

Annex B NLAD Backgrounder

The Newfoundland and Labrador Association of the Deaf (NLAD) is a non-profit organization comprised of persons who are Deaf. Established in 1946, NLAD is the oldest association made up of persons with disabilities in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

NLAD's mission is to protect and promote the rights, needs and concerns of people who are Deaf or who communicate in American Sign Language (ASL) within the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. NLAD is governed by a Board of Directors, the majority of whom are Deaf and use ASL for communication.

NLAD has a long history of providing services to the Deaf community that are not available from mainstream public services or community organizations. This is largely due to NLAD being an organization of individuals who are Deaf and having staff who use signed language, such as American Sign Language. NLAD's work includes:

- Consultation and information to the public, businesses, media, health care, government, educators and others on the needs and interests of Newfoundlanders and Labradoreans who are Deaf,
- Research and data collection regarding Deaf demographics, employment, and literacy,
- Dissemination of research reports, new trends, best practices to membership, governmental, community and private organizations.
- Employment services to enable clients who are Deaf to seek, obtain and maintain employment,
- Promotion and protection of Deaf culture and the use of American Sign Language (ASL) throughout the province,
- Sign language classes,
- ASL Consultation Conferences for the Deaf community,
- Provision of Deaf perspective and expertise to governmental and community organizations, including Health & Community Services, Network of Disability Organizations, Accessibility and Inclusion Advisory Committee (City of St. John's), and Marine Atlantic Accessibility and Inclusion Advisory Committee, and
- Representation of the Province on national boards, task forces and inquiries concerning Deaf matters.

Achievements:

NLAD played a key role in:

- Establishing the Newfoundland School for the Deaf in 1964,
- Reinstating Employment Assistance for People with Disabilities funding in 1987,
- Establishing a telephone relay service through the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) in 1990. Newfoundland and Labrador was the first province in Atlantic Canada to have a telephone relay service,
- Providing closed captioning on the CBC evening news in 1996. Newfoundland and Labrador was the first province to have captioning on a prime time news show.

NLAD:

- Developed and implemented the first Deaf Literacy Program in Newfoundland and Labrador (2005),
- Initiated, developed, and implemented Employment Services for the Deaf (since 2008). NLAD continues to deliver this successful program.
- Provides psychological assessment and treatment in ASL to consumers of mental health services (since 2010). This psychological/mental health services now resides as part of NLAD's Health and Wellness Program.
- Initiated, developed, and implemented a Community Support Program. This program is now in its third year, supporting Deaf citizens to access basic public services, including housing, income support, health care, and education; all primary determinants of health. (2017)
- Administers the delivery of provincial interpreting services for the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2019). In 2019, NLAD was the successful proponent in the provincial tender for delivery of interpreting services.
- Developed a Family Communication Program (2019). A child and family focused program which enables healthy child development through acquirement of language.
- Developed and implemented a Peer Support Program (2020). This program was developed during the COVID pandemic to provide a 'warm line' that can be accessed by people who are Deaf/hard of hearing.
- Developed and implemented the Deaf Connect Line (2020) – a point of contact for critical public information and services. The Deaf Connect Line ensures people who are Deaf/hard of hearing can access critical public information that is currently offered through 1-800 phone numbers that are not accessible to people who are Deaf/hard of hearing.
- Developed Pathway to Care (2020) for Deaf people of our Province, related to the Covid 19 pandemic .

NLAD delivers various programs and services; the majority of which serve individuals and families across the province:

- ASL Instruction,
- Employment Services,
- Community Support Program,

- Interpreting Services,
- Health and Wellness Program,
- Family Care Program, and
- Peer Support Program.

As well, the Deaf Connect Line is a service provided by the NLAD to ensure deaf and hard of hearing individuals have access to critical public health information provided through 1-800 phone numbers.

Members of the NLAD staff are representatives and consultants on a number of local, provincial, and national committees. Our expertise is regularly sought by Ministers and departments within the Provincial Government.

NLAD developed with Provincial government departments a resource to ensure Deaf people have equitable access to information and services related to the Covid-19 pandemic. 'Pathway to Care' for the Deaf people of Newfoundland and Labrador is a leading best practice.