

# Assistive Technology and Independence



*“My Possum will let me do some of the things around the house that I have always had to rely on others to do.”*

## Case Study

Since moving into her flat in Inverurie in 2002, Paula has always wanted to do more for herself. She found this difficult, due to her limited mobility.

Staff tried various tools and gadgets to help Paula achieve her goal. Some did make a difference, but most were unsuitable.

Then Real Life Options contacted Robert Gordon's University (RGU), Aberdeen, who have been funded to assist and advise on Telecare – a programme of assistive technology to promote independence for people with physical and / or learning disabilities.

Liz Sergeant of RGU came and met Paula who explained to Liz what she wanted to be able to do:-

- To help more about the house
- To switch on her TV and change channels
- To use the telephone
- To answer her own door
- To be left in the house without the constant presence of staff





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Simple stuff really—for many of us, but a major challenge for Paula. Liz contacted Possum Ltd who are leaders in assistive technology and with their help Paula has had the most amazing 'smart stuff' installed in her house.

This is the start of a very exciting time for both Paula and her staff. Paula (and staff!) now have to learn to use the new technology and to understand how it will assist her.

What Paula and Possum can do:

- Switch on her TV
- Change the TV channels
- Switch on her bedroom lights
- Answer the telephone
- Call for staff assistance
- Open and close curtains
- Answer callers at the door
- Open and close the front door
- Switch on DVD / Radio / stereo

*"It's great - I press the button to start with, listen to the voice, press the button again when I hear the option I want and hey presto, my TV comes on; press again and I can change channels. It means such a lot to me."*

*Paula*

People with learning disabilities and intellectual impairments often need support to help them take control of their own lives. Real Life Options (RLO) strives to provide self-directed support that puts people with disabilities in control of their own lives.  
[www.reallifeoptions.org](http://www.reallifeoptions.org)

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