

The Ottawa Hospital 2024 Accessibility Annual Status Report

March 31, 2025

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The Ottawa Hospital's Accessibility Multi-Year Plan 2023 & 2024 outlines the Hospital's commitment to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessing the Hospital's goods, services and facilities and meeting the requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

This report provides highlights of progress made in 2024 to advance the objectives of the Multi-Year Plan as well as other significant activities that support the Hospital's commitment toward the identification, removal and prevention of accessibility barriers.

General Accomplishments

In 2024, the Hospital:

- Celebrated the International Day of Persons with Disabilities with a performance from the Propeller Dance Company; this celebration was led by the Hospital's Disabled Community@TOH, which is made up of staff members who identify as having an impairment of body or mind that makes it more difficult for them to do certain activities and interact with the world around them, as well as allies, who recognize their unearned privilege in their personal lives, and in the workplace, and act on inequalities by taking responsibility to end patterns of injustice.
- Continued to engage a third-party accessibility consultant to support the design of the New Campus Development.
- Continued to support consultation mechanisms to allow for the receipt of guidance from staff and patients with disabilities on various activities such as the design of a sign promoting the use of interpretation services, including sign language interpretation. Groups from whom feedback was sought include the Accessibility Advisory Committee, the Disabled Community@TOH, and the Deaf Patient and Family Advisory Committee (PFAC). Plans were initiated for the launch of an Accessibility of the Built Environment Subcommittee to help prioritize renovation and construction projects aiming to remove and prevent accessibility barriers as well as conduct reviews of spaces to identify accessibility barriers and provide feedback on architectural designs.

- Continued work on updating the Accessibility Policy, with a special focus on service animals and support persons.

The Official Languages and Accessibility Department (OLAD) team worked with the Patient Relations Department team toward the refinement of the capture of patient concerns related to accessibility barriers. The OLAD also seized opportunities to promote the principles of universal design, through means such as marking the National AccessAbility Week with the publication of an article in the Hospital's internal newsletter on Universal Design.

Customer Service Accomplishments

- Continued to mandate AODA training as part of the Hospital's onboarding process. For the 2024 calendar year, 3242 new employees, 236 new volunteers and 2 newly appointed members of the Board of Governors completed training. Customized training to raise awareness regarding accessibility requirements was also provided to 46 new leaders and 106 new inpatient and outpatient clerks.
- Worked on updating the accessibility training provided to new leaders.

Information and Communications Accomplishments

- Disseminated messaging to leaders promoting the use of sign language interpretation.
- Continued to provide in-person and virtual sign language interpretation (ASL/LSQ), fulfilling 583 requests for sign language interpretation¹.
- Continued to seek organic ways to highlight persons with disabilities who are working at TOH.
- Continued to work on an internal style guide for written communication that promotes the use of respectful language.
- Continued to engage with a third-party web developer to support the accessibility level of the Hospital's external website, which is being redeveloped as well as the Hospital intranet which was launched in February 2025

¹ As per data provided by vendors.

Employment Accomplishments

Recruitment focus:

- Continued efforts to determine what are the best supports to proactively offer candidates that can reduce or eliminate barriers during the recruitment process.
- Worked on updating a statement for new hires to inform them that accommodations are available.

Emergency management focus:

- Continued work on iconography, such as including icons on Job Action Sheets and the Code White icon.
- Initiated collaboration between the Emergency Management Program and the Occupational Health and Wellness Department to integrate Individualized Emergency Response Plans in the Human Resources Information System.

Design of Public Spaces Accomplishments

As part of our overall strategy to maintain and increase accessibility in the built environment at The Ottawa Hospital, the following projects were completed between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024.

Civic Campus

- CPC ENT Clinic – widen doorway
- Kaminski flooring replacement
- Roadway in front of Patterson Entrance and new line painting for roadway and crosswalk
- Localized repairs to P1 Garage lighting and elevator landings

General Campus

- TRC outdoor furniture
- Chiropody reception
- Cancer Centre carpet replacement
- ED Surge – Silencia screens

Riverside Campus

- Renovated washroom

Throughout TOH

- Ongoing signage improvements, with a special focus on main entrances and emergency departments
- Accessible picnic tables
- Room refreshes

Next Steps

Areas of focus were defined for a one-year extension to the 2023 & 2024 Accessibility Multi-Year Plan as described below. Work to create the next Multi-Year Plan will include the participation of persons with disabilities, with the aim of including a multiplicity of perspectives based on a diverse range of lived experiences.

Customer Service and Proposed Provincial Health Care Accessibility Standards Work Plan

- The main goal for 2025 is to complete a refreshment of training for manager-level leaders, with the following objectives:
 - o Develop an awareness of the legislation relevant for compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
 - o Equip leaders with knowledge on how to foster dignity, independence, inclusion and equal opportunity for their staff with disabilities.
 - o Offer additional resources on Accessibility to help identify, prevent, and remove barriers for staff and patients.

Employment Standard – Talent Acquisition Work Plan

- The main focus for 2025 is the inclusion of language on job postings that will help attract candidates with disabilities by increasing their confidence in the Hospital's efforts to promote and support inclusion and equal opportunity. The Talent Acquisition Team will also continue to increase its awareness of barriers faced by candidates with disabilities, increasing knowledge and applying growing expertise to processes and messaging in order to minimize barriers and counter real and perceived stigmatization in regards to hiring persons with disabilities.

Employment Standard – Emergency Management Work Plan

- The main focus for 2025 is to participate in a multi-team effort to ensure that individualized workplace emergency plans are updated when an employee requiring such a plan changes work location or sees changes in their accessibility needs. The Emergency Management team will also continue to work to ensure effective and accessible public and staff communication of emergency codes and protective measures linked to incidents that impact access to services or that are linked to onsite health and safety concerns.

Information and Communication Standard Work Plan

- The main goal for 2025 is to finish the internal style guide to make sure staff-written content is clear, easy to read and free from language that could cause stigma toward people with disabilities. Work will also focus on aligning communications with the hospital's strategic plan by increasing the visibility of people with disabilities and broadening the focus from Nurturing our Social Responsibility to also include Ignite the Power of People and Enriching the Quality of Care for Patients.

Built Environment and New Campus Work Plan

- For 2025, there will be continued efforts toward incorporating accessibility design principles into the upgrading of existing facilities, new renovation projects and the design and construction of the New Campus Development. Special focus will be brought to the reinstatement of a subcommittee dedicated to directing priorities for accessibility improvements to the built environment, with the objective of ensuring optimal allocation of 2025-2026 fiscal year budget funding for accessibility-centered renovations. The teams supporting the accessibility of the built environment will also continue to respond to accessibility concerns flagged by staff and patients by making improvements where possible, as well as continue to proactively ensure the maintenance of existing accessibility features at the hospital sites and main campuses.