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April 2017

Community Update Alternative Hearing Assistance Supplement

Dear Community Partner,

Effective April 1, 2017 the Ministry of Social Development and Social Innovation (MSDSI) has introduced a \$100 monthly Alternative Hearing Assistance supplement. The supplement was implemented following a human rights complaint supported by lawyers at the BC Public Interest and Advocacy Centre (BC PIAC).

The supplement is available to eligible people with permanent profound hearing loss in both ears. Eligible people include those receiving Persons with Disabilities (PWD) and Persons with Persistent Multiple Barriers to Employment (PPMB) benefits, as well as Income Assistance recipients residing in special care facilities.

Applicants for the supplement must be assessed by an audiologist or hearing instrument professional to show that they cannot significantly benefit from a hearing instrument (hearing aid ect) for the purposes of speech comprehension. People who have received a hearing instrument supplement in the past 36 months may not be eligible for this supplement.

This supplement is good news and has the potential to promote better access to services and supports for people in the Deaf and hard of hearing community. Our congratulations to BC PIAC for their great work on this.

If you have any questions about the supplement, please contact Sam Turcott at our Advocacy Access Program at 604-872-1278 or 1-800-663-1278.