



MEDIA RELEASE

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December 3 is International Day of Persons with Disabilities

This day aims to "promote an understanding of disability issues, the rights of persons with disabilities and gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of the political, social, economic and cultural life of their communities." – United Nations

The Government of Canada estimates that more than 12 per cent of Canadians live with a disability. Of these approximately 3.6 million Canadians, 1.2 million have severe to very severe disabilities. Globally, the United Nations estimates that there are more than 650 million persons living with a disability, which represents 10 per cent of the global population.

The World Health Organization defines disability as “an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions,” and continues that “disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person’s body and features of the society in which he or she lives.”

People with speech, language and hearing disabilities in Canada are assessed and treated by speech-language pathologists and audiologists, who are represented nationally by the Canadian Association of Speech-Language Pathologists and Audiologists (CASLPA). These professionals, along with supportive personnel, work individually or on interprofessional teams to support the speech and hearing health of Canadians.

“The ability to communicate is fundamental to quality of life and community participation,” says Angie D’Aoust, CASLPA director of communications. “Effective communication enables people to influence and participate in the social, political, economic and cultural world around them.”

According to the report *Advancing the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities* published by the Government of Canada, [hearing disabilities](#) are the second most prevalent type of disability after mobility in Canada, with four per cent of all Canadians reporting a hearing limitation. [Speech disabilities](#) and limitations are also experienced by many Canadians of all ages.

If you or someone you know has a communication disability or limitation, CASLPA recommends contacting a audiologist, speech-language pathologist or physician. CASLPA represents the professional needs of more than 5,700 speech-language pathologists, audiologists and supportive personnel. For more information about the role audiologists, speech-language pathologists and supportive personnel play in the management of communication disorders or to find an audiologist or speech-language pathologist in your area, visit CASLPA’s website at www.speechandhearing.ca.

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For more information, please contact:
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