**Webinar: 7 April 2020, Keeping in Touch**

**Sarah Botterill:** Welcome everybody. Thanks ever so much for joining us for ability net life. Our focus today is going to be on how we can stay connected. So, something we've been thinking about a lot. a colleague of mine has written a blog for AbilityNet; the press is using this phrase a lot around social distancing and social isolation.

And actually, it's more useful in a way to think about it as a, as a physical distance thing. And there's a very genuine belief from us and from the partners who joined us today that using technology, we can maintain that social contact in the times that we live in today, it's never been more important.

So I’ll just do a brief round of introductions. So my name's Sarah. I'm Marketing Manager for Free Services for AbilityNet. and I'm delighted to be joined by so many people today, including attendees.

I'm also joined by our County coordinator, Chris Grant.

From Care for the Carers, we've got Carole Gregory. I'm really pleased to be joined by her and by Barbara [Cormie] from Action for Carers. And then we also have James Beecher joining us from Citizens Online.

A little bit of housekeeping and we'll get stuck in. What we're going to be doing today is our colleagues from Carers organizations who will be talking about some specific tips for carers in these times and I think that's an element of this physical distancing is that often we might be caring for people who were physically close to us, but now because of the new guidelines that were in place, we're having to do that at a distance and that raises some very particular challenges.

So we'll be talking about that in the context of using technology to stay in touch.

Then we'll be looking at some means of keeping in touch with people there are lots of things that you can do with the devices that you have already. And so, we'll be running you through those.

And then we'll also be looking at some specific communication devices, which are available to help you stay in touch throughout.

We'll be looking at the advantages and disadvantages , and we won't have a lot of time to do step by step, how to set these up, but we will be doing some signposting around where you can find further information on that.

In terms of housekeeping, we are running live captions during the webinar. After the webinar finishes, slides, transcript and recording will be made available to everybody.

If you could use the Q and A window to ask any specific questions. My colleague Mark is monitoring the chat window for general conversation or if anyone has any technical issues.

Afterwards we'll be asking you for feedback on the webinar. So now, I'd like to throw over to you Carole for you to give us some tips.

**Carole Gregory:** Sometimes this notion of caring at a distance, and the role of, I guess, technology and how you use it to communicate during this challenging time.

At the forefront of this has got to be a wellbeing and because these can be testing times and when people are new to technology, that's even more testing.

Communication is so, so important.

And for people that are not used to technology, to having to get to grips with it, we shouldn't underestimate how challenging that is. It's about planning. I think it's about thinking about this could be quite stressful and how you're going to manage that stress before, during, and after.

I think that that's really, really important and it's about getting somebody that knows to talk you through it or going online for some really good guidance.

**Sarah Botterill:** The common thread that runs through these tips that you've given us here is that even though they are challenging times, there's an element I think of self-care in these, that you can only provide the best care to the people you're caring for if you're looking after yourself at the same time.

So you don't want to suddenly be overloaded with lots of tech.

I think that's what you're saying. Is that right?

**Carole Gregory:** Completely. Caring can be really stressful anyway. There's lots of demands. Carers are spinning lots of plates, especially if they're not living with the person that they're caring for.

They may still be having to do shopping and going out and about, and we all know that shopping currently is incredibly stressful.

Trying to do that online is also incredibly stressful at the moment.

So it's about recognizing that these tech challenges are going to add to the stress levels and it's important carers take care of their self and have strategies in place for dealing with that because if they don't, it will take them down a path of being worn out and then what's going to happen.

So self care is so, so important.

**Sarah Botterill:** And that's the when and how at the top of your list there isn't, it; is have that open conversation first before it becomes an issue.

Completely self-preservation. Yeah.

**Sarah Botterill:** Lovely. Thank you.

So I think we've talked about this a little bit, but these are some of the challenges.

I wonder if you, I love this quote that you've put in about, patience, perhaps you'd like to say a little bit more about that, and I knew you are a carer yourself, so any personal experience that you can share, that would be really fantastic.

**Carole Gregory:** Okay. So, um, yes, it's not measured by your ability to wait by your actions and behavior while you wait.

And I think, to be honest, the sense of humor comes in really well at this point. I have one my dad is 90 and he's blind and my mum's 87, she has dementia and they live in their home and I bought them an Alexa [smart speaker] and so trying to get them, first of all to get the name right was a challenge. So she wasn't responding.

