



**The Ottawa  
Hospital** | **L'Hôpital  
d'Ottawa**

# **Annual Report on Accessibility 2016**

**The Ottawa Hospital and Affiliate Organizations**



**The Ottawa  
Hospital** | **L'Hôpital  
d'Ottawa**  
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**January 1, 2017**

# The Ottawa Hospital

**Vision:** To provide each patient with the world-class care, exceptional service and compassion we would want for our loved ones.



**General Campus**



**Civic Campus**



**Riverside Campus**

Your Accessibility and Interpretation Services' team members:



**Serge Falardeau**  
Coordinator / Trainer



**Kelly Parent**  
Assistant

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## Executive Summary

While we thought that 2015 would be a tough act to follow considering the many exciting progresses that were made here at The Ottawa Hospital (TOH), we were in for quite a surprise in 2016!

Once again, as a hospital that experienced over 50,000 patient admissions as well as over 172,000 emergency visits during this past year, TOH staff and volunteers have been very busy. From a simple smile to living the 'you're in my care' motto, patients were greeted as if they were family. Additionally, thanks to the ongoing building of the culture of accessibility, individuals with disabilities were welcome with "How can I help you?"

With 1 in 7 Canadians living with a disability, 1 in 5 eventually experiencing a mental health illness, accessibility at The Ottawa Hospital is part of its fabric in order to ensure a great patient experience in spite of their health condition or disability. During this past year, this office witnessed an increase in requests for support, comments and expertise from many departments. The sum of these inquiries resulted in greater awareness and accessibility amongst staff and volunteers.

Dr Jack Kitts, President and CEO of The Ottawa Hospital said it best:

"The Ottawa Hospital consists of three major sites and several satellites clinics. Ensuring accessibility for all is very important to us. I am proud of the work our staff and volunteers do day in day out, accommodating not only our patients but each other".

This annual report will provide you with a glimpse of our achievements in 2016. You will see a continued commitment on the part of TOH to provide a more accessible health care system to patients whom have put all their trust in the hands of specialized medical and volunteer teams of individuals.

It's time to build a culture of accessibility at TOH and in the community. The process of building that culture is ongoing. Every year, over 1,500 new staff and volunteers come through our doors. Either through the online and or face-to-face accessibility training, each one of them becomes aware of their responsibility. We must remove barriers and increase accessibility. It is their duty, it is our duty.

For more information or if you have any questions, please direct your enquiries to:

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## **New name for the office**

While our office was known as the 'Accessibility Awareness and Program Planning', it has now been changed to 'Accessibility and Interpretation Services'. This change came as a result of taking on an additional portfolio overseeing the delivery of interpretation services for people with hearing loss as well as those who speak a language other than English and French.

Taking on this portfolio provides us with another opportunity to better serve people with hearing loss, deafened or Deaf when they need interpretation services while at The Ottawa Hospital.

## **Interpretation Services**

For patients to be involved in their care, they must first be able to communicate with their health care team. By providing interpretation services through professional interpreters, the patients and family members are better able to express their health concerns and understand the medical advice being given to them and then make informed decisions.

While interpretation services at TOH is not new, its delivery is expanding beyond the face-to-face interpretation option. In late 2016, TOH purchased a number of Mobile Interpreters (MI) as a tool for interpretation services. These units consist of an I-Pad Pro with a 12" screen mounted on a mobile stand. Through the audio and video capabilities of the MI, the interpreter can be seen either speaking or using sign language. Even though connected with an offsite interpreter, patients and their health care team will have the ability to communicate as if the interpreter was present.



## **New Members on the Accessibility Committee**

During our last meeting in October, The Ottawa Hospital Accessibility Committee expressed their appreciation to our departing community members who have generously donated their time during the past number of years. Thanks to them, accessibility at TOH has grown to where it is today. In order to replace our departing members, we reached out to community agencies and individuals to generate some interest in becoming new members of this committee. Our search has been successful and thus begins our new series of meetings in 2017.

Our community members on the Accessibility Committee include The Canadian Hearing Society, The Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Disability Advocacy Network of Eastern Ontario (formerly United Families of Eastern Ontario) and Ottawa Rotary Home. Welcome aboard everyone!

