Charlene, what are some manual and high level, one-to-one tools used today in place of assistive technology and how do you think these types of tools and manual reinforcements are affecting the fade-out process or maybe delaying progression when learning a task or reaching a goal?

>> Sure, I think one of the things we use very commonly in DVR as a job coach to assist with learning and other things that are needed in the workplace, whether it'd be workplace expectations, sometimes even help finding or moving around say in a large system like a large hospital. It's really a person that we're using a lot for these, all these activities. Some of those activities can be done through Avail, can be done remotely. One of the things we've talked about with job coaching is a lot of people

want to work middle of the day. A lot of our folks that are developmentally disabled they want to work 10:00-2:00. You're not stuck in traffic. It's later in the day, and it's pretty impossible for a job coach to manage everyone who wants work 10:00-2:00 but they can through Avail. That's one of the things that comes to my mind when I think about it and I know with Katrina, knowing that family very well and working with them over the years, they've tried everything. They've tried all the little verbal prompts, as well as a lot of picture prompts for her to know how to brush your teeth and know the next steps to everything. It still required the verbal prompt with the visual prompt to do that. It needed two versus now she has Avail she has one. That's something that I would offer around that. Charlene did you have something you want to add?

>> I just think that some of these you were mentioning, some of the devices using different types of apps on an iPad or having a picture chart and things like that still require the individual to have that initiative to look at that use that being able to read that, things like that. Whereas avail has potential for videos, pictures, voice prompts, things like that in order to really have that person who own their own independence and be able to do those tasks without that other physical persons still helping them manage through those.

>> Thank you. Some of the barriers to accessing the assistive technology or the roadblocks that someone may encounter or people may think that they'll encounter when trying to access assistive technology or technology to assist either from a support capacity or the individual directly. Tracy, do you have any thoughts on that?

>> I think sometimes assistive technology can be costly and other times it's not as costly and I think I know is DVR we do a lot of assistive technology. We're always looking at how to address barriers to employment and assistive technology is one of those ways we do that. But there are, if you have kids in school, typically there is an Assistive Technology person that is attached to the school system. I would encourage people to if don't know where to go, looking at independent living centers across the United States, they can be very resourceful for some of these, maybe not the dollars associated with it would no local community resources and avenues to sources for funding. I think one of the groups, I think that's left out a lot is our intellectual and developmental disabled population, because there's a lot of assumptions made that they can't benefit from it maybe there are two well-functioning and we've seen exactly the opposite with the veil, we've seen individuals be able to be much more independent, more confident, really owning their own learning and their own mastery of skill versus somebody else telling them what to do. I think if you have worked in that arena, you know that everybody tells them what to do. They really don't have their voice and so I think it's really important to give people their own voice and their own opportunities and control over some of that learning and what they want to do. I think that's something that's underutilized in the disabled community.

>> I definitely can add to that. I think that as a job coach or employment consultant, you sometimes are the main support for someone who's looking for the job or their

main communication. You're talking to them and working with them and finding out what their goals are and maybe you're documenting them in case notes or other documents, but that individual doesn't always see that or there's not like an easier way for them to see that unless it's maybe written down or printed out for them, where as if it was assistive technology on their phone or their tablet, they get to see it really quickly, really easily and then maybe eventually say, hey, I want to change this up or this is what I'm working on or I've achieved this so I definitely agree with that.

>> I think it's exposure to, I could say, I was fortunate enough to work in the Blind provision for about three years. During that time, I attended assistive technology pairs at least twice a year. I was constantly in the know of what was happening for people who are visually impaired but that is not something that occurs in other disability groups. I think it's up to us to seek and find some of that stuff and find out how we can be just as informed as people in the visual impairment arena.