And then trying to get them to not be quite so polite and ask something before her name was also quite a challenge. Okay. We got there in the end, but it required a sense of humor and some patience.

A person, I know in their eighties has just got onto a tablet and just the, her wanting to know where the volume button was a challenge. I myself have problems with technology, so it's somebody is very au fait with it and they're on the other end of the line of somebody that's not, it's remembering sometimes about the basics and it's about trying to turn the situation into something of a challenge with a sense of fun.

And if you can approach it with that it might make life a bit easier.

**Sarah Botterill:** Thanks for that. So, Barbara, I know you sent through some tips as well. I was wondering if you could just give us your take on the same challenge, really carrying out distance and had tech can help.

**Barbara Cormie:** Of course. I mean, I think we all know it's important to stay in touch with your loved ones at any time.

But now of course, if you're a little bit distant, you can't get close to them. You're physically separated. It's even more important. So, I think what we're trying to talk about is just really reminding people that how important it is. And potentially to the frequency of communications, and it doesn't always need to be about caring.

You know, it's important to talk about the caring situation. How are they doing mentally, physically? Are they sleeping well? Are they eating well? How's the shopping going? All hugely important, but equally important is I'm just making sure their mental health is okay. How are the emotions? How are they coping?

How are they doing? Generally. So I think it's just not focusing on the practical, but being aware also of the emotional that's really a key point, and I think thinking about just more of the fun, relaxing things, if possible with the person that you're caring for remotely, you know, can you do fun things together, schedule cup of tea together, your schedule a chat together more frequently than you would have done normally.

And there's other ways potentially too joined together. You know, there's things like games you could do. There's Scrabble online, there's crosswords online. There's a whole host of ways to be together without actually being together.

**Sarah Botterill:** That's great. And I think where your two come together is that it's about yeah, setting those ground rules and what you're talking about is having some kind of protected time when you're both in a good space.

**Barbara Cormie:** We're doing that social engagement, so I think they complement each other really well. That's great. Thank you. So some more tips for you here. Yeah, I think a big thing, I think all care know this anyway, but, um, everybody knows it. The more organized you are in terms of planning; the smoother life can be.

And that's important for carers, anytime, but especially important right now. and emergency planning is an important thing to consider. know if something most happened to you, what might you do to help support the person you're caring for? And a big part of that would be to have a plan in place. I'm assigned a written document that would just include all this information. Something to think about now with the person you're caring for is their caring situation and start to write down some of the factors that you're helping them with.

So should you fall unwell yourself or be on any, be able to cook for whatever reason, somebody else would knew about that situation and be able to step in.

**Sarah Botterill:** Great. And you've both provided some excellent links to do with emergency planning, which will be coming up later and there'll be available for people to follow up with afterwards. Thanks for that.

**Carole Gregory:** So, can I just say, some people will have a plan in place already. It's a good time also to review it because the people that you have as your emergency contact person may not be able to get to you right now.

it's about thinking about what you have got in the plan and whether that's appropriate and if it isn't what you're going to do now.

**Sarah Botterill:** Yeah. Great advice. When things are changing so quickly at the moment, I think, so these links are there. and we'll be sharing these afterwards and anyone who either wants to review their plan or, um, create one if they don't have one, we'll have access to this after the webinar.

So that brings me very neatly to our first poll, which I will just launch.

So what we're asking is whether you have an emergency plan in place currently yes or no. That would be great. And I'm aware not everybody will be in that caring roles.

They just going to give people a few more seconds to finish that off. Yeah. You can hopefully see that 31% of people on the call currently have a plan in place and 69% don't. Not everybody will be in that caring role, but it is interesting to just. Just see those results there.

So now we are going to pass over to yourself James [Beecher] and to talk about some of the technology that is available to help people during this time.

**James Beecher:** We're talking about various forms of technology that can help you stay in contact with people. You may have heard a lot about Zoom recently, which a lot of people are using, which is not something I'm going to talk about today.

Mark from AbilityNet is going to talk about that on a webinar tomorrow if you'd like to know more about that.

Zoom is a tool that's designed to do video conferencing, particularly for work. And instead I'm going to talk about some tools which are designed for smaller video calls and are more likely to be things that people might be familiar with already.

So if we talk about the first of those FaceTime, one benefit of FaceTime is it often already comes on an Apple device. If someone has an Apple device, FaceTime is often already loaded onto the device. A con on the other side of this is that it's only available on Apple devices.

