

The following is a transcript of audio segments for slides in this lesson.

Lesson 3.1

In this lesson our instructors will discuss how they:

- Find Communication Assistants
- Interview a new Communication Assistant
- Negotiate work engagements
- Ask an organization to pay for an assistant

Slide 3.2

The instructors tell us where they find people to assist with communication.

Slide 3.3 – Communication Assistance Database

- CDAC has developed a database of people who may be able to assist with communication.
- The database is online and it allows you to search for someone who might meet your needs.
- You type in information and (if there is someone who matches your needs) – the computer connects you with someone who matches your needs.
- However, in some situations, there may not be anyone in the database in your area or who meets your requirements.
- The database is just starting up and it needs to grow.

Slide 3.5

The people in the database report that they have:

- Attended CDAC's online communication assistance training
- At least 1 years' experience working with people who have disabilities
- Can give you a written resume which describes their work experience
- Can give you the name of someone you can contact to find out about their work

Slide 3.6

The people on the database:

- Are not personally known or recommended by CDAC
- Are not accredited
- Are not hired or paid by CDAC
- CDAC is not responsible for their work.
- Work on their own
- Negotiate their own payment with you or the organization hiring them to assist you
- Do not provide communication assistance in police, legal, justice situations or in serious healthcare situations such as consent to treatment, capacity assessments or communicating about end of life directives.

Slide 3.8

The instructors advise that you:

- Write out your questions ahead of time

It's a good idea to ask the person how they would handle different situations – such as what would they do if a person ignored you and spoke directly to them ...or was rude to you... we have included some common scenarios that you can use or adapt in the resource file.

- Check the resource file for suggested questions
- Meet in a public place / coffee shop.
- Bring someone with you.
- Take the assistant's name and contact information.
- You can decide to hire them yourself for a future communication event or ask an organization to pay them.
- Or you may not want to hire them if they don't suit your needs

Slide 3.10

In the next section, we asked the instructors for tips on working with people who assist with communication.

Slide 3.11

Unfortunately communication assistance services are fairly new in Canada and not well funded.

Different provinces and areas are at different stages in their awareness about the need to provide these services when they are needed.

So for now –

- You may already have funding that you can use for communication assistance such as Passport or Direct funding for attendant services.
- If you don't have funding for a communication assistant, you could ask an organization to pay for a communication assistant if you need this support to use their service.
- Because these services are new, some organizations may be more receptive to paying an assistant than others.

We encourage you to ask for communication assistance funding at meetings and appointments especially in organizations that are publically funded.

If you receive your attendant services in a residence or if have agency attendant services coming into your home, we encourage you to ask these organizations to give you communication assistance when you need them in the community.

Slide 3.12

And if you don't have someone to assist you communicating, or if you have someone but you don't have funding to hire them – then Publically funded organizations should offer and pay for services because they are legally obligated to make their services accessible to you. Examples publically funded organizations include:

- Healthcare facilities
- Educationally facilities
- Legal aid services
- Organizations that provide disability services
- Local, provincial and federal government services
- Justice services
- Public meetings and forums

See the card to request an organization to pay in the resource file.

Slide 3.13– Things to think about and discuss

- Check out the CDAC database
- Ask your communication and disability organizations if they can connect you with attendants who might be interested in assisting with communication
- Ask for and get their resumes and references
- Arrange to interview them with someone you know.
- If they meet your needs, keep their contact information for later work.