



For immediate release

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THE ROBIN TAVISTOCK AWARD 2020

Dr. Aura Kagan

In a year that has sent shockwaves across the world as Covid 19 has wreaked havoc globally, we recognise that this has been extraordinarily difficult for many, including those with aphasia. It seems fitting that this year, the Trustees have decided to make an exceptional award.

In 2011 The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia awarded The Robin Tavistock Award for the first time to an international organisation, The Aphasia Institute, including the Pat Arato Aphasia Centre in Toronto, Canada because of their outstanding influence across the world. This year the Trustees want to honour the Director of the Aphasia Institute, Dr Aura Kagan with her own personal Robin Tavistock Award for the huge contribution she has made to the aphasia world.

This Award, named after Robin Tavistock, the 14th Duke of Bedford who founded The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia, is presented annually to a person, or group, who has made a significant contribution in the field of aphasia. This is its 15th year.

Dr Aura Kagan is an internationally renowned researcher, who has always put the person with aphasia at the heart of everything she does. Dr Kagan was one of the first to highlight that responsibility for successful communication is shared by both the person with aphasia and the communication partner. This marked a fundamental shift in clinical research perspectives. No longer should the burden of accessing communication rest solely on the person with aphasia.

This shift in perspectives wrought significant and long-lasting change in how people with aphasia, their families and carers should be treated. It has encouraged clinicians and researchers to focus on the impact and real-life challenges of aphasia; it has changed research priorities for many; it helped to revolutionise how information was imparted and, fundamentally, how people with aphasia are treated.

Under Aura Kagan's leadership and vision, the Institute has been pioneering in all sorts of ways. Aura and her team have developed a raft of materials including evidence-based methods for training conversation partners, outcome measurement and research programs that have enabled many more people across the world access communication.



That which Dr Aura Kagan has contributed to the world of aphasia, to the quality of life of people with aphasia, cannot be underestimated. The influence goes way beyond the borders of Canada. People travel from all over the world to learn from – and emulate – what is happening in Toronto. Many aphasia centres around the world acknowledge that their model and inspiration come from what Aura, along with her staff team and volunteers, have achieved at the Aphasia Institute.

To put it quite simply, Aura Kagan is one of Canada's National Treasures. The ripple effect of what Dr Kagan has done, and is doing, will carry on forever. It is with enormous pleasure that the Trustees present The Robin Tavistock Award for 2020 to Dr Aura Kagan.

Ends

Additional information

- **The Aphasia Institute** is a community-based centre of excellence, pioneering programs and practices that help the 100,000 Canadians with aphasia learn how to communicate in new ways so they can re-join life's conversations. Through direct service, research, and education and training, the Aphasia Institute has built a reputation as a world leader in aphasia care.
- **The Pat Arato Aphasia Centre** offers a variety of programs, five days a week. Staff and trained volunteers work with clients from 20 to 80 years of age in a supportive environment.
- **Robin Tavistock** had a brain haemorrhage in 1988 which left him with aphasia (communication disability). Robin founded The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia to ensure that more people could have access to the quality of treatment he received.
- **The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia** is the only grant-making trust in the United Kingdom that focuses solely on aphasia.
- **Aphasia** is a complex communication difficulty that is sometimes known as dysphasia. It can be caused by a stroke or by brain damage by a brain tumour, a car accident, a blow to the brain or by a progressive neurological illness – anything that damages the 'communication centre' in the brain.
- People with aphasia can find it hard to speak, read, write, understand language and use numbers – or a combination of any of these.
- Intelligence is not affected. Aphasia is different for each person.



For further information, please visit

The Tavistock Trust for Aphasia: www.aphasiatavistocktrust.org

The Aphasia Institute: www.aphasia.ca

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30 years of touching lives
and rebuilding conversation

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