



## Accessibility Policy

- 1) All RHN events are to be scheduled in rooms/buildings with wheelchair access, if at all possible.
- 2) Organizers and presenters of RHN events should read the two checklists below and follow them as much as possible.

Checklists created by DAWN Ontario, (DisAbled Women's Network Ontario, Website: dawn.thot.net)

### **Checklist #1**

Tips for Equal Access Presentations

Suggestions for making your presentation accessible

- Allow access to front row seats for persons with disabilities.
- If possible, adjust the lighting for persons with visual disabilities. Ask what works best for them.
- Make aisles accessible so participants using wheelchairs/scooters do not have to sit in the back of the room.
- Clear the aisles of obstacles for persons with visual and mobility disabilities.
- Control background noise to the greatest possible extent.
- Speak in well-paced, well-modulated tones. Monitor rate and volume.
- Avoid turning your back to the audience while speaking. People may be depending on lip-reading.
- Repeat questions aloud before answering them.
- Accompany overhead transparencies, posters, PowerPoint presentations, etc. with verbal description. Be sure to read what is on the screen.
- Avoid relying solely on oral presentations and gestures to illustrate a point, or using visual points of reference (e.g., "this" and "that" or "here" and "there").

Read or describe what you are pointing to.

- Having your handouts available on disk and/or having a large-print version of your handouts available will be helpful to persons with low vision (enlarging font to 18 point bold or enlarging each page 130-150% on 14" X 17" sheets of paper would be ideal).
- Have transparencies available in hard copy for close examination.
- Use clear, vivid, legible, sharp high-contrast handouts. Avoid using dark ink on dark paper, fancy fonts, or extremely small print.

Excerpted from "**On the Road to Access**" by Nancy L. Badger, Ph.D. and Karen A. Meyers, Ph.D., published in the [American College Personnel Association's \*Developments\*](#), June 1998.

**source: Mary McGhee**

<http://www.casagordita.com/>

## **Checklist #2**

### ACCESS Checklist

Why an "ACCESS" Checklist?

When you make your event "accessible" you make it possible for everyone to participate with ease in any part of your programme.

Coordinating any event can be time-consuming and challenging. To make things a little easier for you, the DisAbled Women's Network (D.A.W.N.)

Ontario has created some guidelines in the form of a "checklist".

#### 1. BUDGETING FOR ACCESS

- Services are available in alternate formats (e.g. Braille, sign language, large print)
- Services are accessible in alternate formats (e.g. on an Accessible website, telephone device for deaf)

#### 2. LOCATION

Location has "safe" and "accessible" entry and elevator.

Check:

- Ramp (The best gradient is 1:20; this means for each 20 cms there is 1 cm increase in height. A steeper gradient of 1:12 is acceptable. The ramp should have a non-slip surface, be well lit and have handrails)
- Wheelchair accessible parking close to the front entrance
- Elevators have low buttons and Braille markings
- Adapted washrooms with wide door and grab bar
- Public telephones are accessible (coin slot -1.22m above floor level) and has volume control
- Signage is in large font, and contrasting colours

### 3. TIMING

- Scheduled events/ meetings provide ample time for:
  - Booking transportation to and from event
  - Booking interpreters (sign and oral)
- Arranging for captioning on videos shown
- Start and end time is adhered to in order to facilitate transportation that has been scheduled
- Social events are scheduled to maximize participation and to facilitate preplanning

### 4. WRITING MATERIALS

Utilize:

- Plain language concepts
- Are produced in large font
- Alternate formats (Braille, cassette tape)

### 5. REGISTRATION FORM

Registration form includes:

- Request for access needs identification for training (accessibility, alternate formats, etc.)
- Request for allergy identification
- Request for assistive devices preferred
- Attendant requirements

### 6. SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

- Room large enough for wheelchair users
- Accessibility between tables is large enough to facilitate easy wheelchair movement
- No steep slopes
- Reserved seating arranged for participants with visual or hearing impairments
- Table or desk tops are at a suitable height for wheelchair users

## 7. STAFF

- Are easily identified, available to answer questions, and can guide clients to the correct locations, facilities, and resources available
- Assist with computer access and on-line technologies
- Familiarize clients with visual impairments with their surroundings

## 8. SPEAKERS/TRAINERS/FACILITATORS

- Have adhered to suggestions for written materials
- Speak using plain language, and avoid jargon and acronyms
- Provide frequent opportunity for physical movement to avoid prolonged sitting
- Keep presentations within scheduled time frames

## 9. FRAGRANCE FREE POLICY

- Request that participants refrain from wearing perfume, cologne and other fragrances, and use unscented personal care products in order to promote a fragrance-free environment at meetings and other public events hosted by the organization.

Approval Date: April, 2007