So it's great if you've got two people with Apple devices who can talk to each other, or indeed up to 32 people. It's not so good for people who are outside the Apple world in terms of their devices.

Okay. If we move on, we've got some links to several resources.

Our partners in OneDigital, Digital Unite have a great page on how to use FaceTime as also the official advice from Apple and some resources there from learn my way about video calling in general.

There are two things in particular that are useful here for people on this call. You can set up FaceTime to answer calls automatically after a certain number of seconds so that someone doesn't need to get to the device. And you can also make phone calls easier to hear by using the accessibility settings on an Apple device to remove background phone noise.

Onto WhatsApp now.

**Sarah Botterill:** Can see James is freezing again. I'll just give it a minute or two.

Are you there James?

Okay. So, I think we're having some problems with James.

While we're just waiting for him to come back in terms of WhatsApp it runs on iOS and Android. It's a chat app, so you can put text messages in there. One of the things that's great about it is that you can set up a group chat with other contacts.

I've set up a, a group which is closed for myself and my sibling and for our parents so that we can just drop a message in and check-in at regular intervals, make sure everybody's still well.

So we have done a step by step on the AbilityNet website. There's a blog there, which will walk you through step by step on how to set up a family group in WhatsApp.

Digital Unite, which James has already mentioned, have got a brilliant overview, and they've also similarly got a step by step on how to use what's on your smartphone.

It is a good, accessible app. On the RNIB website it name checks it as an app that's really good for visually impaired people. It's very accessible in that respect.

I think we're still having few technical issues with James.

The next one to move on to is Skype, which has good ease of use. Microsoft is currently moving this over to a different platform called Teams. But it works on multiple devices, Android, iOS, windows, and it's available on the web and for download as well.

So, right. James, you're back. Do you want to run through the functionality, Skype?

[00:16:29] Okay. I think he's dropping out again. So, I'm just gonna carry on.

So as we've already been through, you can connect to landlords for a fee, and it's also possible to use it to offer technical support to others.

And again, Digital Unite have got a really great comprehensive guide here in terms of using Skype so if you want more information, you can look up the how to guide there as well.

So I'm just going to launch our second poll now.

Hopefully most people can see this now. So, this is our second poll. We're just interested in finding out how you are keeping in touch with loved ones at this time. There's the good old fashioned phone there, which you mustn't forget, email, chat app.

Or a video call, video call is, certainly coming into its own during this time.

So it just be great to have a few more seconds and find out, which of these people are using.

I think you can hopefully check multiple options as well here cause you'll probably be using one or two or maybe three of these options to keep in touch at this time.

And so I'm just going to give it another sort of 15 seconds or say, and just so everyone has a chance to have their say and then I'll end the poll and share it. It's a few more seconds.

Just to ending the poll and share.

Okay, so some interesting results here. Phone's still looking pretty popular in terms of a way of keeping in touch Quite a few of you as I say, embracing video calls during this time, 73%.

Chat apps are just being so apps like WhatsApp are popular as well.

Email, not so much. Interesting results there.

So we just move on, see you back and stable but I don't think I'm stable.

Okay. Great. So I'll carry on in that case.

So another option is Google Hangouts.

Similar to, and some of the functionality of zoom.

One thing that's good about it is that you can set it up in terms of having a password for people that you want to access the meetings.

So there's an added layer of security there, like some of the other options we've discussed, it can be used on multiple devices and platforms, so that's great in terms of making this available to as many people as possible you can do instant messaging, voice calls, video calls, and you can get a group of people together on a Google hangout as well.

So as with all the others, we're just sharing some information here.

You set up the app or a walkthrough. There's information here and it's a shame we can't cover it on this call. But, hopefully we're doing some signposting to some, some really great resources for anybody who wants to get to use these ways of getting in touch with people after the webinar.

So House Party is one that has been getting a lot of attention recently. It seems to suddenly taken off and lots of people are joining House Party. I think one of the reasons why people like it is like some of the other platforms that we've looked at you can chat with multiple people at a time.

It's been getting a lot of good publicity, and some negative publicity as well. Which?, The consumers association have got a great blog on this if you want to look into that in some more detail and decide whether it's the right app for you. One of the things that they've identified is that once you've installed it, it's quite difficult to uninstall.

So if that's something that is a concern for you, you might decide that you want to go with one of the other options or the options that we've shared here. The Which? Blog has got some really good information on there. We've talked a little bit about how many you're connecting with and, and that might be a factor.

