

IATP

ILLINOIS ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

Illinois CARE Connections

FY2023 SUMMARY



My mom is so grateful to be a recipient of an iPad. She uses her iPad to communicate with her grandson in the U.S. Army, to participate in Zoom meetings with her health care team, and, per her doctor's request, to become more social by facetimeing her friends and to increase her mental awareness through games that challenge thinking and problem-solving skills.

With kind regards,
Dr. Dawn W./
Daughter

Program Overview

In FY2023, IATP continued the Illinois CARE Connections (ICC) program with funding from the Illinois Department on Aging (IDoA). This program provides technology devices for socially isolated seniors and persons with disabilities who are clients of the IDoA. The Illinois Assistive Technology Program (IATP) implements the program by processing referrals, purchasing and assembling the technology bundle for each participant, and shipping the bundle to eligible recipients. The program uses an IATP-developed accessible online referral system.

Each bundle included a tablet, either an iPad or a Samsung Galaxy, keyboard, headphones, case, and the instruction manual produced by IATP in the language requested by the participant. Apps that were downloaded prior to shipping were FaceTime of Google Hangout, Zoom, and Covid Coach. In addition, printed information on UIC's Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) was included to encourage participants to register for the 6-class sessions on creating a wellness plan that is safe and easy to achieve, along with information about Illinois Pathways to Health, an interactive workshop that participants could access through their tablet.

Participants are eligible if they are age 60 or above, receiving services through IDoA's Community Care Program services, and are at risk of being socially isolated, experiencing loneliness and a lack of connectedness. During Fiscal Year 2023, IATP provided technical assistance (TA) to 5 participants who needed assistance with the tablet bundle received. Three of the 5 TA provided were in-person support and training, with 2 being provided by telephone. This was a significant drop in the number of TAs provided the previous year, which is attributed to the fact that the providers were able to step in with in-person supports as well as, on each tablet was a video training on the operation and use of the tablet as an ongoing resource for the participant. In addition, clear, concise, and accessible directions for operations of the device are included in the bundle for each package shipped in the needed language of the recipient.

Data Set Overview

A total of 560 referrals were approved in FY2023, with technology bundles (a tablet plus any add-ons needed to access the internet) provided to eligible recipients. This report provides an analysis of final data on the 560 technology bundles provided. Post bundle receipt data was obtained from 56% of all recipients.

Age

The majority of the 560 individuals who received technology bundles are in the age group of 65-79 (61%), with 18% older than 80 and, 21%, aged 60-64.

