



Newcomers With Disabilities - Navigating The System

Date/Time:

April 25th, 2023 / 1:00PM – 3:00PM

Location: Zoom

Chairs: Mezaun Lakha-Evin, Michael Farr

In Attendance:

Abdullah Ahmed (Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers)
Arevik Tokmajyan (CLIP)
Ben Patmore (CCIS)
Fiona Lowes Boyd CIWA
John Chou MCHB
Katie Dodd (Children's Link Society)

Manisha Dave (Immigrant Services Calgary)
Meri Topchieva (Alberta Ability Network)
Mezaun Lakha-Evin (Alberta Ability Network)
Mirzeta Mujanovic (Training Inc.)
Patricia Romo
Sarah Brazeau (Easter Seals Alberta)
Teagan Catingub (Catholic Social Services)
Tessa Turner (ACT Alberta)
Yasmin (Children's Link)

Meeting Minutes

Welcome
Land Acknowledgement
Breakout Rooms
Meeting considerations
Review of last month's meeting minutes

Spotlight Agency:

Barrier-Free Alberta

- While BFA heard back from 5 NDP candidates and presented to 2 of them, no response was received from the UCP or Alberta Party.
- The Chambers of Commerce expressed interest in organizing a meet and greet, but no date has been confirmed yet.
- While the number of individual supporters has increased from 100 to 200 in the last month, more support is needed as over 25% of Albertans have disabilities.

- To mark Equality Day, a media release was issued on April 17th, which received some media responses resulting in an article featuring Chris Ryan and Sam Mason discussing Barrier-Free Alberta.
- If interested in reading the article, please click here <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/advocates-want-promise-of-alberta-accessibility-legislation-in-election-platforms-1.6818981>.
- Chris Ryan was also featured in an article discussing accessibility, please click here to read <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/opinion-chris-ryan-alberta-accessibility-legislation-wheelchair-transit-1.6798361>.

CIWA – Resource Guide overview

- CIWA translated the Newcomers with Disabilities Resource guide into 6 languages Mandarin, Persian, Spanish, Ukrainian, Vietnamese and Arabic. The guide will be shared with table members and their clients.
- Showed the translated guides to the table members.
- A huge thank you to Aida and CIWA for taking this project on and helping us translate the resource guide into multiple languages.
- The resource guide has been sent out to all table members and has been posted on the AAN website under “Resources”. Please find it on the following link: <https://www.ababilitynetwork.ca/resources>
- All members will share the resource guide with their clients when applicable.

ESWIS

- Parents of Children with Disabilities: Enhanced Settlement Workers in Schools (ESWIS) is an initiative of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.
- If you're a newcomer parent or caregiver with a child with disabilities or underlying health conditions, then join us to find out more on how to access various programs, services and benefits to support your family.
- Please click here for more information: <https://emcn.ab.ca/program/eswis/eswis-parents-of-children-with-disabilities-support-group/>
- Abdullah from EMCN will be doing a spotlight presentation to this table in the next coming meetings.

Knowledge mobilization of Resource Guide

- OCASI, Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, created an Accessibility Kit discussing the barriers and challenges of people with disabilities.
- OCASI is Ontario's version of AAN.
- Please click the following to view the kit https://ocasi.org/sites/default/files/accessibility-kit_0.pdf



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Policy Advocacy

- What are some policies your organization is working on or advocating for?
- If you are unsure of what policies your organization is working on, please ask your government relations department and/or Board of Directors what overarching policies they're working on.
- We will be discussing this topic at our next meeting as well.

Action Items:

- If your logo isn't on the Barrier Free Alberta website or if you haven't signed up as a supporter, please click <https://www.barrierfreeab.ca/support>.
- Easter Seals and Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers showed interest in providing a spotlight presentation in the next couple of months.
- Let us know if you would like to present your organization at the next meeting.
- What are some policies your organization is working on or advocating for? We will be discussing this question in next month's meeting.

Wrap Up Adjournment

Next Meeting:

Date: May 30th, 2023

Time: 1:30 – 3:30 pm

Location: Zoom