So WhatsApp can do four videos at a time.

FaceTime up to 30 to HouseParty up eight, and Google Hangouts can cope with eight, and I was just had that poll as well about, how people are connecting. And from my own personal experience, I know (and Carol and Barbara) might echo this) having too many people in video chat has been a bit too much for my mum.

And so that's another thing to consider maybe when you're using these apps is while it's brilliant to get lots of people on there.

And for some people who are less familiar with the technology, it may seem a little bit overwhelming. Barbara, I notice you've come off mute there.

**Barbara Cormie:** Just bear in mind the fact that a lot of older people especially are hard of hearing, and I think that's a factor to consider. So often one-to-one is best. Maybe three of you. I think any more can sometimes be a bit overwhelming.

**Sarah Botterill:** It's just that checking in with people again, isn't it? And seeing whether it's working for them. I know my sister and I've adjusted to adjusting those one-to-one calls because it works much better.

So yeah, just something to bear in mind that just because you can connect with 32 people, it might not be appropriate depending on who they are. So that's that one, and Alex, who helped put these slides together, wanted to flag this up in particular as well, which is that just to make it a bit easier if you do have access to a device holder or a stand so that you don't have to kind of worry about juggling it and you've got everybody in frame, that's just one less thing to think about while you’re on a video call.

So that's something else that you might want to think about; as we know, if you don't have one, getting hold one at this time may prove challenging, but... So, I'm going to launch our third poll now, and again, it's very relevant to what we've just been discussing.

I think, actually, so let me just launch the policy.

You can see the questions. So yeah, how are you connecting with people? Are you connecting one to one? As a group does seem to be becoming more popular, as we've said, it might not be appropriate for, all the people that you're trying to communicate with.

Some people may prefer that one to one communication.

One-to-one communication and also doing a bit of group communication as well. So just allow a few more seconds of people to, so that I can see the numbers going up in terms of who's think.

Just a few more seconds.

Okay.

Does that, most people have voted now. I will just end the poll.

So, yeah, as I say, both looks like the most popular option; quite a few of you, 19% connecting one to one. Um, and the, as a group showing up as 4%, um, sorry, come shared the results. I'm saying you can see that you might not be able to. Um, yeah.

Chris, so you there and it's going to pass to my colleague Chris, who has, um, just been looking at some kind of standalone devices which are available, which can help people connect during this time.

**Chris Grant:** So, um, just to give people a brief summary, KOMP is a one button computer, it's been made specifically for those who have pretty much little to no experience of using smartphones or computers or tablets.

With KOMP, it’s really easy to use, and the entire family can easily connect to this device and through an app and send photos and messages and make two-way video calls.

And it's all, it's when you unbox it first you go, wow, this is huge.

But actually, when you take it out, it's a really, really good piece of, of technology designed by No Isolation and you can rent or purchase them through the no isolation website and the functionality is very good to them that they're very smooth and they run well.

Video calling and picture messaging is the two main ones.

The video calling and the picture messaging is easily onboarded through using an app, which is both available on iOS and Android and accessible to the person. They do need access to the internet. And so, we've trialed them on 4g MiFi devices and on WiFi and on both, they work really, really well.

Users of the software on that app can send pictures to the KOMP device so all the people can feel more connected. So say you are out for a walk and that person is in isolation, you can send them photo of what you're seeing because they might like to do photography or anything like that.

And KOMP can be set up in your own home and then transplanted. So I can set it up here and take it to a friends or family. And the, the, the good thing actually is that connecting on the MiFi device to connect to 4g and one of these devices you get is easier because it's automatically, you just especially during this isolation period you can pretty much leave it at their door and it's already set up and all they have to do is pop a plug into the wall for the power and it works.

I’m totally in awe of it. I think it's, it's a great piece of technology and the best place to have a look at and get more information is on the No Isolation website, which we'll pop in the chat box.

So, the pros of using the KOMP, it’s simple to use as say, one button control and even better. I forget things very easily, but no one needs to use passwords, so you don't need to think, I'm going to forget my username or password.

The con is that at the moment, there's been so much a high demand for the stock.

So, the best place again to keep checking the KOMP website, and on their social media.

**Mark Walker:** Can I just interrupt a second? There's two questions that are coming in. One of them persistently is how much does it cost? Or then you might be coming to that.

