



Association pour la santé environnementale du Québec
Environmental Health Association of Québec



Environmental Health Association of Canada
Association pour la Santé Environnementale du Canada

Accessible justice and human rights for persons with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity

A disability with growing prevalence

Alberta

Speakers

August 14, 2024



John Molot, MD

Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa

Dr. John Molot began his focused medical practice on environmental health in Ottawa in the 1980s and has been a staff physician at the Environmental Health Clinic at Women's College Hospital in Toronto since 2007. He is an adjunct professor in the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa.

Dr. Molot has developed expertise in indoor air quality and health effects. In the 1990s, he was appointed as Medical Advisor to the Federal Task Force on Material Emission Standards, chaired by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and from 2014 to 2016, he was a member of the National Research Council Task Group on Ventilation and Indoor Air Quality.

In 2007, he collaborated in developing *The Medical Perspective on Environmental Sensitivities* for the Canadian Human Rights Commission, which led to the Commission's recognition of environmental sensitivities as a disability with the legal right to accommodation. In 2013, he wrote the *Academic and Clinical Perspectives* segment of a business case proposal to build a Centre of Excellence in Environmental Health, which led to the creation of the Ontario Task Force on Environmental Health (2016-18) to which Dr. Molot was appointed by the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care.

Presently, he is a member of the Canadian Committee on Indoor Air Quality, and medical advisor for Canadians for Properly Built Homes and the Environmental Health Associations of Quebec and Canada. He has recently published peer-reviewed articles on MCS titled, *Neurological susceptibility to environmental exposures: pathophysiological mechanisms in neurodegeneration and multiple chemical sensitivity* and *Multiple Chemical Sensitivity: It's time to catch up to the science*. Dr. Molot has also authored a book called *12,000 Canaries Can't be Wrong*.



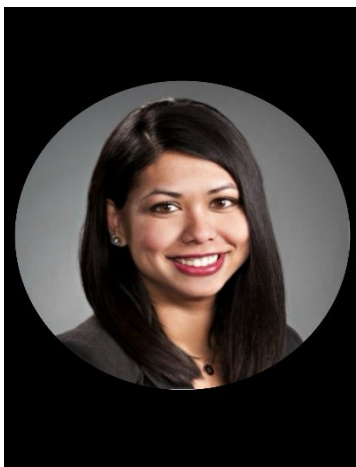
Robert Lattanzio, LLB BCL
Executive Director, ARCH Disability Law Centre

Robert Lattanzio, who has served as the Executive Director of ARCH Disability Law Centre since 2015, embarked on his journey with ARCH back in 2003.

Over the years, he has made significant contributions to the field, arguing influential test cases up to the Supreme Court of Canada. As a recognized authority, Robert is a frequent guest lecturer on pivotal topics such as human rights law, education law, and disability rights.

His profound commitment to disability rights and social justice is evident in his extensive work and volunteer involvement within various equity-seeking communities. A recipient of the Law Foundation of Ontario's Guthrie Award in 2022, Robert's contributions to access to justice is unparalleled. He earned his LL.B and B.C.L. degrees with distinction from McGill University in 2003.

In his forthcoming presentation, Robert will discuss the role of medical professionals within the duty to accommodate process and highlight some key considerations when determining what information is needed within the context of human rights law.



Sanjana Ahmed

Legal Counsel Office of the Director of the Alberta Human Rights Commission

Sanjana began her legal career in the Edmonton office of a regional law firm. She practiced in the area of general litigation with a focus on Indigenous and Labour and Employment matters. Sanjana currently works at the Alberta Human Rights Commission as legal counsel to the Director. With an array of human rights complaints in the areas of employment, tenancy, and goods and services, and the Covid-19 pandemic bringing forth novel human rights issues due to Covid-19 restrictions, it has certainly been an interesting time at the Alberta Human Rights Commission and Sanjana maintains a busy practice addressing allegations under the Alberta Human Rights Act.

Outside of work, Sanjana enjoys making the most of the summer days going on road trips, attending splash parks, and trying every ice-cream flavour with her husband, toddler, and Berna doodle.



Michael DeRosenroll

Principal Lawyer, Human Law

Michael DeRosenroll is a lawyer with 17 years of experience across Canada and the founder of Human Law, working for employees and employers, and has served as legal counsel to three Directors of the Alberta Human Rights Commission. There he saw the need to make human rights and human resources legal services accessible to ordinary people, small businesses and non-profit organizations, and the opportunity to make it affordable by embracing technology to provide modern, client-centered, virtual legal services.

Michael is a member of the Law Society of Alberta and can offer legal services as a visiting lawyer in other Canadian provinces.



Les Hagen

Executive Director of Action on Smoking & Health (ASH Canada)

Les Hagen is the Executive Director of ASH Canada and he is an Adjunct Professor at the University of Alberta School of Public Health. Les and his organization have provided leadership on tobacco control in Canada and beyond for the past three decades and have won several awards for these efforts, including a Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada. Les has served as Canada's official NGO delegate at summits of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. He oversees the Global Tobacco Control Progress Hub in collaboration with the Institute for Global Tobacco Control at Johns Hopkins University. Les is a public health leader and social entrepreneur who has devoted his career to improving the quality of life in Canada.



Jamie Happy

Health Promotions Coordinator, Alberta Lung Association

Jamie Happy (BSc), an experienced healthcare and science professional, is the Health Promotions Coordinator for the Alberta Lung Association. Her role is to advance lung health research and policy, educate the public, and assist patients on their healthcare journey through multiple support programs. She enjoys the Edmonton festival season, hiking, and art photography.



Heather Walkus

National Chair, Council of Canadians with Disabilities

The Council of Canadians with Disabilities is now 48 years old and our current National Chair, Heather Walkus, brings a lifelong personal understanding and expertise of the intersection of disability and identity in her work based on Disability Justice, Human Rights and Community Development principles.

Through that work she clearly articulates that it is the people impacted that must have the agency over their voice and supported to build capacity, in which to develop and have that voice listened to. *“You cannot make substantive and effective systemic changes by using the same beliefs in systemic patterns and organizational practices that has led to the oppression. The support and use of the medical charity model and systemic oppression structures that are based on ableism, racism, queer phobia, misogyny, agism, and exclusion and many demeaning practices including the acceptance of poverty, unattainable basic housing and inaccessible housing, need to evolve and change.*

There are many ways of knowing and organizing from many cultures that are not seen as valid and must be utilized to support change”. Heather believes we are all able bodied. “All of our bodies are able as they are, and it is the environment, attitudes and systems that disable us and push us to the margins. There is nothing wrong with us, and the way forward to inclusion must have that fundamental belief as a principle to engage with all of us from community. That is the only way to bring about a respectful and knowledgeable process and develop meaningful practices of engagement with community to listen, utilize, and learn from those voices and knowledge to make the change that is necessary for true inclusion in our society.”



Rohini Peris
President and CEO, ASEQ-EHAC
Community organizer for over 30 years

Rohini Peris is the President and CEO of the Environmental Health Associations of Québec and Canada.

For close to 30 years, she has volunteered, managed, and grown the group to around 2000 members, built bridges with similar groups in Canada and around the world, including doctors, scientists, universities, and government, to raise awareness about the disability of multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS), and she advocates for help and support this population.

She has presented many workshops across Canada and has developed programs, websites, workshops, and webinars on all aspects, including workplace accommodations for MCS. In 2011, she collaborated with the University of Québec in Montreal (UQAM) and TÉLUQ to develop an education and awareness program funded by the Ministry of Education, Québec.