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**TESTIMONIALS**

London, ON

“I have found all of the training is beneficial and helpful. As I walked in the room I didn’t have much information but now I feel empowered and aware of disability issues.”

**Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Accessibility Project**

Toronto, ON

“Inclusion is very important to any kind of disability. I have learned how to include the disable person as newcomer”

Mississauga, ON

 “Understanding barriers to accessibility and understanding disability, learning about the definition of each kind of disability, what to say, don't say, tips.”

“Inclusion, accessibility and the law gave me more understanding of definitions and available sources”

Hamilton, ON

“It was a very interactive workshop. What I learned in this workshop is the idea of a holistic approach when dealing with people with disabilities.”

The Accessibility Project brings together the settlement and disability sectors through the partnership between OCASI and the Ethno-Racial Peoples with Disabilities Coalition of Ontario or ERDCO. Citizenship and Immigration Canada has granted OCASI and ERDCO 2 year funding to design and deliver a one day accessibility training curriculum to help settlement workers improve their skills and resourcefulness in their work with newcomer with disabilities.

**For more info please contact, fabraha@ocasi.org**

**Community Consultation Report Highlights**

**The Experiences of Newcomers with Disabilities Who use Settlement Services**
Newcomer with disabilities struggle with a number of key barriers common to all immigrants settling in Ontario, for instance, language barriers, affordable housing, access to other forms of education (college or university, trades, etc.), and employment. However, newcomers with disabilities experience additional barriers as people with disabilities, for example:

* Challenges in the interaction with settlement workers, due to a lack of understanding of disability issues in general and a lack of capacity, and resources to service them.
* A lack of disability-related accommodations.
	+ Inaccessible housing
* Fear of exclusion or deportation.

**Barriers to Accessible Settlement Services Reported by Settlement Workers**
The settlement workers in this project identified reoccurring challenges in supporting newcomers with disabilities:

* More time needed to serve newcomers with disabilities.
* Lack of information on available services for people with disabilities.
* Lack of dedicated funds at settlement agencies to work with clients with disabilities.
* Inaccessible welcome centres and settlement agencies.
* Lack of partnerships between disability organizations and settlement organizations

**Key Recommendations**

* Provide training to settlement workers and their agencies around appropriate interaction with newcomers with disabilities and different categories of disabilities.
* Provide information on how to create inclusive spaces and client-centred customer service
* Train service providers to design/use outreach methods that speak specifically and openly about disability and accessible services in their agencies.
* Create an easily accessible listing of all programs and services available to newcomers with disabilities and their eligibility criteria.