And the other one is about what MiFi is. You mentioned MiFi in passing, and that's obviously important. We're going on beyond that now. So just those are two questions. Just popped up on the Q and a no songs smart and yeah, the KOMP device.

I can't exactly remember the price. And I've just had a look on their website just now, and again, we'll, we'll share that information.

**Alex Barker:** I'm just looking it up I think it's 28 or 29 pounds rental per month.

**Chris Grant:** I think it's a standard place of a mobile phone [per month] looking at it last time but we'll, we'll definitely get that confirmed.

And the MiFi device, I'm sorry, I should explain this; essentially, it’s just a small router as I would call it. It’s a little box and it doesn’t need any power to it and you can connect using a SIM card. It sits there and acts like a router and you can connect to it.

George, how has just popped up from No Isolation on chat.

So it's 29 pounds a month to rent when it is available.

It will be available for purchase only and the pricing is being discussed, but it's likely in the region of between 4-600 pounds.

So, Facebook portal, something that's still quite new to the market and yes, it's probably and two years old and the first portal.

The first time I came across it was one night watching TV.

Went online and I have to say it works really well. The functionality is video calling and access to WhatsApp and Spotify and it's got Alexa built in. It's really clever.

It's steady, smooth again, and sweet to run and story time… I wish this was it only when I was younger because it says you can read younger family members stories.

I think that's really good. But one thing I do like about the portal, and again is just by speaking to people is the sound of them So the sound is crystal clear. You can have, you know that live discussion with somebody and it literally works. It’s scary; it looks like you’re in that person’s house talking to them. There’s an advert on portal.facebook.com and it shows a lady cooking in the kitchen; if you want to run your own cooking show, and you know, during this isolation it's a perfect opportunity.

Um, but it's, it's really good and it minimizes the noise. And so, if you've got, you know, for example, if you're working from home and you've got kids shouting and bawling and playing with toys in the background it’s a great thing to minimize that – looking at the reviews.

The other good thing is that you can surround yourself with the sound.

The pros of it, if you have Facebook Portal – you can have Facebook Portal to connect on Messenger. Added features for reading stories to family members, and it includes a camera, which attaches to the TV. The con of it though and with anything related to Facebook and social media, privacy is a concern…The camera is always watching but you need to disable it.

You can disable it if needed.

There has been a lot of stuff in the last couple of weeks questioning it and saying the camera is watching, and that anyone could be watching it. You can turn it off and there are a lot of assuring comments online.

People scaremonger so you have got to look at the pros and cons online.

The pricing again is to me is very reasonable; there's different portals now that developed. Facebook portal is actually giving you 50 pounds up to 50 pounds of your purchase until the 18 April, specifically during COVID.

The Portal Mini should be around £129, and it’s £79; the main portal is sitting at £119. So, you know, everyone's doing their bit. So again, it's a good way of keeping in touch with your, your loved ones, your friends, your family during this time of COVID and certainly these devices should be used at any time particular both KOMP and portal.

**Mark Walker:** I've got a question coming in here. Um, you've mentioned a couple of devices. There are, there's somebody asked about Google duo. There are other devices with a video screen that you can interact in this way, aren't there?

Sarah Botterill: There are smart speakers. Those types of devices. I think that's might be what you're talking about, Mark, also come with some of the screens, don't they? So that you can have a video call as well as using the audio.

**James Beecher:**  Someone's asked the question, what is MiFi. MiFi is mobile internet. It means that you can connect to the internet through a three or four G phone signal rather than through a broadband connection.

Somebody pointed out, they usually have to have a battery connection. It's not the same as having it plugged into your telephone wire, so it could be very flexible, but it's also comes with you need to keep it plugged in.

**Mark Walker:** It's basically just using your mobile phone rather than connecting into broadband.

**Sarah Botterill:** Some mobile companies do have a limit on how much data you can use with those, but I have noticed that, during COVID and the situation we're in now, quite a lot of those mobile providers have actually removed those caps temporarily so that if people are in social isolation. So, it's worth just checking in if you're going to be doing a lot of video calling, whether you have a data cap.

**James Beecher:** They've zero rated lots of websites, like for instance, NHS websites. So you won't see those in your data.

I was just going to say about BT Basic… Um, what is, it is an offer by BT, which if you are receiving certain benefits, you can access a cheap package. You need to be getting income support, income-based job seekers, allowance, pension, credit employment and support allowance.

**Sarah Botterill:** I think James might have dropped out again there, but I think that's really helpful at this time when lots of people are finding themselves in that situation.

