EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Technology influences the lives of nearly everyone in one manner or another. Most of us take technology for granted, not noticing the extent to which our everyday activities are reliant upon technological advancements and/or have been made significantly easier. In an age where every year we are more integrated into a global digital society, it is imperative that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities be included.

Technology encourages opportunities for more inclusive and independent lives for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Currently, approximately 90,000 people with intellectual and developmental disabilities receive supports through Ohio's developmental disabilities system. In recent years, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) has modified services in its Medicaid-funded home and community-based services (HCBS) waivers to afford people greater access to technology. In 2012, for example, a service called remote monitoring (now called remote support) was made available through the Level One, Self-Empowered Life Funding, and Individual Options Waivers. These remote support services enable people to use technology in their homes, such as monitors, sensors, communication devices, etc., through which they can receive supports from staff who are in another location.

In 2017, a mere 170 individuals were using remote support services. Through focus groups and telephone interviews, we collected responses for 56 individuals, and/or their guardians, who were either using or had previously used remote support. These individuals indicated that remote support resulted in greater independence and subsequently increased self-reported ratings of perceived safety in navigating one's environment. In fact, safety was the most frequently endorsed response among satisfaction metrics with the use of remote support.

Various new and emerging technologies may also be used to promote independence for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Some examples of these technologies may include: wearable technology, home automation or smart-home technologies, guided direction applications, schedule maintenance software, telehealth, robotics, augmented reality, and autonomous vehicles.