



# Macular Degeneration Foundation Navigator Library Access Project (NLAP)

*A pathway to maintaining quality of life and independence*

## What is the Macular Degeneration (MD) Foundation?

Macular Degeneration (MD) is Australia's leading cause of blindness. The incidence of MD is increasing as the Australian population ages, resulting in higher levels of vision impairment among the elderly.

The MD Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation which aims to reduce the incidence and impact of Macular Degeneration in Australia.

## What is the Navigator?

The Navigator was developed by Australian company Audio-Read Pty Ltd. They are the sole provider of this technology. The Navigator is a 'low tech', hand-held and portable technology that reads aloud books, magazines and daily newspapers chosen by the user. It can hold an average of five books and two newspapers in its memory or fifty hours of operation.



*"I would recommend the Navigator to anyone; it is really a wonderful thing! It has created a new leisure life for me. I told my doctor about it and he asked me to show it to him. I congratulate those who designed it because it is just wonderful!"*

*Eileen Payne, Client of MD Foundation and Home lender at Bankstown Library*

## What is the Navigator Library Access Project?

The Navigator Library Access Project (NLAP) is practical and will connect people with Macular Degeneration who are vision impaired to the Navigator through their local library via the home lending and "walk-in" service. It is a community based project which aims to increase quality of life and independence for elderly, vision impaired people with Macular Degeneration.

It is due to the generous support of the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation (VFFF) and Profield Trust that the MD Foundation is able to provide Navigator's for use by libraries through NLAP.

## Why is library partnership important?

Library partnership plays an integral role in the project because libraries offer:

- Easy and equitable access to those who can least afford technology, which helps to challenge the 'digital divide'
- Key services in a local context
- A "level playing field" for the vision impaired with an opportunity for those formerly only able to access 'cassette style talking books' now being able to visit their library, borrow books (on the Navigator) and have a wide choice of reading material
- A home lending service which is a critical means of delivery for the severely vision impaired

*Please turn over*



## What are the benefits of library partnership?

The NLAP presents an opportunity for libraries to assist in the co-ordination of a new and technologically advanced service to their local MD community. Benefits of library participation include:

- Being provided with Navigator's by the MD Foundation free of charge
- Minimal expense as a partner in the delivery of the project
- The potential for a highly improved home lending service by replacing cumbersome and outmoded cassettes and talking books with the Navigator
- Being trained in the provision of new and technologically advanced community service
- Freeing up places on existing Navigator home lending programs for libraries currently using the Navigator system

## What does library partnership involve?

As a partner in the delivery of this project each library will:

- Be allocated number of Navigator's to lend to library members with Macular Degeneration
- Be supplied with an Audio-Read storage device that connects to a PC and downloads information onto the Navigator. This will be installed by Audio-Read Pty Limited
- Be trained in how to administer the system, which includes simple downloading
- Lend Navigators to library members identified by the Foundation
- Download new information onto Navigators for borrowers on a regular basis (as determined by the library) either via the home lending service or by regular walk in

Participation through partnership requires that each library:

- Is willing to assist in the delivery of the project to members of the library who are nominated by the MD Foundation
- Incurs the cost of the annual Navigator Content Licensing of \$100 (excluding GST) per Navigator (this price is reviewed annually)
- Incurs the cost of the Library Site License an annual license/ update/ support fee of \$1000 (excluding GST) Note: Only required for libraries not currently using the Audio-Read Service. This is a special price for NLAP and is substantial discount on normal library pricing. It relates to Year 1 of any new subscription only.
- Provides a means for the delivery of the project through the home lending or the "walk in" service
- Maintains a record of usage by participants through usual library loans process
- Complete evaluation forms provided by the MD Foundation for the project after the initial two week trial period and bi-annually thereafter

## What is the MD Foundation's role in the delivery of the project?

In delivering the project to the community the MD Foundation:

- Supplies Navigators to libraries free of charge
- Sources and selects MD Foundation clients to participate in the project according to specify criteria
- Facilitates training and installation of the Navigator system into libraries
- Facilitates MD Foundation client's contact with their local library
- Publicises the project and provides articles for newsletters and other library publications when required
- Conducts the ongoing evaluation of the project
- Provide the necessary support and assistance whenever possible
- Monitors overall delivery of the project