



## ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Effective communication is critical in health care, emergency, police, legal, and other essential services.

### We expect these services to have:

- staff who are trained to communicate with us
- access to a communication assistant to help with communication, if we need one
- emergency picture, alphabet boards and communication tools that we can use in these situations

## WHAT WE CAN DO

- we can learn about our rights
- we can tell people how to communicate with us
- we can ask for the communication supports we need

## 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.

### Go to the CAN website for:

- videos about communication rights
- pictures and words about accessibility
- tips on negotiating our accessibility needs

[www.communication-access.org](http://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) 

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](http://www.cdacanada.com)

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# ACCESSIBILITY INCLUDES COMMUNICATION



 **Communications Disabilities Access Canada**

## ACCESS SYMBOLS

Symbols tell people about disabilities and access to services.



The wheelchair symbol tells people about ramps to get into buildings.

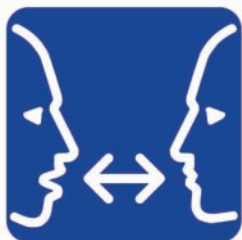


The sign language symbol tells people who are Deaf that sign language services are available.



The Braille symbol tells people who have visual impairments that they can get documents in Braille.

## THE COMMUNICATION SYMBOL



The communication symbol tells people about accessibility for those of us who have communication disabilities.

### It shows that communication:

- involves two people
- is about interaction
- is about giving as well as receiving information
- is about listening and watching

## COMMUNICATION ACCESS

Depending on our individual needs, we may want people to do things so that we can:

- understand what they are saying
- have them understand our messages
- use the communication methods that work best for us
- be able to communicate at meetings, public events and over the telephone
- read and understand their written information
- sign documents and complete forms in ways that are accessible for us



## COMMUNICATION RIGHTS

### We have a right to:

- be treated with respect
- be taken seriously
- understand what a person is saying to us
- have our messages understood by another person
- use the communication method that works best for us
- have people follow our instructions on how to communicate with us
- get extra time to communicate
- ask questions and express our own opinions
- request a communication assistant when this support is required
- connect over the telephone or another way that works better for us
- have opportunities and supports to communicate at meetings and public events
- get documents in ways we can read and understand
- get supports we may need to complete forms, sign documents and take notes