>> Thank you. We're going to look at some step-by-step digital instruction. In the video with Katrina and Lindsey, they were using technology to assist them in their day to day and while at work, they were using a veil and they were using it on a phone or a tablet. In this image right here shows a list of tasks based on the goals that Lindsey was specifically working on at home and at work. You can see this was what she saw when she was on her veil and her list of goals that she was working on. We want to talk a little bit more about step-by-step digital instruction and how it can help individuals with disabilities. Tracy, you may have already mentioned this, but can you talk a little bit about the individuals that you guys have worked with that have used it and maybe just a brief overview of what it is. I know you talked a little bit, but anything else to add?

>> We had individuals use it like we've seen in the videos for job and home task, but we've also had individuals use it for things like pre-employment transition services. Our youth that are 15-21 in school that need additional supports to help them get job ready, that maybe we're enhancing what the school district has is doing in their transition program. But we can really address some of those things remotely with that individual and help them get ready for employment. One of the areas that we've used it as project search, so if folks aren't familiar with project search, briefly, project search is a partnership with DVR project search and typically a hospital, it doesn't need to be a hospital, but it typically is. It's 12 internships for a whole year and their last year of transitions. Actually, it's only going to digital score, intellectually limited or IDD population, and so working in a large hospital can present a number of challenges for individuals that have this disability way finding in a large hospital. Looking at professionalism, do they always remember that doctor's name or that supervisor's name? Maybe they can have a picture of them with their name to remind them so that they can be more professional in that setting, as well as the systematic instruction in the variety of places within the hospital. What I liked about project search and how we'll develop a whole library so the next person that comes, you'll get to this, I think in showing how you've set this up. But what's nice about available, you can set it up individually or you can just pull it from a library

and put it into their system. That's going to be a beautiful thing long-term for project search in a large hospital setting, our project search site has 58 internships available to someone, over time you could see how this could really benefit that program and really helping the individual be independent a lot quicker than one job coach for 12 people in a large hospital. Well, those are some of the examples.

>> I don't have anything else to add to that. [LAUGHTER]. In this video, it's going to play, but I'm just going to pause really quick because it does have sound. But you're going to see a task and avail that shows Katrina's morning routine as she gets ready for work. She's using image prompts and audio prompts to complete the morning routine and her job coach helped create these tasks with her involved in it as well. I'll show you that and you'll hear a little bit in this video.

>> Fill your water bottle with freshwater and then set it on the table. Get your mask and put it by your water bottle on the table. Get your work ID and put it on.

>> Be ready to go by 9:20.

>> That is the view that Katrina would see each morning when she would complete this routine. She would also see this list of tasks in her avail as well and then these are some of the images or videos that were in some of these tasks. But she would get to click through and use avail while she was completing that routine. Charlene, any other thoughts on how Avail or Katrina used the assistive technology to reinforce and help her with her independent living skills as well as get ready for work?

>> Yeah. I think something that was really cool about avail is that Katrina was doing work tasks originally. Things like cleaning and laundry and things like that and she was able to carry some of those transferable skills over to her home life as well. She was able to set up some similar tasks at home, so doing laundry at home, doing some cleaning things, cleaning up her room, tidying up things like that. That previously, she was not taking initiative on number 1, but also having her assistance of her mom to do all of those things. I think it shows on there like her morning routine, so previously before Avail, mom was helping with getting the toothpaste on the toothbrush, washing her face, doing all of those things that an individual without intellectual disability might take that for granted but of course, that's what we do in the morning, but for someone who really doesn't have, not the ability, but doesn't really absorb as well the same routines even though she's doing it each day, she was able to be so independent at home just by having the Avail software there with her and being able to do things at work and at home and even saying, okay, I think I want to try this new thing and continuing to add tasks and built her independence.

>> Yes. Whenever you were talking, I also thought about sometimes all of those things that she was doing, even though she originally started with work tasks, when it led to independent living tasks at home, like doing your laundry or that morning routine that her mom was helping her with before, whereas employment in the past people have been resistant to go into employment and maybe going to like a day program instead because of that consistent schedule or all of the reasons why and

so if she had the job and she was doing okay at the job, but her mom was having to help her with her morning routine, always wash her uniform, always get her lunch ready, it could build up some resistance to going out into the community and working where now she can all of those things at home also really apply to work and can help her retain that job and be more prepared for work and maybe learn new tasks that work. It just helps really with the overall process of it.

