



DISABLED PEOPLES' INTERNATIONAL NORTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Antigua and Barbuda; Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Canada; Dominica; Grenada; Guyana; Haiti; Jamaica; Montserrat; St. Kitts and Nevis; St. Lucia; St. Vincent and Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago; USA

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Distinguished Regional Colleagues in DPI NAC,

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RE: COVID-19 PANDEMIC

As we face the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting our territories, let us utilize the wealth of knowledge and expert advice widely available on the nature of this virus and effective preventative measures to safeguard ourselves, families, communities and countries. Our disability sector remains most vulnerable as medical consensus indicates that older persons and persons with specific medical conditions and disabilities who have an impaired immune system are at greatest risk of developing complications from COVID-19.

Greater vigilance and diligence are required on our part especially as we put measures in place to ensure that all public service announcements and related national pronouncements by medical and political leaders are in formats accessible to our diverse membership.

Let us vigorously promote and work closely with relevant authorities to ensure that vital information on COVID-19 and instructions are in accessible formats e.g. via video with sign language interpretation, sub texts or closed captioning for the Deaf, tailored audio messages, large fonts and braille leaflets for persons who are blind and with visual impairments and generally short accessible messages that explain simple steps which can be taken to mitigate against infection and spread.

Understanding that Persons with Disabilities are also among the poorest and most vulnerable in all societies and that we will be adversely affected by isolation and quarantine measures without provision for food, care and essential resources, it is incumbent upon our organizations to advocate for greatest social protection and access to information for our membership.

The Board of Directors of DPI NAC will be monitoring regional COVID-19 developments and we are available to support the voice and advocacy of your organization should you call upon us. We look forward to your updates and suggestions which you wish to offer as we seek to remain united in our fight against this pandemic.

Yours sincerely,

Merphilus James (Mr.)
PRESIDENT

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