



# **Multi-Year Accessibility Plan**

2018 – 2023

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## Halton Healthcare's Commitment to an Inclusive and Accessible Environment: A Message from Denise Hardenne, President & CEO

At Halton Healthcare, we are guided by our values of Compassion, Accountability and Respect. Our staff, physicians and volunteers strive to demonstrate these values in all we do. As we work collaboratively to transform the community hospital experience through, 'Exemplary Patient Experiences, Always' we are committed to providing accessible and inclusive patient care to everyone in our communities of Milton, Halton Hills and Oakville. Together, we will reduce barriers and increase accessibility for people with disabilities.

In alignment with The Path to 2025: Ontario's Accessibility Action Plan, our Halton Healthcare hospitals are becoming increasingly accessible which is evident through our newly designed and redeveloped spaces, the availability of volunteers and Staxi chairs to help transport patients, accessible parking adjacent to key hospital areas and programs, availability of ASL interpretation as needed, reviews of hospital entrances from a visibility perspective, and much more.

With a caring heart, we will seek to understand the perspectives and viewpoints of our patients and their families as they play an active role in their care. We endeavour to continue to improve our organization wherever possible, and develop a high quality, integrated healthcare system in Halton that gives our residents the right care, at the right time, in the right place through an inclusivity and accessibility lens.

### Introduction

Halton Healthcare strives to meet the needs of its employees, patients and visitors with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. Our organization is committed to fulfilling all requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. This accessibility plan outlines the steps Halton Healthcare is taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Our plan shows how Halton Healthcare will contribute to making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.

### Section One: Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

Our accomplishments in achieving a barrier-free environment include:

- Newly designed and redeveloped spaces at our three hospitals which meet or exceed the Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment outlined in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005)*
- Planning committee considers improvements to physical space on an ongoing basis

- Staxi chairs available at all entrances of OTMH and MDH to support movement across larger distances for those who need this assistance; transport wheelchairs are available at all three hospitals
- Large team of transport volunteers to assist patients in getting them to their intended destinations
- Parking adjacent to ambulatory areas (Cancer Care, Dialysis)
- Review and analysis of hospital entrances, parking lot by CNIB, with recommendations implemented to improve visibility in those areas
- We have a long history of providing American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation through Canadian Hearing Society, Ontario Interpretation Services
- Patient and Family Advisors partner with us to enhance the patient experience, including participating on our Health Care Equity Committee

## Customer Service

Halton Healthcare is committed to creating an accessible environment that strives at all times to provide care and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities (including both visible and non-visible disabilities), disabilities of differing severity and where the effects of the disability may be intermittent in nature. We are committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access and benefit from our programs and services similar to other individuals. These services will be provided in the same place and in a similar manner as individuals without disabilities unless an alternate measure is necessary.

Past initiatives have included:

- We have strengthened mechanisms for feedback to building redevelopment, to ensure we are responsive to this feedback
- Website compliant with accessibility requirements
- Make assistive devices available, including wheelchairs, Staxi chairs, and Pocket Talkers
- Service animals are welcome
- Support persons are welcome
- Staff receive training in accordance with the AODA

## Information and Communications

- Offer remote video American Sign Language interpretation services
- Provide written/electronic materials in alternative formats upon request in accordance with the legislation
- Ensure that response to such requests are tailored to the individual needs of the patient

- Process in place for communicating to the public when accessible elements (e.g. elevators, power-assisted doors) are not in working order and what alternatives are available

## Employment, Volunteerism and Third Party Contractors

Halton Healthcare ensures that it has appropriate policies and procedures in place that are in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*. These policies are reviewed and revised both on a regular basis as well as when required by changes to legislation.

Accessible parking is available for employees, physicians, volunteers and third-party contractors. All of our hospitals and off-site locations are accessible, and as we continue to renovate spaces within our facilities, those projects will also be in compliance with all relevant accessibility legislation.