CHART 1
Age Distribution

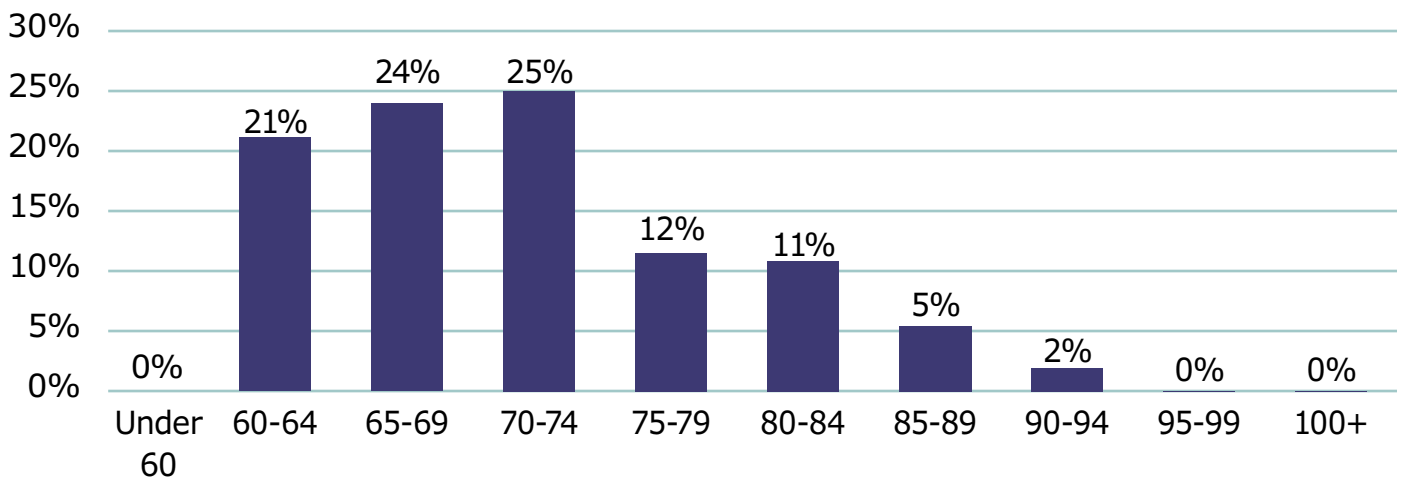


Chart 1 provides an overview of the age distribution of all bundle recipients.

Race

The majority of the 560 individuals who received technology bundles race is White 72% with 23% Black or African American and all other races less than 5%.

CHART 2
Race Distribution

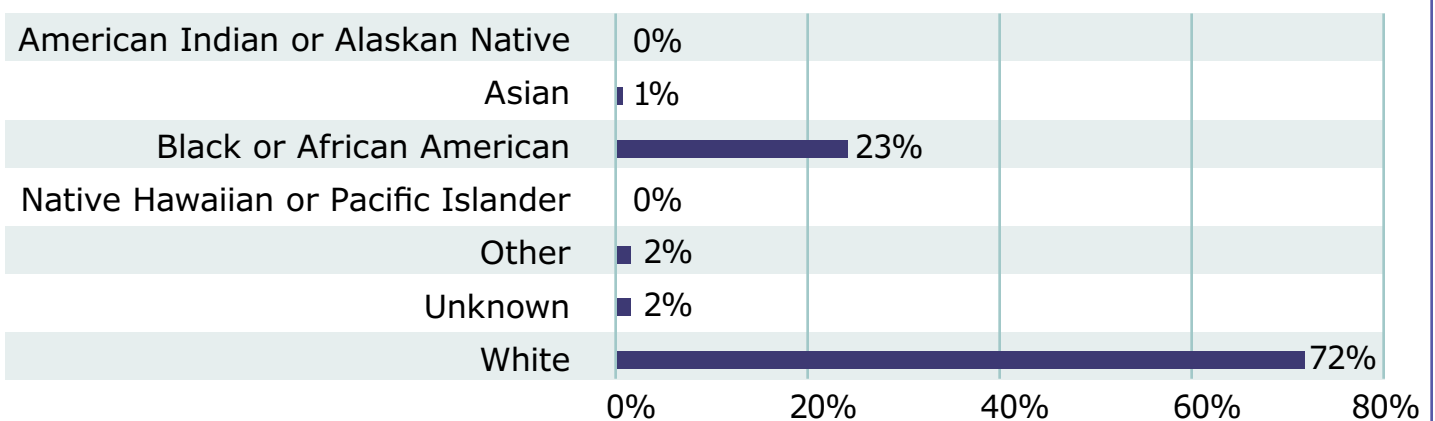


Chart 2 provides an overview of the Race distribution of all bundle recipients.

Planning and Service Areas (PSAs)

The majority of the 560 individuals who received technology bundles are in PSA 5 36%.

