



Canadian Hard of Hearing Association Association des malentendants canadiens

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SHINING THE SPOTLIGHT ON INVISIBLE DISABILITIES

Youth, Veterans and Seniors facing barriers in times of change

OTTAWA, ON (December 15, 2016) — Despite the growing number of Canadians challenged with an invisible disability, whether that be with hearing loss, mental health or a learning disability, they have few places or resources to turn to when faced with their new life experiences. This project has been funded by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program - Disability component, the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) is spearheading the Spotlight on Invisible Disabilities Project to conduct consultations and forums to give those with invisible disabilities a voice and an opportunity to contribute to Canada's planned accessibility legislation.

As the country turns its attention to accessibility for all Canadians, this project is a reminder that change can only be achieved by placing attention to emerging issues on what those with invisible disabilities need to learn, work and live, especially when navigating through periods of transition. The question is how do we best accommodate their needs and provide equal access for all?

CHHA will be leading a national consultation process with the help of [18 Canadian disability organizations](#) who represent the interests of over 9 million individuals who are relying on these consultations to change legislation to improve accessibility and inclusion of Canadians with Disabilities.

"CHHA is proud to be liaising and working alongside such dedicated organizations, says Glenn Martin, Executive Director, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association. Although our communities may be different, the objectives are the same. With the help of our many partners, 400,000 participants will be invited to contribute to improving accessibility and ensuring inclusion of all Canadians with disabilities."

You are encouraged to fill out the Spotlight [online survey](#) or take part in our upcoming webinars and tell us what an accessible Canada means to you. Everyone can be part of the conversation.

Backgrounder

About CHHA

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) is Canada's only consumer-based organization formed by and for Canadians living with a hearing loss. A national non-profit organization, CHHA works cooperatively with professionals, service providers, and government bodies to provide information about hearing loss issues and solutions. CHHA's goal is to increase public awareness of hearing loss and to help Canadians with hearing loss fully integrate into Canadian society. CHHA represents the interests of over 3 million Canadians who are hard of hearing. [CHHA has 23 branches, 6 provincial chapters and one national network.](#)

About the Spotlight on Invisible Disabilities Project

The Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) is leading a partnership of 18 organizations in conducting consultations with members and the public to determine the issues that federal accessibility legislation must address to ensure equal access for those with an invisible disability. The goal of these consultations is to deeply engage with participants to determine the issues accessibility legislation must address and how it can bring federal institutions in Canada closer to achieving the goal of barrier free access for all.

Consultation Tactics:

Consultation participants are invited to examine the challenges facing Canadians with disabilities in times of transition, particularly:

- (1) youth as they transition from high school to university and university to the workplace;
- (2) veterans as they transition from service to civilian life; and
- (3) seniors as they transition out of the workforce and into retirement and healthy aging.

Lead Spotlight Advisory Partners:

Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA)
Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC);
National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS);
Royal Canadian Legion (RCL);
Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work (CCRW); and
Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA).

Spotlight Project Partners:

Canadian National Society of the Deaf-Blind;	ARCH Disability Law Centre;
Canadian Deaf Blind Association;	Media Access Canada;
Communicaid for Hearing-Impaired Persons;	Inclusive Design Research Centre, OCAD University;
The Hearing Foundation of Canada;	Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion;
Canadian Academy of Audiology;	Canadian Mental Health Association- Ontario
Brain Injury Canada;	Neil Squire Society;
	Mental Health Commission of Canada;

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