>> I just wanted to add, I mean imagine yourself being in a position where somebody is always telling you what to do and nagging you along your way, through your morning routine and everything that you need to do and then all of a sudden that no longer needs to happen for both parties. How amazing that can be. Talking with Katrina's mom, she's like I was able to check emails and blow dry my hair while Katrina was getting ready to go. That's the first time I've ever been able to do that. Small potatoes to us, huge to mom. Mom's exhausted and so now she's actually getting some time back for herself and I just don't think you can put a price tag on that. I think the other thing that I think with Katrina, I would just mention that and it's not in this video, it's in a different video. But the day that Katrina went to get her nails or her hair done one day, it was noticeably different, then people were saying what's different about Katrina, something's different? I just see something different and it was her confidence. That was super invaluable. It's just that little piece of information for that person. I mean, Katrina has come a long way she's got ways to go, to be independent, that's her goal and I think she really can achieve that goal eventually.

>> Thank you. This slide is going to show a video of at work, step-by-step digital instruction and task analysis, and what it could look like at work. Right now you're seeing a task in avail for a young man, his name is Domino. He works at a hotel in a janitorial crew where he cleans common areas in the hotel and so what you just saw, I'll play it again, is a list of his tasks and then what it looks like for him to complete each of those tasks and then what his dashboard looks like as well. Here's an image of Domino using the Avail software while he's completing those tasks. Charlene or Tracy, any other thoughts on just how assistive technology could prepare someone for employment or just while they're on the job using it.

>> I know we hadn't said this before, but this doesn't require Internet to use and so in a lot of situations when we work with individuals in a workplace, they don't want them on their phone, so maybe a tablet or something else that is shut down from the Internet. I just wanted to say it can be very stand-alone, but I think that this is a perfect example of some variety of tasks that a person can do it. I would also say that use your imagination, you really can do anything with this software and it is a software, not an app. Although it is managed through an application, it is like software like Jaws or Dragon software. This is very similar. But really you can use it in a lot of different ways. We are using it now with someone and I always forget the terminology, but that always repeats everything you say, rather than having a dialogue with you and so we're looking at how we can use avail to help him stop that behavior because it's a behavior, it's a footprint skill that he's developed his whole life, he's in his 30s and it's really preventing him from going to work and so if we can

help him actually converse with people, we might be able to help him achieve with that.

>> Another thought that I hadn't, there's an individual who's also using, it's not Domino, but it's someone else who's using Avail in a hotel and they were preparing the hotel rooms to get ready for the next guest and it was a 72 long list checklist of what to do and that individual was using Avail to essentially check off those tasks and the employer said he is the only employee who is actually completing all 72 because he was able to use Avail to do that [LAUGHTER] and do it correctly. It's of course benefiting the individual and maybe the rest of their supports, but for the employer, it also can help with accuracy, hopefully, retention in the job. Someone who wants to learn more and then has the tools that they need to gain those skills and help that business out as well.

>> One thing I will add really quick that I put in the chat too like so, I have an individual that we just started working with that Avail is really going to be perfect for their working and doing some meal prep and things like that in a really small kitchen, a pretty tiny restaurant and the employer said, "We just don't have the space for a job coach to be back here. It's already sweaty, hot, we got knives, we got everything. We can't have more people than we need." Having an iPad this big sitting there is taking up no space at all and it's really instrumental in this person's success. If you're working at a restaurant, we can't be eyeballing and stuff and making up our own recipes on the back. It has to be really consistent and needs to be done a certain way, things that he needs to be chopped to a certain size, things like that and that's where these pictures, videos, things like that are awesome for this individual to be able to get that support that they need. Outside of the job, they're working with a job coach in a kitchen, but it's not the kitchen that they're working in, so Avail can really help them in the environment that they're working in get those supports.

