

## Deaf Access and the Canadian Hearing Society Introduce 211 Services to Region

Deaf Access Simcoe Muskoka and the Canadian Hearing Society has launched a new partnership with 211, the information source to human services in the Simcoe region. Through 211's TTY line and online live chat, deaf and the hard of hearing people in Simcoe and the surrounding areas will find it easier to connect with services and support for challenges, such as housing, income, financial assistance, employment and health issues.

"About 23 per cent of the population has some kind of hearing loss. In Simcoe that would mean 98,000 people are deaf and hard of hearing," said Louise Gagne, Executive Director, Deaf Access Simcoe Muskoka. "We are excited about joining 211 and the Canadian Hearing Society to launch these specialized 211 services to this invisible and often marginalized community."

211's TTY line (1-888-435-6086) and online chat at [www.northsimcoemuskoka.info](http://www.northsimcoemuskoka.info) is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day of the year. By using 211, callers can get information on the options available to them for their particular situation. 211's Information & Referral Specialists can explain how to access services, eligibility requirements, hours, location and more about social, community and government programs serving the community.

Deaf Access Simcoe Muskoka and the Canadian Hearing Society have worked with 211 so the deaf and hard of hearing communities become better aware of the expertise and resources that exist. They have also provided training to 211 staff about communicating with deaf, deafened and hard of hearing consumers.

Deaf Access Simcoe Ensures that culturally deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing people in Simcoe County have equity and communication access in the community. The Canadian Hearing Society is the leading provider of services, products and information that remove barriers to communication, advance hearing health, and promote equity for people who are culturally deaf, oral deaf, deafened and hard of hearing.



*In this photo (left to right): Pam Hillier, Executive Director Community Connection/211 Central East; Peggy Norton-Harris, Hearing Care Counsellor, Canadian Hearing Society; Louise Gagne, Executive Director, Deaf Access Simcoe Muskoka.*