CHART 3
Planning and Service Areas (PSAs) Distribution

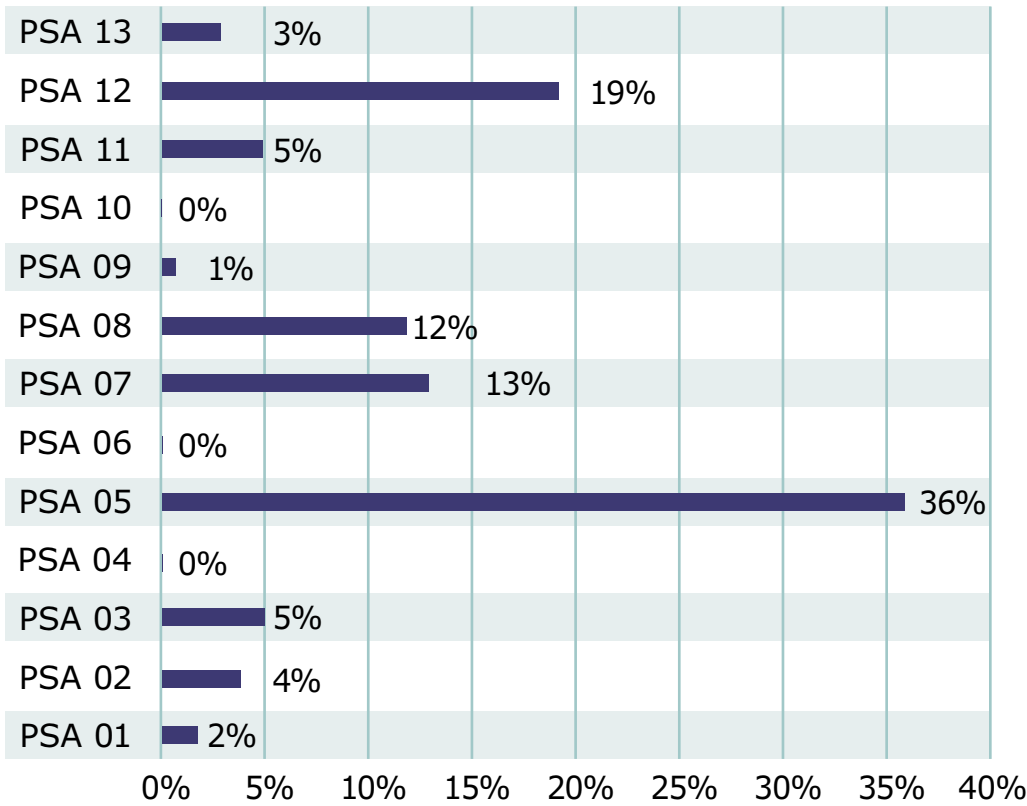
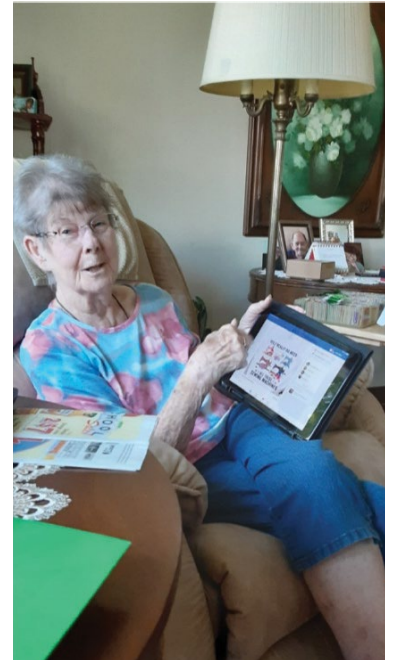


Chart 3 provides an overview of the Planning and Service Areas distribution of all bundle recipients.

Referral Reason

The majority of referrals identified combating social isolation (65%) as the primary desired outcome for obtaining the tablet bundle. The rest of the referrals identified using for recreational activities (15%), being able to communicate with family (10%), and being able to purchase necessities online (10%) as the primary desired outcome for technology use.



Anna Marie was thrilled to get her tablet. She uses it to facetime with her family, especially her grandchildren. Anna Maire is so excited to be able to see their faces and visit with them.



Functional Skills Needed to Use Tablet

Individuals completing a referral were asked to identify any functional limitations that would impact the ability of a recipient to use the tablet. This information was used to help identify any adaptations and/or peripherals that were needed for the basic tablet bundle. Questions were posed specific to interacting with a tablet. For example: Can the individual interact with a tablet without magnification, or do they need magnification? Almost all individuals referred had sufficient functional skills to use a tablet without significant adaptation. Specifically, 99% had sufficient cognition, 99% had sufficient motor skills, and 98% had sufficient hearing. Screen magnification was noted as needed in 17% of referrals, making vision the functional area that required the most adaptation to support tablet use.

