

## **September's independent living technology news**

Here's what's new in the world of independent living technology this month.

### **Public policy, legislation and campaigns**

#### **Access to Work announces Covid-19 extensions**

The government has announced a series of [new extensions to the Access to Work programme](#) designed to help disabled people secure, retain or return to employment during the Covid-19 pandemic. These changes include funding for additional support and equipment to work from home, extra taxi fares, mental health support and fast-tracking for certain groups.

#### **Interactive website offers advice on independent living technology**

Hertfordshire County Council has [produced an interactive online guide](#) to show how assistive technology can support people to live independently at home. The website allows users to click on different parts of a technology house to view examples of products and where they can be obtained.

#### **Research assesses technology benefits and challenges for care providers amid pandemic**

Oxford Brookes University, NHSX and Digital Social Care have [published a report](#) identifying the challenges and benefits for social care providers of using technology during the Covid-19 pandemic in England.

#### **New MSc in Educational Assistive Technology launched**

The University of Dundee has launched a new [MSc in Educational Assistive Technology](#) for teachers, therapists and others supporting disabled learners in specialist and mainstream education.

### **Technological developments and innovations**

#### **Amazon Fire TV debuts Text Banner for visually impaired people**

Amazon has unveiled a new accessibility feature on its Fire TV platform to help visually impaired people make onscreen text easier to read. [Text Banner](#) displays information such as the title and description of a film in a box that appears in a fixed location onscreen which users can customise to suit their needs.

#### **Disney releases new range of adapted children's costumes for Halloween**

Disney has launched a new range of adapted Halloween costumes inspired by popular characters such as Buzz Lightyear and Cinderella for disabled children. Available from [shopdisney.com](#), the inclusive clothing line features stretchy fabrics, openings for feeding tubes and long inseams.

#### **Samsung TVs exemplify accessibility for blind and visually impaired people**

Samsung's 2020 range of [new television models](#) have been awarded the Tried and Tested rating by the Royal National Institute of Blind People. The product range includes a number of useful accessibility features such as text-to-speech, the ability to magnify menus and a high contrast mode.

#### **Wireless headset promises smooth and easy electric wheelchair control**

A disabled inventor and entrepreneur has developed a wireless head-operated electric wheelchair control system. Marton Juhasz developed the [GyroSet Vigo](#) headset to provide an easier-to-use alternative to existing hands-free options such as chin-operated joysticks.

*These stories were originally published in the dispATches newsletter – a free monthly e-mail about assistive technologies that empower disabled and older people to live more independently. [Click here to sign up for dispATches](#).*