



**Communication Disabilities Access Canada**

April 4, 2017

## **Making Federal Services Accessible for Canadians who have Speech, Language and Communication Disabilities**

Last year, we asked you what you wanted in the Government of Canada's new accessibility law. We also asked you what the government should do to make its services accessible to people with communication disabilities.

We heard from 2,205 people and we got over 4,000 messages. This is an overwhelming response.

Congratulations to everyone who participated. Together, we have created a very loud voice that accessibility policy makers and legislators need to hear.

Most of the people that responded to our survey, have communication disabilities. We also heard from family members of people who have communication disabilities, as well as friends, clinicians, teachers, social workers, personal support workers and others.

We read all your messages and we shared them with the Hon. Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities.

Minister Qualtrough is now developing the federal government's accessibility law.

Click [here](#) to read our full report.

## **Main points in our report**

People with communication disabilities and their supporters want Minister Qualtrough to know that:

- Communication is essential in our lives and having a communication disability can make it difficult or impossible for many of us to use services at federal, provincial or local levels.
- Accessibility includes communication and is as important as getting into buildings.
- We can communicate if we have appropriate communication methods and any supports we may need and if people respect and know how to interact with us.
- The new accessibility law should include our communication accessibility needs.
- We can experience many barriers when using services because people working in these services may not know how to communicate with us.
- We want people who work in government services to know how to communicate with us in face-to-face and telephone services. We want them to know how to develop communication friendly information, and how to make forms that we can complete and sign. We also want to have the communication supports we may need when we attend public consultations or participate on committees.
- In healthcare, justice, education and emergency services, we want communication policies and procedures in place so that we get the communication supports we need in these critical situations.

- We want federal government staff to engage us and other experts in communication access to develop policies and practices and train them in how to make their services accessible to us.
- We want the federal government to work with provincial governments so that we can get the speech-language pathology, audiology, augmentative and alternative communication services we may need as well as funding for our communication devices.

## **Next steps**

The Government's consultations are now closed.

The Hon. Carla Qualtrough is now reviewing all the information that she received from us and other Canadians with different types of disabilities. She will release a summary report later in the Spring 2017.

The Government's accessibility laws are planned for Winter 2018.

CDAC will continue to work the Government to include the needs of people with communication disabilities.

## **Stay updated**

We will share updates about the development of federal accessibility law with you on our Facebook page.

Click [here](#) to join our Facebook page.

If you don't use Facebook and want to be added to our email list, please send your email address to us at [admin@cdacanada.com](mailto:admin@cdacanada.com)