I would like to thank you for this tablet. It helps me get where I need to go. I really appreciate it.

– James T.

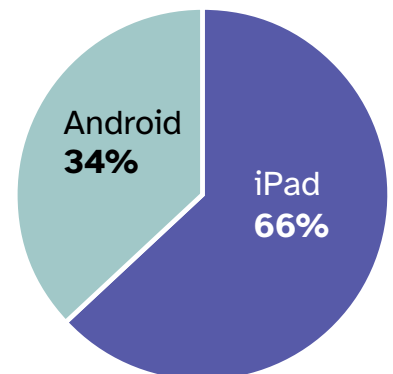
Bundle Types and Internet

Requests for iPads (66%) were at almost twice the rate as requests for Android-based tablets (34%). This significant preference for iPads could be based on past use of and familiarity with IOS devices, more superficial awareness of the Apple/iPad brand name, or possibly an artifact of family or provider influence when completing the referral form and making the tablet equipment request. Internet access hotspots were provided to about one-third (32%) of all recipients as part of the technology bundle.

- Total iPads 369
- Total Androids 191
- Total Hotspots 179

CHART 4
Tablet Type Provided

Chart 4 provides a summary of the type of tablet provided to bundle recipients.



Loneliness Rating

The UCLA Loneliness Rating Scale was administered at the time of client referral to identify a baseline rating of loneliness and again after receipt of the tablet bundle to identify any change in rated level of loneliness. This scale provides a rating of 3 to 9, with ratings of 3-5 identified as “not lonely” and ratings of 6-9 as “lonely”.

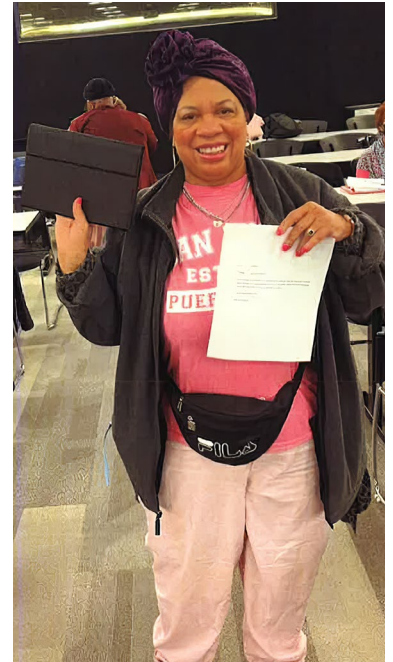
A total of 312 tablet bundle recipients reported pre and post-loneliness rating scale scores. Over two-thirds (67%) rated loneliness as less after obtaining the tablet bundle. Correlations between the age of clients who received a tablet bundle and loneliness ratings revealed no significant relationships. This was true for all recipients and for recipients by age group.

Prior Technology Use and Loneliness Rating Change

The change in loneliness rating was also analyzed as a function of prior tablet use. The majority (73%) of all bundle recipients had no prior tablet experience that would translate to using the bundle provided.

There was a slight difference in the level of loneliness rating improvement post bundle receipt between recipients who had prior tablet experience (1.19-point improvement) and those who did not (1.35-point improvement). Both moved from a lonely rating area (6+) to a not lonely rating area (4.6-4.8), with the recipients who had no prior tablet experience showing the larger impact on reducing loneliness.

It is important to note that the N of those with prior tablet experience is relatively small (85), making it difficult to draw any firm conclusions from this difference. In addition, this difference is reversed from previous fiscal year data where those with prior table usage reflected a slightly more significant improvement in loneliness rating. This suggests there may be other factors at play that may have a more direct impact on improvement other than prior technology experience.



I am writing to thank you for the wonderful tablet that I received. I use my tablet for Zoom, email, paying bills, and playing games.

Once again, thank you,
Barbara B.