For employees, Halton Healthcare's accessibility practices are seen throughout the employee life cycle. During the recruitment phase, job postings contain the following language:

*In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code, Halton Healthcare will provide accommodations throughout the recruitment and selection process. If you require an accommodation, we will work with you to meet your accommodation needs to ensure your equal participation.*

During the employment relationship, Occupational Health & Safety supports leaders in providing appropriate and timely accommodations to employees to ensure their on-going participation in the workplace and to facilitate as early a return-to-work date as possible if applicable.

Additionally, Halton Healthcare's benefit providers also provide accessible options and opportunities for employees to access their benefit plans should they require them.

## Procurement

Halton Healthcare works closely with Shared Services West (SSW) to procure goods and services. We have a responsibility to ensure that SSW conducts its procurement activities on our behalf in accordance with AODA regulations.

## Self-service Kiosks

Halton Healthcare has a number of self-service kiosks in place for way finding, parking and automated teller machines. These kiosks function in accordance with AODA requirements.

## Other

- New Health Care Equity Committee, focus on both Accessibility and Diversity with Patient & Family Advisor representation
- Link to the Mississauga Halton LHIN Healthcare Equity Committee

## Section Two: Strategies and Actions Planned for 2018 – 2023

Halton Healthcare is committed to creating an accessible environment that strives at all times to provide care and services in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities including both visible and non-visible disabilities, disabilities of differing severity and where the effects of the disability may be intermittent in nature. We are committed to giving people with disabilities the same opportunity to access and benefit from our programs and services. These services will be provided in the same place and in a similar manner as individuals without disabilities unless an alternate measure is necessary.

Halton Healthcare partners with an external contractor, Carillion, to deliver facilities management services at the Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital, and with CBRE-GWS Facilities Management to provide facility management at the Milton District Hospital. We have well-established procedures for preventative and emergency maintenance of the accessible elements in public spaces, and for dealing with temporary disruptions when accessible elements are not in working order as outlined in s. 80(44) of the IASR.

Following the initiatives outlined in Section 1, Halton Healthcare is committed to continuous improvement over the coming years. To do so, Halton Healthcare engages in a robust stakeholder engagement process at all three (3) hospitals and its off-site locations on an ongoing basis. This process incorporates the unique communities of each of our hospitals' services and their needs with the goal of generating a list of potential initiatives to be considered for implementation either at a hospital-specific level and/or organization-wide.

Our current list of opportunities includes but is not limited to:

- Explore partnerships with community agencies that would provide various resources and supports to our patients with disabilities (e.g. WellSpring for driving services for our cancer patients that are not able to drive)
- Ensure American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation is available to all patients when requested
- Establish and educate staff on “teach back” protocols that address the unique challenges of those with invisible disabilities, to ensure that the information we are sharing with the patients and families is understood

- Increase the volume of the audible signal of the parking garage elevators, and investigate the feasibility of in-car oral enunciator
- Install a push button door opener on the OTMH Volunteer Services door
- Install a push button door opener on the OTMH Breast Feeding Clinic door
- Install skid prevention on the OTMH Food Court ramp
- Install grab bars in the OTMH and MDH Diagnostic Imaging areas
- Ensure availability of call bells for people with limited manual dexterity/paralysis
- Increase availability of adjustable height commode chairs
- Have mobility devices (stretchers/wheel chairs) available on level 0 OTMH and MDH for use in the event of a code

Using the feedback generated by the stakeholder engagement process, a formal plan to take the organization up to 2023 will be drafted, reviewed and finalized. This plan is expected to encompass any and/or all topics relevant to creating an accessible environment including:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communications
- Employment
- Procurement
- Self-Service Kiosks
- Training
- Design of Public Spaces

### For More Information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact Quality & Patient Relations at 905-338-4138 or [patientrelations@haltonhealthcare.com](mailto:patientrelations@haltonhealthcare.com).

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Please contact Quality & Patient Relations for an accessible format of this document, available upon request at no charge.