

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Communication is important in all situations. However, effective communication is critical within health care, emergency, police, legal, and justice services.

Without appropriate communication accommodations in these situations, we can experience major barriers that can have serious consequences.

We expect essential services to have:

- policies and practices for communication access
- staff who are trained to communicate with us
- access to a communication assistant to help with communication, if we need one
- access to emergency picture, alphabet boards and other communication tools

" In critical situations, I want a trained communication assistant to help others understand my messages. These services need to be developed and made available to us so that we can have effective communication in hospitals and all essential services".

Colin Phillips, PhD Candidate.



COMMUNICATION ACCESS NOW

Communication Access Now (CAN) is a national strategy to increase awareness of communication access for people who have speech and language disabilities.

Make your business or organization communication accessible:

By visiting the CAN website at

www.communication-access.org

Communication Access Now is operated by Communication Disabilities Access Canada (CDAC) with a funding contribution from the Government of Canada's Disability Component of the Social Development Partnerships Program

(SDPP-D)  Government of Canada

Communication Disabilities Access Canada (CDAC) is a national, non-profit organization.

CDAC promotes human rights, accessibility and inclusion for people who have speech and language disabilities.

www.cdacanada.com

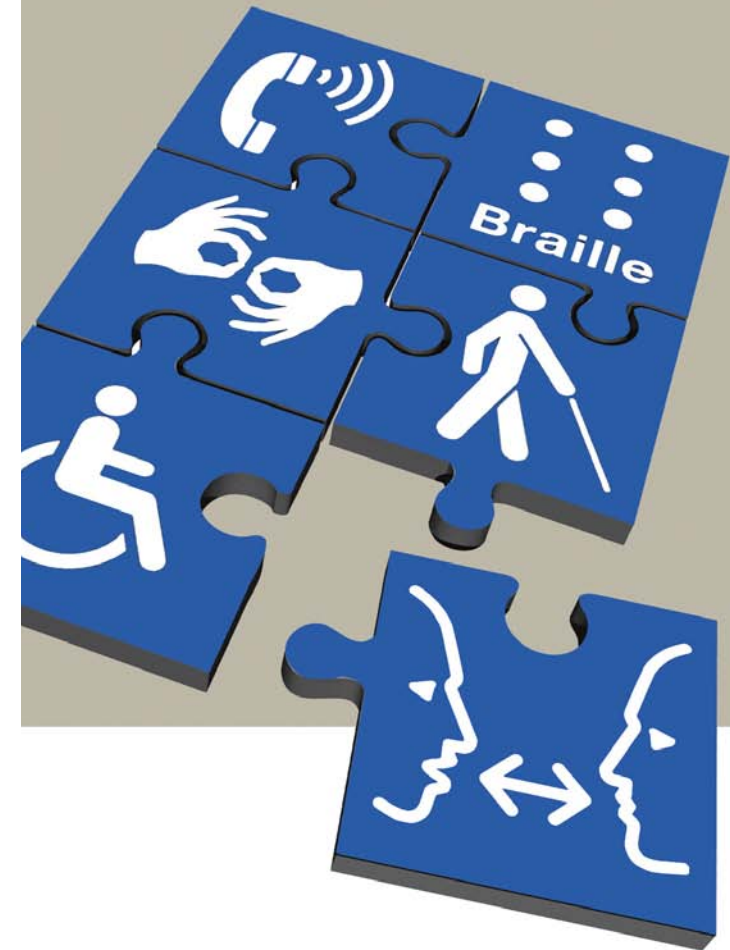


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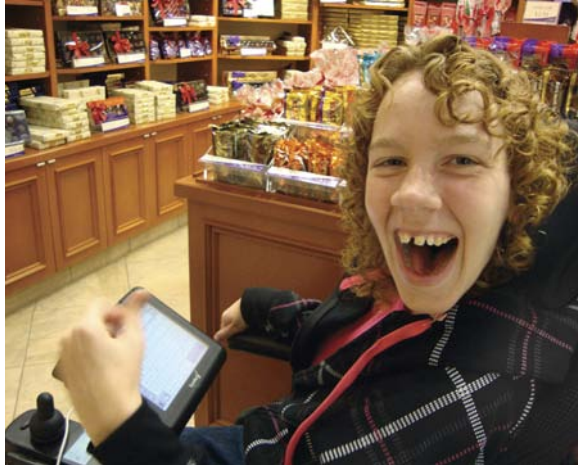
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ACCESSIBILITY INCLUDES COMMUNICATION



FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DISABILITIES

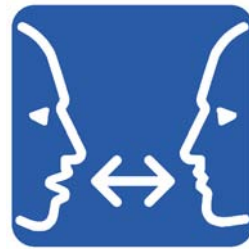




IT TAKES TWO TO COMMUNICATE

Communication access means:

- understanding what you are saying
- having you understand our messages
- using the communication methods that work best for us
- being able to communicate at meetings, public events and over the telephone
- reading and understanding your written information
- signing your documents and completing forms in ways that are accessible for us



Communication access is about what you can do to effectively communicate with us when we use your business or service.

"I have aphasia after a stroke. It affects how I speak and sometimes I have difficulty processing what people are saying. For me, access is having people help me understand what they are saying and giving me extra time to express myself".

Dr. Kaufmann, Retired.



Over half a million Canadians have communication disabilities that are not caused by a hearing loss.

We may have cerebral palsy, autism, cognitive disability, traumatic brain injury, aphasia, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis or other conditions.

We communicate in different ways

- Some of us have speech that is difficult for you to understand.
- Some of us communicate using communication boards, devices or human assistance.
- Some of us may also have difficulty understanding what you are saying.

Like everyone, we have a legal right to access your business and services.

We cannot use your services if you:

- are afraid to talk to us
- underestimate our abilities
- do not know how to communicate with us

"My greatest barriers are people who think that because I can't speak, I cannot understand what they are saying or I am incapable of making my own decisions. Having a speech disability does not mean that I can't hear and understand".

Jess Weber, Peer Mentor.



Paul Marshall, Web Master.

Everyone is different and has different accessibility needs. Here are some simple communication tips to get you started.

- Talk directly to us, not just the person with us
- Do not underestimate our abilities
- Assume we understand, unless we tell you otherwise
- Ask what you can do when communicating with us
- If you do not know how we communicate "Yes" and "No", ask us
- Watch and listen as we may use speech, body language, a communication board, device or human assistance
- Be patient. It takes us longer to communicate
- Tell us if you don't understand. We may want to repeat or change our message. Sometimes it helps to move to a quiet place so that you can focus on what we are communicating
- If we have difficulty understanding what you are saying, use everyday language, speak clearly or show us what you are talking about
- Ask if we need assistance to read your materials, complete forms, take notes or sign your documents