ON THE ROAD TO
WELLNESS
North Dakota Disability Health Project

Promoting the health and wellness of people with disabilities

NDCPD
Minot State University
Center of Excellence

January 2009 Issue 5

Accessibility - It's not just about the parking spot!!!

Nearly 20% of the population has a disability which may limit their ability to hear, see, move, learn or communicate. You may need to accommodate workshop participants with some or all of these kinds of disabilities. These guidelines, though not all inclusive, can help you in planning, organizing, and delivering accommodations to your participants with disabilities for workshops, conferences, and meetings.

Print Material and Handouts

- Include the following statement on all printed literature: "*This document is available in alternative formats upon request. Examples include braille, large print, audio, or disk.*"
- Include the following statement on all printed literature announcing the event and registration materials: "*Individuals with disabilities may request meeting accommodations by contacting (name) at (phone number) prior to (date).*"
- Include an accommodation question or request area on workshop registration forms.
- If distributing name tags, use string name tags rather than clip name tags. String name tags can be purchased at most office supply stores and customized on the computer. Avery Inc. has several kits available, the most easy to use is kit #2004-6273.
- Create easy-to-read visual aids. Text should be displayed in large bold letters. Eight lines of text (18-point type with high contrast) are minimum for a slide or transparency. Use colors on PowerPoint that are high contrast (e.g. light background, dark letters).
- Include a barrier-free room category on your hotel reservation form.
- Include hotel and/or site maps that indicate accessible parking, restrooms, and entrances.

Parking

- Insure that adequate parking is available and that it is clearly marked with the international accessibility symbols.
- Insure that the path of travel from the parking spaces is unobstructed and has a curb cut to the building entrance.

Meeting Room Details

- Plan for 30 percent more meeting space when 10 percent or more of the participants will use mobility aids. Make sure the chairs and tables leave room (3 feet minimum) for wheelchairs to move about the room.
- Use microphones and face the audience when speaking to assist those who read lips or use assistive listening devices.
- Theatre style seating, or a section with this arrangement designated, is helpful for those who use wheelchairs. One chair can be removed from every other row adjacent to the aisle to allow seating selection for people who use wheelchairs. U Shaped meeting rooms are most accommodating for small groups (20-40).
- Insure there is adequate space for wheelchairs to be dispersed throughout the room, within easy viewing of safe and accessible exits.
- Check seating options so people with disabilities are not limited to the back or front of the room.
- Most standard tables can comfortably accommodate wheelchairs.
- Be sure that refreshments and handouts are easily accessible for everyone to reach.

Transportation

- If you are providing transportation for attendees, be sure to consider if special transportation facilities are needed for the movement of attendees with wheelchairs.

To receive this newsletter by email or in an alternative format, call 800-233-1737.

Facility Accommodations

- Building and room entrances should be at least 32-inches wide for wheelchair access. Insure that corridors are unobstructed and have at least a 36-inch clearance.
- At the building entrance, there should be either an automatic door or the pull force on the door of five pounds or less.
- Schedule meeting rooms on a building entry floor or a floor that has elevator access.
- Check the facility to determine whether telephones and water fountains are accessible for persons with disabilities. These should be no higher that 48 inches.
- Check restroom facilities for access. They should be free from obstructions with stall doors that swing outward with at least a 32-inch clearance. Stalls should have grab bars with commodes raised 17-19 inches from the floor. Basins should have a 30-inch clearance underneath and wrapped water pipes. Towel racks, mirrors, soap dispensers and toilet-seat-cover dispensers should be no higher than 40 inches from the floor. If a bathroom is inaccessible, insure there are appropriate signs redirecting people to an accessible restroom.
- Insure that directional signs, including elevator control panels, are displayed in large print and Braille.
- Consider if the meeting room floors have nonslip surfaces negotiable by persons who use wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility devices..
- If persons with hearing impairments are attending your meeting be sure to consider what kind of assistive listening devices you will need to provide. Possibly plan to have a sign interpreter or use a remote captionist. Consider if they will need any special in-room amenities, such as a vibrating alarm clock or a TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf) telephone system.
- If persons with visual impairments are attending your meeting, consider what assistance they might need, e.g. enlarged print or Braille handouts or high contrasting PowerPoint presentation.
- In the case of emergencies, insure the exits are clearly identified and that the fire and emergency alarms have both audible and visual signals.

Source: Information adapted from the New York State Health Disability and Health Program: http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/promo/events.htm

Additional Resources

Accessibility Guidelines. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, NCBDD—Disability and Health Branch. *http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/dh/accessibilityguides.htm*

"A Guide to Planning Accessible Meeting," June Kailes and Darrell Jones, IRRU, 2323 S. Shepherd, Suite 1000, Houston, TX 77019; (713) 520-0232.

"Accommodating All Guests: The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Lodging Industry," John Slamen, AIA, The American Hotel and Motel Association, 1201 New York Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-3100.

The ND Disability Health Project can provide technical assistance to assist with health promotion, staff training and education, and disability awareness. Contact us at 800.233.1737 or visit our website at www.ndcpd.org/health .

North Dakota Disability Health Project

North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities
Minot State University
500 University Ave. W.
Minot, ND 58707
1.800.233.1737
701.858.3580
www.ndcpd.org/health

Project staff :

Brent Askvig
Principal Investigator
701-858-3052
brent.askvig@minotstateu.edu

Kari Arrayan
Program Director
701-858-3048
kari.arrayan@minotstateu.edu

Kylene Kraft
Project Assistant
701-858-4365
kylene.kraft@minotstateu.edu

Korie Huettl
Administrative Assistant
701-858-4154
korie.huettl@minotstateu.edu

Vision:

All people in ND have access to information and services they need to maintain good health and wellness. There are no health disparities between people with and without disabilities that are based solely on the presence of a disability.

Pay It Forward.....

Pass it on to others who may find this information helpful.

Health-related information provided in this fact sheet is for informational purposes only and should not replace advice from a medical professional. The ND Disability Health Project is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through a grant (1 u59 DD000278-01) to the North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities at Minot State University. Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the CDC.