>> Yeah and to that point, like sometimes employers don't like a job coach or an employment consultant or specialist, isn't a widely known job, sometimes and so employer may be like, "Who are you or why do you need to be here?" Until they may be resistant to that and then on the other hand, if an individual to give them that dignity of risk, to learn that job, maybe struggled just a little bit, you learn what that business is and communicating with their coworkers, their manager, etc and so the job coach can begin to that fade away process, but still use the assistive technology, in that small environment or in a business that really is not conducive to have a job coach there. This I'll replay it again, but ways to implement step-by-step digital instruction.

Tracy, do you mind sharing a little bit about some of these ways?

>> Sure. I think we look at it, look at it fail like anything. What are we using it for? Sometimes it can just be temporary learning. Lindsey might be a good example. She's probably mastered the skills now maybe she's using Avail for other things, so she's mastering learning so it's temporary potentially. I had an individual that I

purchased Avail for because he been at Walmart for five years. But every time corporate comes in, he freezes up and he can't do his job. We did some stress management for him and then he wanted to learn how to cook and be more independent, so we're teaching him how to cook through Avail. It depends. It could be goal settings, some specific things like learning how to cook, it could be reducing the human rights descriptions like in Katrina's case, so Katrina cannot be unsupervised at anytime. That's very limiting. It's limiting for your life. She can't live independently. She's looking at systematically making bowls or she can reduce her human rights restrictions so that she can have a long time in the community, a long time at home and eventually live independently. That's a definitely a long-term goal for her. I explained earlier about the individual who would repeat what we say so maybe some communication skills or other types of coping strategies, the stress depression, I think there can be a lot of ways that this can be utilized. One of the things that was on Lindsey's, was that you might have seen it said text. Lindsey, you may know individuals like these that are chronic callers, they're going to call you 20 times in a week because they have a question they need answered now. They were successfully able to reduce the number of texts and calls to the job post significantly by using Avail. You don't want your individual calling an employer 20 times in a week to get an answer, so we have to teach behaviors that are appropriate and Avails, we've been able to use it in so many different ways. It's been pretty exciting.

>> Yeah something else Lindsey used it for. Well it definitely reduced the amount of times that she was contacting her job coach, and other people and so that which was affecting her relationships out in the community. Because of that, she was able to have better relationships. One of the other things that she used it for was if she forgot what to say to a customer if they came up to her and asked her a question, she would have in her Avail what to say to a customer. It would have a picture and say, I'll go get a Manager for you. Then she could also press a play button and it would audibly say it as well. She could use that to also communicate with the customer if necessary. Those were some pretty cool things that Lindsey used it for. One of my other thoughts was, I know that some people are using it maybe at break time to take deep breathing exercises or during their 15-minute break, as well as if they become frustrated in any way then they may use it as, Tracy mentioned a coping strategy. Deep breathing or taking a minute or calling your job coach. It really is only limited by your imagination and how you could use it.

>> I think one of the areas that I see really an opportunity that hasn't been used as large as in the school systems. Because I feel that working with youth for many years and working with people that have an IEP of five or four, there's a lot of goals in those IEPs that are mandated. I think that one of my school districts has 2200 kids with an IEP. My whole unit has 700 cases. We can't possibly serve all those students, but they may benefit from something like Avail where they could work on their IEP goals, their transition goals, getting ready for employment, getting ready for adult life post K through tomorrow. I think that's an area that we really could expand the usage of Avail.

>> This video that I'm going to show it's muted as well. But it is around

assessments using task-based technology. Goal setting, conducting an assessment, reducing and increasing prompts, and then progress reporting with built-in assessments. For those who aren't really familiar with task analysis or maybe just unsure of how it plays a part in assessments, Tracy or Charlene, do you mind sharing how that works, and also just how it relates to vocational rehab as well?

