



A Message from Independent Living Canada: Persons with Disabilities have more barriers to fight for lives With COVID 19

Independent Living Canada is asking all Canadians, levels of government and medical establishments within Canada to ensure people with disabilities have equitable access to healthcare supports amid COVID-19. The Canadian Human Rights Commission has also recognized that as with other vulnerable groups, the rights of people with disabilities must continue to be respected. “We are all in this together,” must include Canadians with disabilities.

Independent Living Canada also recognizes there must be additional measures taken to ensure persons with disabilities are on an equal playing field with every other Canadian citizen. As ever, the focus must be on the individual who has inalienable rights to independently live their life with the same opportunities, decision making capabilities and services that are available to everyone else.

The following are calls to action we urge government to respond to immediately to protect the rights of Canadians with disabilities:

- 1) People with disabilities must have access to healthcare services and life sustaining medical interventions. Decision making for the allocation of scarce medical resources must not minimize the value of any human life, regardless of disability. The value of a human life is equal.
- 2) The Canadian health care system must be responsive to persons with disabilities. This includes any accommodation needs which may involve the presence of an advocate, family member, or attendant care personnel required for people with disabilities to participate in diagnostic or medical treatment related to COVID-19.
- 3) Attendant care services or other home care services must be declared essential services as they sustain life and help keep people with disabilities out of hospital. They should also have access to personal protective equipment required to continue providing services without disruption for people with disabilities.
- 4) There must not be a denial of transportation or medical services involving any person with a disability who requires medical attention associated with COVID-19.

Independent Living Canada represents Canadians from coast to coast who live with a disability. Our 24 IL Centres across Canada are designed to facilitate greater independence through the involvement of persons living with any form of disability. The work that IL Canada and Centres perform ensures the inclusion of our cross-disability community across Canada. Independent Living Canada envisions an inclusive and accessible society where people with disabilities are valued equally and participate fully. For more information, call IL Canada media relations at 613-563-2581.

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