



Rick Hansen Foundation Supporting a New National Standard for Accessible Homes across Canada

November 23, 2020 (Vancouver/ Traditional Territories of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations)) – Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) is pleased to support the development of a new and much-needed national standard for affordable, adaptable and accessible homes across Canada.

RHF intends to use the proposed national standard, being developed by CSA Group, to inform the basis of a new Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC) module enabling RHFAC Professionals to rate the accessibility of residential homes. Based upon the National Standard of Canada, CSA B651-18, *Accessible design for the built environment*, RHFAC is the only national program that rates, certifies and celebrates the meaningful accessibility of buildings from the perspective of persons with mobility, vision and hearing disabilities.

The federal government, through the National Housing Strategy (NHS) delivered by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), is providing \$190,000 in funding to CSA Group to support research and the development of this new standard.

“Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. Research is key to finding new, innovative approaches to help address Canada’s housing challenges and make it easier for Canadians to find a home that meets their needs and that they can afford,” **said The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister Responsible for CMHC.** “Our Government is proud to support this project dedicated to affordable, adaptable and accessible housing.”

Research informing the new proposed standard will use established methodologies to contribute to the development of new knowledge, and the synthesis of existing knowledge, that will have a positive impact on accessibility, affordability and adaptability. RHF will provide expertise in housing accessibility as a member of the advisory panel that will help guide the development of the new standard.

The proposed new accessible homes standard will help support:

- the development of affordable and adaptable accessible homes across Canada by providing evidence-informed guidance, and
- the application of new and existing knowledge related to best practices for the design, construction, and modification of affordable and adaptable accessible homes.



The need for accessible housing

Public polling released by the Angus Reid Institute in January 2019 shows that one in three Canadians have issues getting around their own home and a majority are anticipating challenges moving around at home in the future. “Having the opportunity to age at home is increasingly important to Canadians, and the need for accessible housing in Canada is a huge issue,” says **Brad McCannell, VP Access and Inclusion at the Rick Hansen Foundation**. “We’re thrilled that CSA Group will be developing this new residential standard and to incorporate it into RHFAC to help industry address this critical gap.”

CSA Group is a global leader in standards development and in testing, inspection and certification. CSA Group currently works with the Foundation to host the online RHFAC Registry of publicly listed accessibility certified sites in Canada and administers the RHFAC Professional exam.

“Consensus-based standards could help give Canadians greater options for accessible housing. Our accredited standards development process aims to create resources combining technical expertise and knowledge with meaningful and achievable targets that are in the public interest,” says **Nancy Bestic, Director of Health and Safety Standards, CSA Group**.

The proposed new accessible homes standard is scheduled to be published in May 2022.

Over 1,250 buildings have been rated to-date based on RHFAC including YVR, YOW, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Museum of Science and Technology, and Husky Energy. For more information on RHFAC, visit www.RickHansen.com/RHFAC

For a list of RHF Accessibility Certified sites visit the RHFAC Registry at <https://rhfac.csaregistries.ca/>

About the Rick Hansen Foundation

The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) was established in 1988, following the completion of Rick Hansen’s Man In Motion World Tour. For nearly 30 years, RHF has worked to raise awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Visit www.rickhansen.com to learn more.

About CSA Group

CSA Group is a global organization dedicated to safety, social good and sustainability. We are a leader in Standards Development and in Testing, Inspection and Certification around the world including Canada, the U.S., Europe and Asia. Our mandate is to hold the future to a higher standard.



About CMHC

As Canada's authority on housing, CMHC contributes to the stability of the housing market and financial system, provides support for Canadians in housing need, and offers unbiased housing research and advice to all levels of Canadian government, consumers and the housing industry. CMHC's aim is that by 2030, everyone in Canada has a home they can afford, and that meets their needs. For more information, please visit cmhc.ca or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).

To find out more about the National Housing Strategy, visit www.placetocallhome.ca.

CSA Group Media Contact

Margaret Hills

Director of Corporate Communications

Margaret.Hills@csagroup.org

416-747-4192

RHF Media Contacts

Monica McCluskey

Yulu Public Relations

rhf@yulupr.com

778-751-4542

CMHC Media Relations

Leonard Catling

604-737-4029

lcatling@cmhc-schl.gc.ca