>> Yeah I can take this one. Task analysis is really the process of breaking down a scale into smaller, more manageable components. Taking something that seems big and scary and working our way backwards to figure out how we can accomplish that task. It might be too challenging, too complex to really teach everything all at once. We break it down into different smaller goals, and then you can really monitor this progress by seeing, we're looking at it. We see an individual getting stuck on the third step every single time. Maybe that's what we need to focus on it and really job coach to that specific task rather than saying they're not doing this task right. We're able to really get down into the minute details, and figure out how we can accomplish that. It's more of a concrete way of identifying those different steps, and really putting attention to the different details in order to get that desired outcome at the end. With an MDVR, if we say, get out there and job coach on your job, that's super vague. It's more helpful to say, here are the different tasks this individual is working on. They got these two things down tech that they've been really practicing and doing well, but we're really struggling with this third thing that they need to do. By breaking it down into those smaller work tasks, we're able to get into the meat of how we can help that individual and individualize that coaching for whatever they need.

>> Thank you. You really don't have to be a task analysis expert to use Avail or this assistive technology. But to speak to that, how does Avail or the recording play a part in reducing the prompts or increasing a prompt? Or it may be adding or editing a goal, Tracy, do you have any thoughts on that?

>> I think that the reports over time can tell you the progress of that individual. As you can see what things will taper off and then things can be adjusted or removed as needed. It allows you to stay in real-time with an individual about what's happening rather than we typically get reports sometimes 45 days after service has been provided. The job coach can really stay in line with that. Sometimes you give somebody 30 hours to job coach, they might use it all without really understanding when that person might be mastering a service. Human to human versus something that's more digital, that can really let us know. They've mastered scale of one to three. We really need to focus on four to six now. Something like that.

>> Yeah. Just like really anything else. I can speak to Lindsay. Initially, she was learning, when she first got the job, she learned those initial tasks that she was hired for, but after a month, she learned those skills, and then she went to her job coach and said, "Hey, I want to learn how to do the goal back at TJ Maxx". They reduced the prompts for those initial tasks, and her job coach reduced the prompts for those initial task may be from a video to an image or an image to an audio or a description and then they added new tasks for her to go back at the store as well. Then that

task may have started out with videos or images as well and then overtime reduced.

>> I think as a DVR counselor, it can be super helpful for us because we're not there doing the job coaching, right? We're just getting the case notes or reports from the individual reports from the job coach and things like that and through checklists and things like that and reports we're able to see while this person is like really crushing these tasks they are getting, almost mastering it there at a really high percentage of proficiency and neat things. We can also use that to monitor ourselves and see how individuals are doing because I call an individual, I'm working with at bank, how's the job going on? It's good. That's about all the information I get. Looking at some of these avail reports and things I can see, this is person really struggling with x, y, and z. Let's talk to the job coach about how we can change this or this person is doing awesome at all these things. Maybe they do need more tasks on the job, or maybe they need maybe we can reduce some of these prompts and see how they're doing without it because ultimately, at the end of the day, some individuals will continue to need to use prompts, software, etc, for the life of their jobs, but some people aren't. They're going to fade away from it. They're going to become more independent on their own. At the end of the day, we want individuals to be as autonomous and independent as possible, whatever level that they are at. I think that that's really kind of reports and looking at both things that's helpful in that way.

>> Yeah, thank you. This is just talking about empowering individuals with tasks based technology. Just some of the ways that it can help them. Anything to add on for this slide, Tracy or Charlene?

>> The only thing that I would add that comes up sometimes is who's controlling the technology and it is the individuals still, even though you have a job coach and an administrator. But the individual who's actually using the technology has a lot of control over what they want to do, who they wanted to do with. I would just point out that to just note that that is. We would want to empower people to be autonomous, and this is one way that we can do that.

>> Thank you. We have another poll for the group. This one is, who can determine the best type of assistive technology to address the individual's barriers? A rehab engineer assessment, a rehab counselors, support provider, all of the above or none of the above?

>> We'll give everybody another minute. Okay. I'm going to share the results, Sam.

