

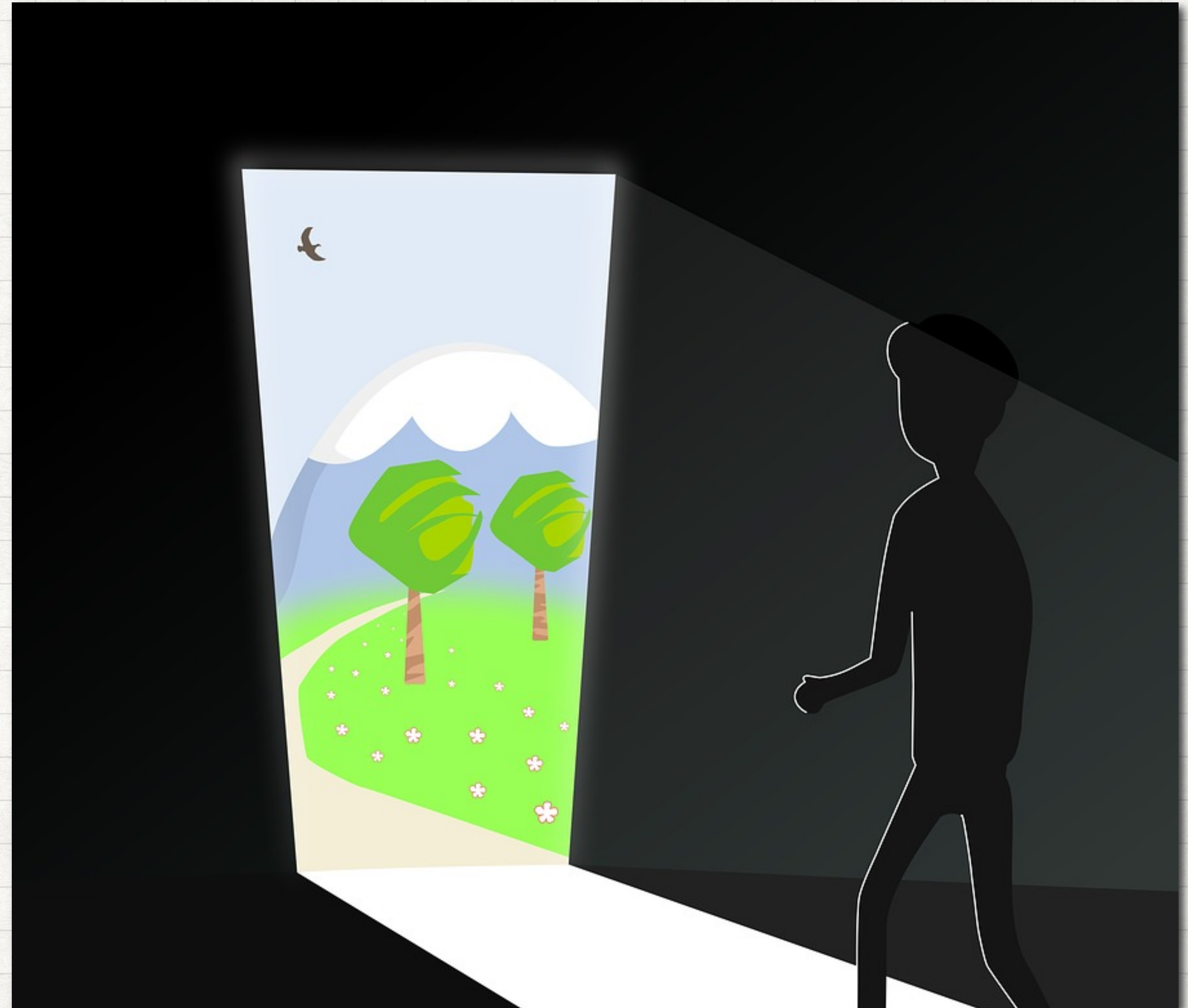
Canadian
Association of the Deaf



Association
des Sourds du Canada

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

TECHNOLOGY ACCESSIBILITY FOR CANADIANS WITH COMMUNICATION DISABILITIES



PROJECT GOAL

The goal of this report is to strengthen marketplace attention to Canadians with communication disabilities and to remove barriers to their participation in that marketplace.

The importance of telecommunications is threefold: (1) helping social communications, (2) helping to develop communities, and (3) providing safety and security for Canadians.

Canadians without access to technologies, and communications technologies especially, struggle to connect with people who could help them. Social networking could break down social barriers that often exist between individuals who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and hard of hearing and individuals who are hearing.