## **New Civic Campus planning underway**

The Ottawa Hospital welcomed the Dec. 2 announcement by Ottawa's federal, provincial and municipal leaders to recommend the reconfigured Sir John Carling site as the future home of the Civic Campus. We believe that this site provides the best option for the patients of The Ottawa Hospital to experience 21<sup>st</sup>-century health care in a setting that is accessible and promotes wellness through natural areas and green space.

The new campus will incorporate modern, accessible design and will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss and promote accessibility.

## **National Access Awareness Week 2016**

Once again, the Accessibility and Interpretation Services' office hosted a table at The Ottawa Hospital's Staff Appreciation Week promoting interpretation services to staff, volunteers and visitors. This event was held at all three campuses over a period of a few days. With the weather cooperating, thousands of people mingled and visited the different booths while enjoying food and refreshments.

## **Accessibility Standard Advisory Council**

In June of 2016, the Honorable Stacey MacCharles, Minister Responsible for Accessibility appointed Serge Falardeau, Coordinator - Accessibility at The Ottawa Hospital as a new member of her Accessibility Standard Advisory Council (ASAC). This two-year appointment will provide an opportunity for The Ottawa Hospital to contribute in the future modifications of the AODA and the development of new Standards for the Health Care Sector.

## **Celebration of People 2016**

Once again, The Ottawa Hospital played a key role in the Celebration of People gala event that was held on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. This event is to celebrate the United Nation International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Close to 400 guests witnessed the achievements of persons with disabilities from the Arts, Youths, Volunteerism and Career categories. As well, local organizations and employers were also recognized for their cultures of inclusion in their environment. This event was well attended by both Federal and Provincial politicians. Congratulations to all the nominees and the award recipients!

## Updates on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA – 2005).

While most of the timelines set for the following Sections have come and gone, we remain very vigilant to ensure that we not only meet the set standards but that we look for opportunities to go beyond them.

The following are the color codes used to identify the status of the Section in question:

Indicates full compliance with the legislation, and may have ongoing or repeating components	<b>Green</b>
Indicates approaching compliance, with a detailed plan in place to ensure success	<b>Yellow</b>
Indicates a delay in achieving full compliance on schedule with a detailed plan in place to ensure success	<b>Red</b>

<b>Section 3 - Accessibility Policy Updated</b>	<b>Green</b>
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TOH is updating its accessibility policy in order to reflect changes to the Customer Service Standards (CSS) that were implemented on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, a requirement under the AODA. For example, the previous wording of the Standard required staff with direct contact with ‘customers’ or ‘patients’ to take the CSS training. Now all employees must take this training whether they have direct contact or not with patients. This new requirement did not necessitate any changes at TOH as all staff and volunteers were already obligated to complete this training upon hiring. Training provided addresses the Customer Service Standard as well as the Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation (IASR) and Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC).

<b>Section 4 - Accessibility Plan</b>	<b>Green</b>
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As the 2012-2017 Accessibility Plan is coming to its end, some initial thoughts are already in place to develop the 2018-2022 five year plan. A special working group will be organized to draft a plan that will propel TOH to greater accessibility. One item that will be of great interest will be the planning for the construction of a new campus to replace the existing and aging Civic Campus. The Plan will reflect our involvement in its planning process.

<b>Section 5 – Procurement</b>	<b>Green</b>
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Procurement continues to meet its requirements in the purchase of goods and services.

<b>Section 6 – Self Service Kiosks</b>	<b>Green</b>
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Throughout the campuses, one can find bank machines, parking paying kiosks, pay phones and direct line telephones that are carefully chosen to ensure that they are accessible to people with hearing loss, vision loss or other disabilities that may require special accommodation.

<b>Section 7 - Accessibility Training</b>	<b>Green</b>
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During the year 2016, a total of 1,498 TOH staff and volunteers received Customer Service Standard, IASR and OHRC training either through the internal learning module or face-to-face. Upon request, the Coordinator provided and will continue to provide targeted training covering specific Sections of the AODA both internally and externally. For example, in early 2017 and throughout the year, identified hospital staff will be trained on the new interpretation services and processes. This will allow people to better understand their role in this communication scenario.