Device and Instruction Use

Follow-up data from 312 bundle recipients indicate extensive use of the technology provided. Almost half of recipients (48%) reported using the device more than 5 times per week or daily. Another 41% reported using the device 2 to 5 times per week, which is still very regular use, while 11% indicated they used the device once a week. The majority of recipients (69%) used the instructions provided with the bundle shipped.

CHART 5
Use of Technology

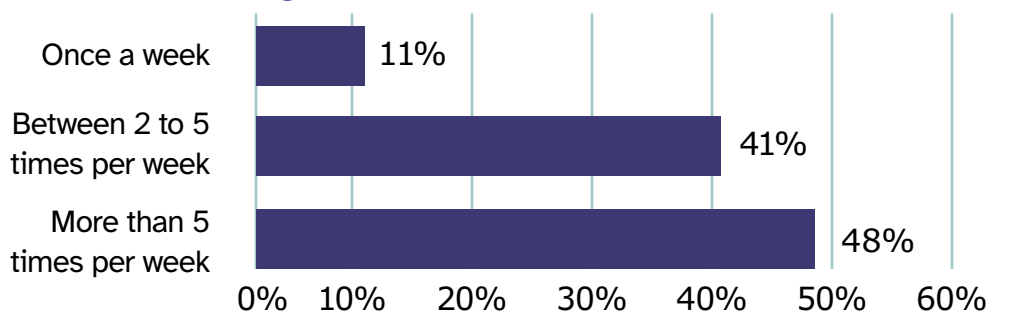


Chart 5 highlights the time of technology use by bundle recipients.

Outcomes and Satisfaction

Overall, 83% of bundle recipients reported that they would not have been able to obtain the technology needed to address their social isolation without the Illinois Care Connections program. Recipients were also asked to report their level of satisfaction with the Care Connections program. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of all recipients reported being highly satisfied or satisfied with the program.

Comparison with Prior Fiscal Year Data

Data for Fiscal Year 2023 was very similar to prior year data for age distribution, functional skills of recipients, types of tablets provided, prior technology experience of recipients, time of device use, instruction use, outcomes, and satisfaction. One change from prior year data was found in reason for referral with an increased percentage of recipients who identified using technology for recreational activities as the primary desired outcome for obtaining the tablet bundle. Another change was a significant decrease in the percentage of recipients needing a hotspot, was 59% last year and is 32% this year. The other change was discussed in Prior Technology Use and Loneliness Rating Change section. These data shifts will be followed in future years to identify consistent change trends.

Average Bundle Cost

Based on the experience participants previously had with Apple or Android products, the ICC program provided participants with the option between an iPad or Galaxy bundle to reduce the learning curve of a new operating system. The average cost of the iPad bundle was \$357. If the bundle included internet service, the iPad bundle cost was \$1,517.13. The average cost of the Galaxy bundle was \$314. If the bundle included internet service, the Galaxy bundle cost \$1,474. The total amount spent on equipment during FY 2024 was \$322,863.00.



