



Canadian  
Down Syndrome  
Society

Société  
canadienne de la  
trisomie 21

**Human Rights Statement – Canadian Down Syndrome Society  
A Response to the COVID-19 Crisis in Canada Focusing on the Health & Well-Being of Persons with  
Down Syndrome**

***For distribution amongst the Down syndrome community in Canada, federal and provincial government agencies including ministers and Government of Canada officials, regional Canadian health offices, and Canadian media outlets.***

This statement encompasses the Canadian Down Syndrome Society's (CDSS) commitment to and continued strong focus on the human rights of individuals with Down syndrome. At this difficult time, we call on and encourage Canadian governments and regional ethics committees to ensure basic human rights are upheld.

CDSS works to ensure equitable opportunities for all Canadians with Down syndrome by fostering a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity, worth and equal rights for ALL people.

CDSS asserts that Down syndrome, a naturally occurring chromosomal disorder, in and of itself, is not a medical condition and therefore should not prohibit a successful application for or access to medical services, insurance and treatments.

CDSS affirms Canada's commitment to the rights of persons with disabilities as written into the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, our federal, territorial and provincial Human Rights Laws, and in Canada's commitment to United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Articles 12, 19, 21 and 25). As such, any Canadian pandemic triage response must be disability inclusive. Every Canadian must be offered a similar standard of treatment delivery and be considered for access to life-saving equipment and not be denied access or given substandard treatment on the basis of their disability.

CDSS has informed and encouraged the Down syndrome community to focus on best practices to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, and on the health and well-being of all persons with Down syndrome, along with the families, workers and loved ones that support them.

CDSS receives information from and is collaborating with federal and provincial disability coalitions. We remain committed to advocating on behalf of the Canadian Down syndrome community.

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