>> Okay

>> All right. Tracy or Charlene, do you guys want to talk a little bit about if someone's working with an individual and they think, it's something at work or at home or in the community would really benefit them especially if I can't be here every single time, especially if they're working that 10 to two shift and they have really high caseloads or a service agency who's maybe really low staffed, who can help identify assistive technology tools that could benefit those individuals?

>> Sure. I think it really can be all of those people. We here in Colorado have one place that we do assistive technology evaluations where we get in a really very large report that can tell us all the things we want to know about what this person needs to be successful. In some cases, we need that level of information. We need that report to really let us know. There's a lot of other situations where a service provider or maybe a DVR counselor will come across something and say, maybe they have somebody in school and they need, and I feel what that pen is, but there's a pen that you can take notes with. DVR counselor can say, "Yeah, talk with your disability service center at the school and let's get that for you." I think avail can be a lot like that as well. We do a lot of case consults with our counselors and people across the region about what kind of barriers are you struggling with this individual and avail it's just another tool kit in that toolbox to say, have you thought about trying this? This might be helpful for you. Again, you have to become more knowledgeable of all the things that are out there to have your toolkit or you're seeking a professional, whether it be the professional at the school system, the professional that you contract with, something of that nature. It really can be a lot of different ways and discover what these tools can do.

>> Thank you. This slide kind of goes along with that. An evaluation resources for assistive technology, additional equipment needed to accommodate that technology, and then training and implementing that technology. Who might train that individual to learn how to use it, and who might train the support that would be using it as well? Charlene, do you have any thoughts around that or anything that relates to that?

>> I think it's going to always come back to the individual on what their needs are. At DVR, that's our main focus is doing everything in an individual basis, basing it off of what their barriers and limitations are, but also what their strengths are. Sometimes we can have an individual who is really tech-savvy, and so they might not need as much instruction on how to do certain things. Then other individuals are starting from ground zero with not a ton of foundational skills in that area so I always use the classic DVR answer. It depends. [LAUGHTER] But that could be a wide variety of people from a job coach, a paraprofessional, the individual themselves, their parents, and I think that's why using kind of the software-based technology is really a great advantage because it's not limited to a certain environment either where that training could take place.

>> Something I think just with working with vocational rehab and I know this is vocational rehab submission as well and just like you said, it's about the individual. If an individual needed shoes, a particular type of shoes for work or a particular uniform for work, then vocational rehab and their job coach are going to help them get that particular pair of shoes, that particular uniform, learned that particular bus route. This is the same thing. If they would like to use a particular type of assistive technology, then that's what we're here to do to help them. If they or additionally, if they wanted to work in retail and they had the interests and the skills to do that, we're going to help them try to find that job that they want to go to every day because we want them to be happy in their jobs. That's how I think about it as well.

All right, so we have another poll, is our last poll. What are some resources available to provide assistive technology? State vocational rehab, Medicaid waiver, Special Education Programs, independent living centers, all of the above, none of the above?

About 50 percent. We'll give everyone a few more seconds to answer. I think we'll end it and share the results. All of the above [LAUGHTER] We knew that. These are some of the resources available to learn more about assistive technology. If you're a counselor or an educator, an employment specialist, a job coach, then you may go to a rehab engineer, or a state-approved assistive technology vendor, or you might go to your counselor with vocational rehab. If you're a parent or a caregiver, you may go to vocational rehab, Medicaid, or the support providers, including community programs, independent living, and supported employment agencies to find out more about assistive technology. Anything else you'd like to add, Tracy or Charlyna?

Just that some of these things may be called different things across the US. Just know that. I would just look in your local community about what might be available.

Thank you.

I think it's not going to be limited to just one of these things kills like with individuals that we're working with, obviously, we work at DVR. Where the individuals who were supporting with avail where paying for that license and things like that to start. But we are a temporary service. Once their cases successfully closed with us, we're looking to see what other supports are out there so for a lot of the individuals that I'm working with, that's going to be the Medicaid waiver. That's eventually going to pick up the license down the road and things like that so that that person can continue to use avail and not be like, I can't move forward without it and so there's an option more than just one [LAUGHTER].

