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Mindfulness of Invisible Disabilities To Be Promoted During Lancaster October Accessibility Awareness Month

Lancaster, MA, U.S.A. (September 25, 2023) – This year’s Lancaster October Accessibility Awareness Month will focus on educating the community on invisible disabilities, which are physical or mental conditions that are not visible from the outside, yet can limit or challenge a person's movements, senses, activities, or ability to function in society. A person is typically considered to have a disability when using a wheelchair or a walker, or have other visually apparent challenges. However, examples of invisible disabilities include learning disabilities, multiple sclerosis, dyslexia, crohn's disease, bipolar disorder, sensory processing disorders, autism spectrum disorder, and many more.



“Invisible disabilities are very prevalent in our society and are much more common than people think,” said Michael McCue, Chair of the Lancaster Commission on Disability. “Symptoms such as debilitating pain, dizziness, fatigue, cognitive dysfunction, vision or hearing impairment, learning difference, mental disorder, and many others can easily negatively impact a person’s function. In these cases, the symptoms are largely unapparent to onlookers and can lead to misunderstandings, false perceptions and judgements which can frustrate persons with disabilities,” added McCue.

During October, **Lancaster’s Thayer Memorial Library** located on the town green at 717 Main Street, will display literature and resources about invisible disabilities and will feature related podcasts on its website at <https://thayermemoriallibrary.org/>. In addition, posters and/ or pamphlets on invisible disabilities will be available in Lancaster at participating schools, places of worship and public buildings.

In addition, the **Lancaster Emergency Preparedness Guide**, a comprehensive 36-page booklet, which was made available in [digital format](#) during last year's October Accessibly Awareness Month, will be printed and distributed to all Lancaster residents in October. The guide, conceived and developed by the Lancaster Commission on Disability, is uniquely formatted in a fully inclusive presentation that provides guidance for all residents, while also including in-depth guidance that is relevant for persons with disabilities. This is the first type of guide designed and produced with this fully inclusive approach. It will be extremely useful and valuable in helping to save lives and reduce injury, stress, and confusion for all Lancaster residents.

Lancaster October Accessibility Awareness Month coincides with both [National Disability Employment Awareness Month](#) (NDEAM) and [Invisible Disabilities Week](#), which occurs from October 15-21. October is officially "Accessibility Awareness Month" in the town of Lancaster. October Accessibility Awareness Month was developed by the Lancaster Commission on Disability (COD) to create awareness and education surrounding the importance of accessibility for disabled persons, whether physically seen or unseen, such as hearing, emotional and other less noticeable illnesses or conditions.

The Lancaster COD is also actively seeking volunteers. The commission is progressive and was the world's first entity to establish an official Community Awareness Month on Accessibility. Anyone interested in the COD can visit [Commission on Disability | Lancaster MA](#) or www.facebook.com/lancasterCOD or contact Michael McCue at (978) 697-2408.

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