**Carole Gregory:** Just it's about planning really. It's about thinking about where you're at now and where this might take you. It's about all seeking for help. If you're not getting any support, there is support out there. Each County has got a carer center. There’s national, there's Carer’s trust and this Carers UK that you can go in there and put your postcode and it will give you one, or you can ring us at Care for the Carers and we will find your local care center. There is various types of support, so please don't manage this on your own.

Like I say, if you're going to have a difficult day, if you're going to be in collection, has to be submitted, plan it. Think about how that might stress you, give yourself something nice to look forward to at the end of it.

And online, there's all types of things, you know, join the theater. You can go in the library and get books. There's music, there's mindfulness, there's lots of stuff out there. Use what's out there.

**Sarah Botterill:** Yeah, so I guess we just wanted to come full circle and address specifically those caring needs, again. Yes, it is a time of, uh, physical distancing and we're all doing everything that we can to kind of close that physical gap, I guess.

But just to remind people again that, um, self-care as well as caring for others so that you can carry on and caring for others is just as important.

**Carole Gregory:** Yes, completely. You matter too. If you're a carer, you matter too, and you may not have identified as a carer before. You know, you're a wife, a husband, a brother, a friend, and people don't like to be labeled as a carer, but consider yourself in a caring role and therefore there's support out there and please don't miss out on it.

**Sarah Botterill:** Yeah. Brilliant. Thank you. Um, and in our next webinar, which is next week, we are actually going to be looking at how specifically addressing how you can find local physical support for somebody who you might be caring for at a distance and how can you use technology to, to reach out and find that. And I know you guys are providing us with some information for that as well as joining in with a webinar today.

So another roundup here, so, um, I won't read all of these out, but there's a great list of, um, email contacts and links for specific carers organizations here where people can find more information and they will be shared with everybody after the webinar.

So thank you both for helping to put that list together. In terms of AbilityNet we're keeping it business as usual, as much as we possibly can. The freephone telephone support is still available. You can email us.

We very much welcome people who wants to volunteer and to help people. Mark as we’ve mentioned is doing a another webinar tomorrow, which is specifically looking for people who at people who might now find themselves working from home, and we've launched a new service to help people make sure that they've got the reasonable adjustments that they need in the home when they may previously been working in a conventional, I guess, work place. So, and do you follow those links as well? So that brings me to our final poll, which I will just launch now.

**Mark Walker:** While you're doing that, Sarah, I have got a couple of questions that have been, which we may know the answers to, or just a couple of things to point out.

There's a few questions in here about making these tools accessible. Um, you know, whether there's a particular reference, a recommendation around working with people with hearing impairments. And then another question about, um. I need dementia friendly solutions. Is any of this technology dementia-friendly I don't know whether anybody has any comments about that on the, on the group.

**Carole Gregory:** I would recommend The Parkinson’s Society website. It's got a lot of useful information, um, as with any kind of disability or anything, it's focused in that area. So, um, I mean, by all means give us a call at the office, but also if you're thinking, um, dementia specific or anything else specific, have a look on the website.

If you've got access to it and they will have the information on there.

**Sarah Botterill:** Hmm. And I know from my personal experience, and I've got a couple of friends who are dealing with these challenges at the moment, and one of them has said that, actually not doing the video calling with the person who's got dementia because they find it more distressing to be able to see them on a video call and not sound why they can't see them physically. So it might be quite a personal thing, I think as well.

**Carole Gregory:** Absolutely. I think you're right, Sarah.

So, um, I think the, if I just end the poll. And this is about whether you'd be interested in joining future AbilityNet Live! webinars. We're putting together a whole program of these, fantastic to see the 98% of you, um, would be interested in joining us for some more. So as to say, next week we'll be looking at where you can find local support, kind of physical support, um, from some of the people who are working during this crisis, but using tech to access that. And we'll also be looking at Carole, you touched on things like, um, entertainment, you know, learning things that you can do for yourself. We've got a webinar coming up on that in the future, and we're also going to be looking at how people can stay safe online.

Communities are really pulling together in times of crisis. Often there's that minority who take advantage. So I'm keen to address that and we've got a great expert who used to work for a security software firm who's joining us for a webinar. And we'll be giving some real hands on practical tips on how to stay safe as well, which, um, is an important element.