CHART 6
Average Retail Cost Per Bundle Type

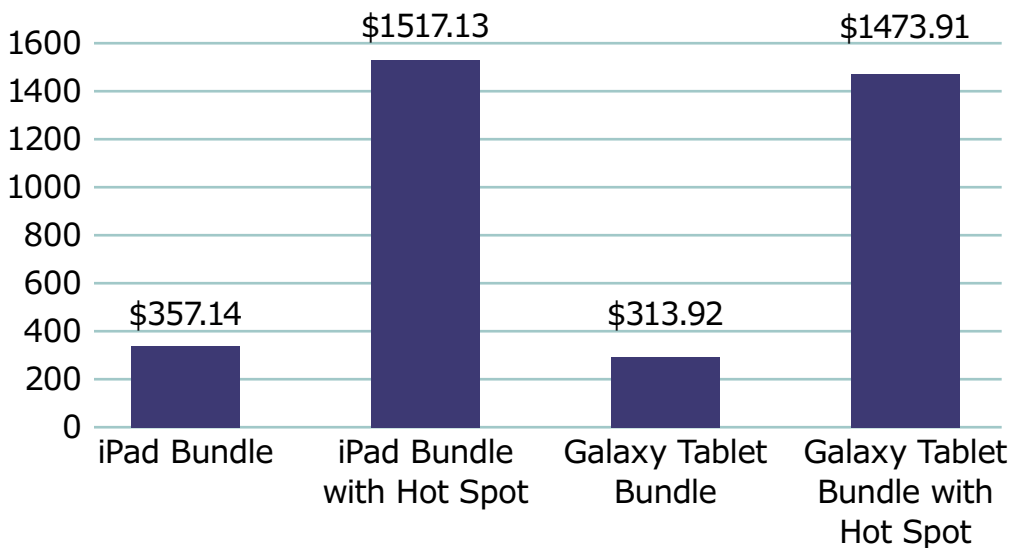


Chart 6 provides a summary of the average retail cost per bundle type.

Future Plans

IDoA has partnered with IATP for Fiscal Year 2024, to offer seniors aged 60 and above who are receiving services through a Community Care Program statewide continued access to tablet bundles to increase socialization with family and friends and continue to decrease the feelings of loneliness and promote safety and wellness. In addition, the ICC program for FY 2024 has been expanded to include assistive technology devices and durable medical equipment to increase safety, confidence, and greater independence in remaining in their home.

ICC Raises the Bar for Quality Connections

Patricia Donoho says receiving an Illinois Care Connections (ICC) technology bundle has been lifechanging! Using the iPad keeps her connected to her family and simplifies her shopping needs.

Through a connection with a Senior Resource Center, Patricia was referred to IATP to receive a technology bundle through ICC. She received an iPad, case, stand, and headphones.

Recently, Patricia went on a vacation with her family. With the help of one of her grandchildren, she was able to use her iPad to create a plan for sightseeing, meals, and meeting points. Not only did it make the trip more organized, but the iPad also allowed Patricia to be a part of the planning process.

Connection to others is a vital part of good mental health. With the ICC tech bundle, Patricia can stay connected to her family, especially her grandchildren. She can video chat, receive and save photos, and keep up with all the latest happenings in the lives of her grandchildren.

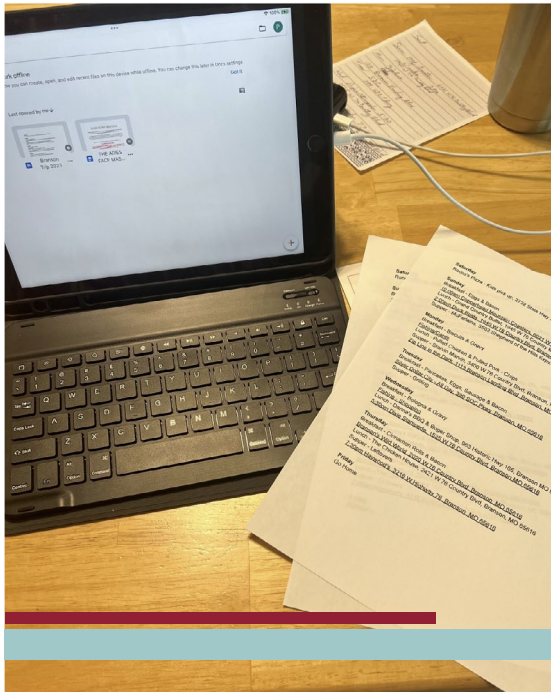
The Gamechanger app Patricia installed onto her iPad allows her to watch her grandson's participation in sports. She says, "It is like we are at the games with him!"

Since COVID, Patricia still prefers to order online instead of going into stores. She is able to order household and pet needs easily. The larger screen provided by the iPad makes shopping much easier than on a phone.

Patricia uses the iPad up to five times a week. Staying in touch with her grandkids as they are growing and changing enriches her life and the lives of her grandchildren as well.

According to Patricia, the ICC tech bundle has, "Raised the bar so high to share family's lives and shopping. Thank you!"

IATP is honored to be a part of the ICC program and support the recipients' ability to stay connected with their families and communities.



PLANNING

CONNECTIONS

PARTICIPATION

SHOPPING

ENRICHMENT



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