



# The VOICE of Albertans with Disabilities

January 1, 2023

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

From VAD to you and yours, a wonderful happy and prosperous new year.



## Disability Awareness Presentations - Have you had one yet?

VAD offers disability awareness presentations to all schools, post secondary institutions and businesses. These free presentations educate and inform, outlining the ways to interact with someone that has a disability, including etiquette, and social norms – for example: what do you call someone with a disability – by their name of course!

Michelle Bissell, our Education Coordinator, has a team that is made up of volunteers that have diverse disabilities and lived experiences and can speak to all ages. This presentation speaks to:

- The meaning of disability and impairment
- How to treat and act around a person with a disability



- Appropriate use of language when talking to or about someone with a disability
- Understanding of people with disabilities rather than myths and misconceptions
- Attitudes and barriers faced by people with disabilities

VAD also offers customized workshops for businesses who are looking for paid training specific to their business needs. Call our office to speak with Michelle and arrange for your free disability awareness presentation. Check out her volunteer bios on our website under the awareness page.

<https://vadsociety.ca/awareness/>

## We did it..!!

Alberta Disability Awareness In Action ADAIA, Calgary, Canada

DEC 21, 2022 —

THANK YOU.

Dear supporters,

Over the course of the past eight months, our campaign to address the wage crisis encountered by disability workers in our province has come a long way. Together, we experienced many ups and downs, but today we can all rejoice in what we accomplished. WE DID IT!

As you have probably already seen, the Government of Alberta today announced that they will receive a 10% wage increase January 1st, 2023. Without a doubt, this represents a tremendous improvement for workers in our sector and is reflective of the tremendous depth of public support our campaign has gained.

Today's announcement makes us think about where we started: Just over eight months ago, a handful of us organized under the banner of Alberta Disability Awareness in Action. We launched our campaign by circulating this petition amongst friends and allies; only a handful of months later, the petition has now been signed by over 13,000 people. In the early days and weeks, we couldn't get government officials to recognize our group; as of now, representatives of our movement have met with 20 MLAs. Most importantly of all, what started amongst a small group of friends has become a grass-

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roots effort, through which we've all met hundreds and hundreds of incredible people.

All of these actions – and others – are all thanks to you.

Whether or not you are a disability worker, we hope you understand just how much of a difference your efforts made. Because of your support, thousands of workers and their families will rest a little easier this holiday season, knowing they are valued and appreciated by Albertans and our government.

We can't thank you enough. Have a wonderful holiday season,

Alberta Disability Awareness In Action

[https://www.change.org/p/ucp-alberta-government-essential-but-forgotten-campaign/u/31178198?cs\\_tk=AktU\\_wzR2ACdSMbjrGMAAXicyyvNyQEABF8BvEIP8RYY93JJDceXkS9QVfQ%3D&utm\\_campaign=b2397c3bc1014b228022795f72d603cb&utm\\_content=initial\\_v0\\_6\\_0&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=petition\\_update&utm\\_term=cs](https://www.change.org/p/ucp-alberta-government-essential-but-forgotten-campaign/u/31178198?cs_tk=AktU_wzR2ACdSMbjrGMAAXicyyvNyQEABF8BvEIP8RYY93JJDceXkS9QVfQ%3D&utm_campaign=b2397c3bc1014b228022795f72d603cb&utm_content=initial_v0_6_0&utm_medium=email&utm_source=petition_update&utm_term=cs)

## International Day of Acceptance

International Day of Acceptance is observed every year on January 20 and it is the day to fill our hearts with the sublime powers of acceptance. It is important to be accepting of certain things in life. This idea unquestionably holds in the case of accepting the disability of the person. This is a day when people all over the world come together to support and embrace the challenges that come along with having a disability. International Day of Acceptance was created as a way to recognize social acceptance of disability.

<https://nationaltoday.com/international-day-of->

[acceptance/#:~:text=International%20Day%20of%20Acceptance%20is,the%20disability%20of%20the%20person.](#)

### What is acceptance?

Acceptance in simple terms is perceiving reality as it is, what people are rather than what you want them to be. That being said, acceptance doesn't mean that you can't work on changing things and that what you're accepting will be that way forever.

### Why is acceptance so important?

When you learn to accept and you make peace with the way things are, you step out of your way and step forward on the growth path. The more you practice acceptance, the more you see that each moment has a purpose, a lesson to learn, a reason for unfolding the way that it does.

### Why is it important to accept people's differences?

Respecting both similarities and differences of others is good for us. Situations in our lives keep on changing constantly. Accepting every type of situation that we might face, be it good or bad will give us lasting peace and contentment.

## Changes to AISH Program

Danielle Smith announced a plan to re-index Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH), mere months ahead of the provincial election. Albertans on assured income for the severely handicapped will be seeing about a hundred more dollars on their next AISH payment.

Those receiving AISH and other provincial programs will see their benefits rise starting Jan. 1, 2023, a move that

Smith said will combat inflation. AISH benefits will be reflected on the Dec. 22 cheques.

Additionally, those receiving the quarterly benefits from the Alberta Child and Family Benefit will also see their payments rise by

### #DayOfAcceptance

Tell the world that you embrace who you are—a person with social rights who has opinions, interests and goals. You are a person who is empowered to make a difference in the world and will not let yourself or others be left without a voice in society. You are not living disabled—you are living.



January 20th is International Day of Acceptance.

*Together, We Hold the Power!*

**Full Participation - Accessibility - Equity**



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six per cent next February, while those on the Alberta Seniors Benefit will see an increase in their January cheques.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9309545/alberta-premier-danielle-smith-reindexing-aish/>

Examples of monthly benefit rate changes for January 1, 2023: (Examples are based on the maximum core monthly benefit rates for single people with no children)

- **\$1,685 to \$1,787 – AISH**
- **\$745 to \$790 – Income Support** (expected to work)
- **\$866 to \$919 – Income Support** (barriers to full employment)



- **\$286 to \$303 – Alberta Seniors Benefit**



## The Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal

The Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee Medal (Alberta) was created to mark the 70th anniversary of Her Majesty's Accession to the Throne as Queen of Canada. To celebrate this historic event, the Medal program recognizes outstanding service from Albertans who, like The Queen, have dedicated themselves to family, community, and country.

Recipients must:

- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident; and
- living as of February 6, 2022; and
- be a leader in the community; and
- made a significant impact on a local level.

*VAD is pleased to have presented awards to the following individuals:*

**Detective Bryce Clarke**  
**Cindy Gordon**  
**Dr. Dahlia ElShafie-Mostafa**  
**Larry Pempeit**  
**Dr. Ross Wein**

**Larry Pempeit**  
**December 22, 2022**



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Dr Ross Wein



Cindy Gordon



De Dahlia Mostafa



Detective Bryce Clarke  
Honourees



December 10, 2022

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