

HMD Alliance Newsletter

EMPOWERING OURSELVES

Historically disabilities were seen as personal problems or weaknesses. But now the social model sees disability not as something wrong with us but as a result of the interaction between our mobility limitations and environmental barriers plus social attitudes that hinder our full and effective participation. We are just fine! It is our environment that needs to adapt to our needs.

Together we can make a difference!

Summer Challenge

You have taken your car in for servicing. When you return to pick it up, the cashier says, "It's in space 87—just over there," pointing to a space at least 150 feet from where you are standing. Your comfortable distance to walk, without sitting down to rest, is 50 feet.

What action could you take so that you walk no more than 50 feet?

Send in your suggested actions and we will publish them in September.

Helping Each Other

Usually our focus is on how to get the help that we need so that we do not end up in difficulty. But we can also be on the lookout for others with hidden mobility disabilities who need help and advocate for them. Here are signs to look for in others:

- Walking more & more slowly
- Beginning to stagger
- Increased difficulty breathing

Do you have other suggestions? Please contact us and let us know.

Solving the May Challenge regarding wheelchair assistance

Ensure you are coded on the airline website as someone who needs more than a ride in a cart over long distances. You can do this by checking that you cannot climb stairs.

Get to the airport early enough that you have time to insist on wheelchair, not cart, assistance.

Insist on wheelchair assistance from check-in rather than a ride on a cart.

Tell airport personnel that you cannot walk through security but need a pat-down.

Remain on the cart & ask the driver to pull in closer to the jet way door or until a wheelchair is provided.

Advocacy in Canada

One of the primary objectives of the HMD Alliance is to advocate for the changes that we need in our environment so that we can function in society on an equal basis with others. Over the past several months, the HMD Alliance has been able to make the following official interventions:

- Federal Consultation on accessibility: The HMD Alliance submitted its *HMD Research Report #1* & the *HMD Fact Sheet*.
- Federal Consultation on changes to the building code: The HMD Alliance submitted its *HMD Accommodation Guidelines*.
- Canadian Transportation Agency's Consultation on improved accessibility: The HMD Alliance submitted *Accessibility Issues in Air Transportation*.

What other advocacy opportunities are there—especially in the U.S.?

We can advocate more effectively the larger our Alliance is and the more detailed our research is.

Invite 5 friends or family members to join the HMD Alliance by the Fall.

Get others to take the Survey!

Educate others!

Visual cues are excellent for self-advocacy & to educate others. Order [Hannah's HMD buttons](#).

Staying Mobile

Good self-care is critical to remaining mobile, and the variability of hidden mobility disabilities can make that self-care challenging. If you start to have pain:

- **STOP** the activity. It doesn't help to "push through" the pain and increase joint inflammation or breathing difficulties.
- **REST**. Taking pressure off of joints or really catching your breath, even if the rest is 1-2 minutes, can help position you to become mobile again.
- **ADJUST**. Alter movement patterns to briefly take pressure off of impaired joints—like "dancing" while you are standing at the stove or sink.

Other ideas? Send them to us.

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9 Core Members
95 Supporting Members