**Mark Walker:** And just to add, Sarah, that if people haven't spotted it at all yet, the Q and a has got lots of answers as well as questions in it and we'll be sharing that document. We can download that and share it, but we will also be doing a list of links that we think have arisen out of the session and sharing those around to people afterwards.

**Mark Walker:** The reason that the captions are coming up along the bottom is because you're presenting in PowerPoint. So if you have somebody who needs to have captions for hearing reasons, one thing you can do whatever, um, this isn't, this is only works on zoom, it wouldn't work in WhatsApp, for example, is that you could use zoom to pull up a presentation and it can hear both sides of the conversation so it can hear me and it's doing.

So as a simple way of holding a meeting with captions, that's one way of doing it. Um, we're talking about this tomorrow as well on this webinar, but, but the other one is that teams, Microsoft teams has built in captions.

In the other examples you were giving like WhatsApp and there isn't an easy way of bringing it in, but there are some apps that can do translation and transcription on the fly.

We were using Otter AI, which you can have on your phone, and it can put it next to the audio source and it will give you live captions.

We've just been using it now. There are ways that you can get live text from the speech of any of the devices that you're using. Um, so there are ways to work with people with hearing impairments. We can share these links as you say afterwards.

And then the other thing, there's several people been mentioning the various constraints on Zoom. It's a 40 minute maximum. Um, uh, Hangouts doesn't have that maximum apparently at, you know, I don't know whether it does have any maximum time.

**James Beecher:** I think it's, if you sign up for a free account. Then you, you should be able to go beyond the 40-minute. Then if you're just using it as a user, you might not.

Thanks. James.

**Chris Grant:** Could I just jump in and just a bit the volunteering at the moment, so we're, we're no recruiting.

**Mark Walker:** We have suspended it just, and it's worth saying, Chris, that that's partly because we have an awful lot of volunteers who were previously going into the homes who are now working remotely. And so we've got much greater capacity to do the things that we're being asked to do anyway. So if you need help, give us a call cause we're ready to help.

**Sarah Botterill:** So anything else, Mark, that you think is important to draw out of the Q and A?

Well, I mentioned that the, um, well actually somebody just pulled up future.now, which is really good service, I think BT, a part of it, which is trying to share donated devices such as laptops, tablets, and phones. I spotted this just earlier today. So they're getting the most vulnerable online during the COVID-19 crisis. It's supported by the department for digital culture, media, and sport, future.now; coordinating industry action through a new initiative, targeting 1.7 million households that don't have access to the internet.

So that is a way that people may be able to get online. Oh, whether themselves, a family and friends will definitely put the link to that in the resources afterwards.

Sarah Botterill: And that reminds me of Wavelength, which I know you're familiar with, another organization called Wavelength. One thing that they do is they, you can sign up and apply on behalf of family or friends who are feeling isolated and get a free digital radio from them. They're working currently with BBC on that program as well as you can find out information by via BBC or wavelength, and we can share those links afterwards as well.

**Mark Walker:** It's worth pointing out that their website says that they're pausing at the moment due to overwhelm.

So I've dropped a future.now link in the webinar chat.

**James Beecher:** It's worth saying that they're running that using the government's, um, registering as a vulnerable person list. And then there's a bit of bureaucracy or administration around it. It's not this, you can say, I like the device and that one, but it's still very much something that's worth looking into.

**Sarah Botterill:** That's brilliant. Thank you.

Mark Walker: And just want to clarify something that did come in. Um, so the live captioning that we're doing on, on this meeting is not part of Zoom. Just to clarify, it's a button you click when you do a presentation in PowerPoint. It is in pretty much any current version of PowerPoint. On the slide show button, you can enable captions, but it's not part of Zoom. Zoom doesn't present them.

This just happens to be sharing Sarah screen, which has PowerPoint captions on it.

**Sarah Botterill:** Okay. Anything else Mark that's coming in that you think is with the slides or on the website already? T

**Mark Walker:** The video will be there tonight, today, tomorrow, first thing tomorrow, and we're going to do some notes as well based on the links that have been shared, just to answer them, the questions and answers will be shared with you. If you have missed something, don't worry and the webinar tomorrow, you can find details of that.

AbilityNet.org.uk/webinars, and then that will cover stuff that we've mentioned briefly here, but in a bit more detail around running meetings.

**Sarah Botterill:** And just from me, um, thank you once more to everybody who's joined the webinar and hope it's been useful and thank you so much to, um, all the people behind the scenes and on the webinar for pulling it together as well.