That is what we have for you. I know there have been some questions in the chat. I think now Becky if people want to unmute and ask questions or is there anything we want to cover? There was maybe covered in the chat and go ahead and talk to Charlyna or Tracy.

We'll stand for that a question in the chat just now. Help people create past plans that certainly is a possibility. I think avail is relatively still new for us. We've only been exposed to it since 2020, we haven't gone down that road, but I absolutely think that is a possibility. I also think Abel's savings accounts or another way that people could talk money away for their avail. Having that, especially if they want to renew and they know they don't have a source like Medicaid or something else down the road. That can be another way people can prepare for the licensing continuation.

Perfect. Thank you. Something I thought of I think I saw something in the chat about it was like the reporting functions and I know actually that's on the call right now and I know that one of the organizations that he's involved with. When they pull a report from avail, they can actually put it into their case management system. I think Charlyna and I mentioned this as well, but that service provider could then share that report with the DVR counselor or a case manager, a parent, of course, the

individual as well. That's a nice way of showing an individual may be at their annual service plan or at the end of it, maybe if their employer requires like a 90-day evaluation and there may be up for being in the union or whatever the reason may be. Then you could bring that report to the employer and say, "These are the goals that they've reached over the last 60 or 90 days." Already well, I know we're coming up on time. Let's see. We'll ask how many folks in Colorado supporting with avail and how does the cost-benefit analysis?

Let me just take you back. When we learned about avail, it was so fresh and you're like, this is cool, but he can't get my head wrapped around it. We did basically a pilot project with just less than 10 people just to see. We were looking at things like the benefits to the individual course and how they could be more independent. But we're also taking a look at how it benefited the service provider because we know that in a lot of areas is limited service providers I mean, were wealthy here in the Denver area, we've got tons of great service providers and partners that we work with. Perhaps on the Eastern plains here at Colorado or even in the Western slope which is in the mountains. They don't have as many and so this can be traintive a way to augment what we don't have. We found that the benefits for avail like any software if you can't type on a computer you need dragging that really benefits you. If you have no vision and you need just to use a computer that really benefits you. What I do in my supervision with my staff as we talk about what are the barriers and what are the potential solutions to that barrier and avail may be one of those solutions. The cost-benefit, we don't look at it that way. We look at what is appropriate and necessary in these possible costs to address the barrier. I thought this person become fully in gainfully employed and their goals and so it in that order. If it's an expensive thing, but it's going to help them. We're going to purchase it. If it's necessary for them. That's how we came to learn and understand avail and know when and where we might use it.

I think one thing here if we're thinking just about straight costs about both and things like that. We are looking at, let's say DVR reimburses a job coach at \$50 an hour. It's not necessarily possible to have a hard number of well, we know avail eliminated x amount of job coaching hours because that's impossible to know. However, we can say, this individual started off with this many jobs working hours. We were able to reduce it may be more quickly than somebody who does not have this software. At the same time then that job coach is physically able to be on the job with somebody else at the same time. At the end of the day, that it's a cost-savings in itself and that we're able to help more individuals who need that job coaching support at the same time rather than saying, well, this agency doesn't have any job coaches available because they have a lot of people working, which is great. But then we have to find another person and things like that. It frees up time. It's hard to equate the individual's time with a dollar amount. But if you think about it that way, it's like a cost-saving measure in that.

To speak to Lindsey and Mary because I supervised Mary and worked with Lindsey. After Mary was able to set up avail for Lindsey. She was traveling there three times a week for a 45-minute drive there and back. That's a lot of time. Once Lindsey was

learning her task and the task or set up and Mary was able to support her. She was able to take some individuals off the waitlist, served other individuals, or if something came up with someone else. That's just an example to Charlyna this point. But I know we're on time, so if we miss any questions, we'll definitely follow up with you. This is my contact information and Tracy and Charlyna's contact information as well. Please feel free to reach out and I'm so glad we could be here today.