

## Assistance in the workplace – why, what and how.



*By S. George.*

You or your employer should make an application through the EAF, and Job Access will assess the application. Sometimes a workplace assessment is required - they can look at the workplace and what you need to complete tasks, often suggesting technology options to make the job achievable and easy to manage. Once the application is approved, government funding is available to your employer, providing equipment to make your workplace accessible.

If you are an adult who has been putting up with eye strain and headaches, or if there is a part of your job that you avoid because it is too hard, it may pay to think about exploring options. Assistive technology is developing so fast with the introduction of new voice output and enlargement software, lightweight enlargers and ground breaking bioptics and voice description devices – you may not be aware of those options and their capabilities. There may be assistive technology available without expense, or at minimal cost to you or your employer, including follow up training and maintenance.

In practical terms this means that you can source things like large screens, personal computers, iPads or other devices to allow you to access documents, write reports, fill out data etc without any expense to you or your employer. It may also cover things like changing overhead lighting or marking stairs for safety and explaining to other employees how this assists you (so that you don't have to). This may be referred to as Workplace Modifications. It may also assist you to reduce hours over the week so that each day is shorter, or to have a day off in the middle of the week, if you are experiencing eye fatigue or coming home exhausted due to your low vision. It can also support you in gaining or changing employment and acquiring new skills if necessary.