WHO IT HELPS AND HOW

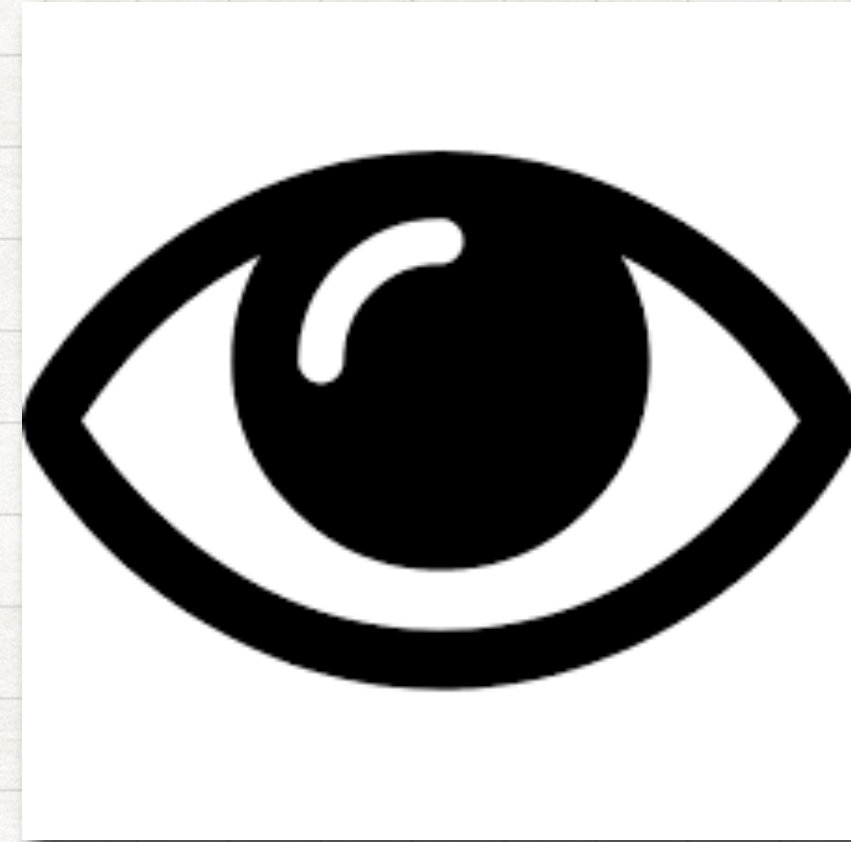
WHEN DESIGNED PROPERLY, TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENTS COULD BENEFIT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE SAME WAY THEY BENEFIT THE GENERAL POPULATION. FOR EXAMPLE, TELEMEDICINE IS A GREAT WAY TO DELIVER HEALTH CARE SERVICES. AND VIDEO-CONFERENCING CAN BE A WONDERFUL TOOL.

DEAF PARTICIPANTS PREFER COMMUNICATIONS THROUGH VIDEO CALLS BECAUSE THESE ALLOW FOR SIGNING AND LIP-READING.

AUDIO AMPLIFICATION DEVICES (HEARING-AIDS) THAT USE HIGH-LEVEL TECHNOLOGY; EMERGENCY ALERT SERVICES; OTHER ALERTING TECHNOLOGIES (E.G., FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SOUNDS, AND "SMART HOME" KITS); RELAY SERVICES; TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION DEVICES AND APPS; AVATAR INTERPRETATION -- THESE ARE ALL EXAMPLES OF EMERGING COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Our report cautions that the difference between failure and success in new technologies is often the involvement of DHHDB people in the development steps.
- Unfortunately, this kind of involvement doesn't happen often. Usually, what happens is that people who don't have disabilities will create devices and technologies that they think will be useful for us.
- They are often wrong, because they don't ask us what we want.



REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

OUR REPORT ENDS WITH SOME RECOMMENDATIONS INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES:

- **Recommendation:** The Canadian government should support low-cost, high-data, high-speed connections for persons with disabilities.
- **Recommendation:** Improve relay services in Canada by establishing standards of quality.
- **Recommendation:** Canada needs to learn from the COVID-19 pandemic to make sure that emergency situations are communicated clearly to people who are Deaf, Deaf-Blind, and hard of hearing.

**This project was prepared by the Canadian Association of the Deaf – Association des Sourds du Canada
with the support of the federal Office of Consumer Affairs.**

**For more information about the project or the Canadian Association of the Deaf - Association des Sourds du
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