

EMPOWERING OURSELVES

In our home environment, we can arrange things so that the distances we need to walk are known and manageable. But when we travel, that is not necessarily the case. To help our members enjoy air travel in particular, we will have a series over the next several months on tips for handling each portion of a trip by air. Our first issue will focus on checking in—i.e., getting to the check-in counter. In U.S. airports, porters can usually provide wheelchair assistance at curbside, but that is not the case in many other countries.

Please share your thoughts and suggestions and we will publish those as well.

Together we can make a difference!

Solving the Summer Challenge regarding serviced car pick-up

When you leave your car, say you will need it brought to the door when it's ready.

Ask the cashier to have it brought to the door for you when you check out.

Advocating for Ourselves

As fall activities start up, consultations on accessibility do as well. In British Columbia, for example, the legislature is beginning consultations to resurrect the former Human Rights Commission that would provide a proactive channel for raising accessibility issues.

Where else are there possibilities for the HMD Alliance to advocate regarding accessibility, like on building codes, or parking, or transportation?

Let the Alliance know and we will act!

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TIPS FOR AIR TRAVEL

Part 1: Checking In

Airlines and airports are moving towards self-service, which can pose problems for persons with hidden mobility disabilities. If you want to manage your pain level, find out ahead of time how far you will be expected to walk from transportation to the airport until you actually receive wheelchair assistance. Keep in mind the difference between what you can comfortably walk and the amount of mandatory walking you will have to do to get to your seat or use a restroom – and try to limit all other walking to just that amount.

In addition to notifying the airline that you will need wheelchair assistance, here is some research you can do ahead of time:

1. If you are parking your car and taking an airport shuttle, can you ask the shuttle to drop you on the Departures level near your check-in counter instead of down on the Arrivals level?
2. Will there be a greeter or porter at the airport door who can get you wheelchair assistance while you wait on a bench (instead of having to walk into the Departures Hall)?
3. Will you be expected to use a stand-up kiosk for check-in or is there a sit-down option?
4. What can you do to be connected with wheelchair assistance quickly and without much walking?

While the facility where you park can answer #1, you will probably need to talk with someone at the airport, not simply the airline. Try starting by contacting the airport (Special Assistance or Customer Service) to get specific information. Remember you will need to educate the person you are talking with. Try saying something like, "How can I quickly connect with wheelchair assistance? I can only walk 30 feet." If you say "I can only walk a short distance," the person will probably think you mean 250-300 feet.

The key is planning ahead and arriving early!

Grow Our Alliance

We can advocate more effectively the larger our Alliance is.

Invite friends and family to join!

Educate others!

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

12 Core Members
94 Supporting Members