We also had the opportunity to provide training specifically designed to respond to the needs of our community. The Ottawa Community Support Coalition, the Ottawa International Airport and University of Ottawa were provided training focusing on the importance of addressing the needs of their clients, customers or patients. Based on the feedback received, this training proves beneficial as the trainees get a better understanding of the need to accommodate persons with disabilities.

<b>Section 11 - Accessible Format for providing Feedback</b>	<b>Green</b>
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The Ottawa Hospital is presently looking at providing alternate formats for individuals to express their concerns. For example, some patients may prefer to send a video message rather than writing a letter or making a telephone call. Once this option is in place, we will promote it both internally and externally. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor incoming concerns and address them within the set timeline.

<b>Section 12 &amp; 26 - Accessible formats / communication support</b>	<b>Green</b>
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While TOH continues to provide documents in an accessible format upon request, the need to develop a corporate wide guideline for all communication material has been identified. Early in the New Year, an **Accessibility – Information and Communication (A-IC)** committee will be put in place to review our existing communication tools, update them where necessary to ensure a consistent format is in place.

<b>Section 13 - Public safety information in accessible format</b>	<b>Green</b>
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During this past year, TOH has put up new signage to indicate evacuation routes with greater clarity allowing quick access to safe sites.

<b>Section 14 - Website conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines</b>	<b>Green</b>
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TOH is presently in the middle of transferring its external website to a new platform that will allow for greater accessibility as required by the AODA. While doing so, it is also ensuring that all documents uploaded to this site are fully accessible. Two web specialists who are in place for this task were also provided training to become TOH’s in-house accessible PDF document specialists. They are in the process of reviewing every single document posted externally to ensure they are fully accessible to the public. Additionally, a protocol will be put in place to ensure that all future documents to be posted on the external website will be fully compliant to this Standard.

This is very much a work in progress with a self-imposed short timeline in order to meet the WCAG 2.0 Level AA way before the January 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 timeline.

<b>Sections 22 to 32 – Working at The Ottawa Hospital</b>	<b>Green</b>
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The Ottawa Hospital recently connected with the local United Way’s EARN (Employment Accessibility Resource Network) program. This development will initiate some conversation aimed at increasing access to qualified people with disabilities who may wish to work in a hospital environment. With a higher than average unemployment rate in this country for people with disabilities, such an initiative could be a life changing moment for them and TOH is looking forward to playing a role in this process.

Throughout the year, this office is made aware of ‘barriers’ impacting patients’ experience while receiving care here at TOH. Some of those barriers are often related to the built environment, a direct result of the campuses being built before the Ontario Building Code had a focus on accessibility. It is for this reason that, when renovating or new construction takes place, all accessibility related requirements are adhered to. The new **Accessibility-Built Environment (A-BE)** committee will be a voice for those concerns brought forward and will work closely with the Portfolio Management Office in order to set project priorities and recommendations.

Throughout the year, this office is consulted to make sure that accessibility is part of project considerations prior to its start. A number of walkthrough exercises took place this year in order to assess accessibility in different areas such as washrooms, cafeterias, nurses’ stations, receptions, waiting areas and new construction which were completed. As a direct result of these consultations and walkthroughs, there is a greater sense that small details can make a huge difference for patient with disabilities.

## Closing Comments

The year 2016 provided us with opportunities to maintain and even increase our level of accessibility for patients, family members, staff and volunteers with disabilities. We continue to be vigilant in our approaches when identifying, removing and preventing barriers from interfering with individuals' desire to access goods and services provided by The Ottawa Hospital.

Moving ahead to 2017, we will witness better interpretation services through new service delivery options such as audio and video remote interpretation for people with hearing loss. Staff will have access to more targeted training that will complement their existing knowledge of working with people with disabilities. We will continue to receive and respond to the identification of barriers from attitude to structural.

As a member of this community, TOH is dedicated to making sure that, while people may be coming here for health reasons, they are all considered as members of The Ottawa Hospital family. We may not be able to control what happens outside of our campuses but we are committed to standing as an example of what is the right thing to do for each other.

This is our commitment to you.

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...to build a culture of accessibility  
at The Ottawa Hospital and in the  
community. **Think accessibility!**