

Community and Health Services – Departmental Overview

Environmental Scan

The Community and Health Services Department provides a wide range of programs and services that promote safe, secure and healthy communities, that respond to the needs of vulnerable residents by supporting health care needs at all stages of life.

The Department includes:

- Business Operations and Quality Assurance
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Housing and Long Term Care
- Public Health Branch
- Social Services
- Strategic Service Integration and Policy Branch

Our Customers

The department serves people of all ages, including children, youth, and seniors with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Clients that access our programs and services may be in need of financial and employment assistance, housing assistance, child care including development programming, emergency medical services, long term care and public health services.

Accessibility Statement

The Community and Health Services Department continues to identify and eliminate barriers to accessibility for people with disabilities in our programs, services and facilities. Through our partnerships with community agencies, we are increasing our awareness of the needs of people with both visible and invisible disabilities so that we can better respond to their needs.

In 2011/2012, we will continue to consider accessibility planning as a key component when reviewing, improving and developing our programs and services to ensure our citizens and customers have full access to them. Our branches will work together to identify, remove and prevent barriers in our programs, services and facilities.

Community and Health Services Department

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2010

Barrier Identified: By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Barrier Type	Disability Type	How the barrier was addressed
Helping People Live Independently			
Facility limitation and the need to provide greater accessibility in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	Plans to complete the link between 55 and 57 Orchard Heights Place in Aurora are 60% complete. The installation of additional lamp posts to enhance accessibility for residents at 55 Orchard Heights and 43 Queensway are 95% complete.
Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural, Physical	Physical	Upgrades were completed which include raised toilets, grab bars and improved lighting in some of Housing York Inc. buildings.
Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural, Physical	Physical	Bathroom upgrades at 325 Elm Road are complete.
Facility upgrades to assist people with disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural, Physical	Physical	To enhance accessibility for people with physical disabilities, a wood ramp was replaced with concrete paths. Curb cuts were also completed to enable easier access from the roadway.
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Physical	Completion of the nine barrier-free units at Mapleglen Residences are expected to be complete 2011.
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Physical	Completion of the four designed units for residents of Kingview Court is expected to be complete in 2011.
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Physical	Physical	The stimulus funding to improve accessibility in non-profit social housing has been allocated, however completion of existing repairs are underway.

Community and Health Services Department

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2010

Barrier Identified: By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Barrier Type	Disability Type	How the barrier was addressed
Making It Easier to Move Around the Region			
Gaining access to segments of the intended population for the Falls Prevention program.	Informational	Mental Illness	Seniors with mental health disabilities have greater access to Falls Prevention information, reducing the number of falls at the Canadian Mental Health Association and long-term care facilities.
Current policies and practices around risk management and safety, along with vehicle limitations prevent EMS staff from loading assistive devices during transport.	Policy/Practice	Physical, Other	The development and implementation of departmental practices, procedures and protocols regarding the transportation of assistive devices is complete. More occurrences required to determine the success of the implementation of the practice, procedures and protocols.
Current policies and practices around risk management and safety, along with vehicle limitations prevent EMS staff from transporting service animals in EMS vehicles.	Policy/Practice	All	The development and implementation of departmental practices, procedures and protocols regarding the transportation of service animals is complete. More occurrences required to determine the success of the implementation of the practice, procedures and protocols.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Communication materials used in Long Term Care and Community programs.	Informational	Sensory	All communication materials used in Long Term Care and Community programs will be reviewed and will meet CNIB standards. The development of communication materials for Seniors Community Programs, Newmarket Health Centre and Maple Health Centre have been streamlined and centralized. All new materials developed are reviewed by our business services support co-coordinator who liaises with the departmental communications unit to ensure all materials align with the Information and Communications standard within the Integrated Accessibility Regulation under the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA) and CNIB standards.

Community and Health Services Department

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2010

Barrier Identified: By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Barrier Type	Disability Type	How the barrier was addressed
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Communication materials and processes at Housing York Inc.(HYI) buildings.	Communicational, Physical	Sensory	A review of HYI tenant letters and forms was completed to ensure the use of plain language and a standard format using the Operational Policy and Practice document (an internal document used to ensure consistency of practices among staff). Property notices are posted on information boards in accessible, common areas at all building and communication regarding building repairs and maintenance is enhanced. Larger font is now used in print materials produced for senior tenants and HYI web pages were refreshed to increase the accessibility of information for people with sensory disabilities.
Access to recreational programs for children with disabilities.	Policy/Practice, Physical	All	A focus group that took place in October 2010, consisted of 25 families whose children participated in the 2009 Summer Camp and PLAY programs for children with special needs.
Access to (intranet) corporate staff website.	Communicational	All	Barriers to information have been identified and addressed for the new website (e.g., white/black background options). Once the new website is launched, staff will continue to look for other barriers that need to be addressed.
Expand opportunities for people with disabilities in receipt of Ontario Works to provide input and feedback on how to best serve them.	All	All	Preparations for the development of an additional Ontario Works Consumer Reference group in the Vaughan office are underway. The first meeting took place in December 2010.

Community and Health Services Department

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2010

Barrier Identified: By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Barrier Type	Disability Type	How the barrier was addressed
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Corporate lead for the coordination and development of policies, procedures and compliance for all regulations under the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA).	Policy/Practice	All	The Corporate and Departmental leads are working together to review the proposed standards to address and implement the specific requirements of each regulation under the AODA, to ensure compliance is met once these standards become law.
Access to staff communication and information by staff with low vision.	Informational	Sensory	To increase access to written and digital communication and information, plans are in place to use size 11 font as the minimum font size used in a large number of printed communications. Plans are underway to make this font size the standard in all materials printed. Accessible formats (i.e. verbal, large print) continue to be provided upon request.
Access to staff communication and information for staff with low vision.	Informational	Sensory	At the request of Human Resource Services, and the Employee Health and Safety Division, the needs of employees with low vision are accommodated for on an as needed basis.
Provide ongoing support to the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC).	Policy/Practice	All	The term for the 2006-2010 York Region Accessibility Advisory committee has concluded with the term of Regional Council. Recruitment for the new 2011-2014 YRAAC is now complete.
Eliminate accessibility barriers on (intranet) corporate staff website.	Informational, Communicational, Technological	Sensory, Cognitive	The new intranet will have a built-in contrast tool that will allow users to switch from a white background with black font to a black background with white font.
Access to Public Health information.	Communicational	Sensory	Persons with sensory disabilities are provided with more customer service options for accessing information and resources related to infectious diseases, immunization and sexual health.

Community and Health Services Department

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2010

Barrier Identified: By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Barrier Type	Disability Type	How the barrier was addressed
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Access to Smoking Treatment programs facilitated by Public Health.	Architectural	Physical	Persons with physical disabilities have greater access to Smoking Treatment programs facilitated by Public Health by meeting requests for accommodation.
Incorporate the Accessible Customer Service Policy into specific departmental policies and practices.	Policy/Practice	All	Departmental policies and practices have been reviewed against the Corporate Accessible Customer Service Policy to ensure incorporation of the Accessible Customer Service Policy into specific departmental policies and practices.
Need for continued awareness and sensitivity on how to make programs and services more access for staff with disabilities.	All	All	Increased independence and accessibility to programs and services by staff with disabilities.
Need for greater staff awareness and sensitivity about how to make programs and services more accessible for people with disabilities.	All	All	Activities during National Access Awareness Week have enhanced customer service and staff's sensitivity and awareness about working with and serving people with disabilities.

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Barrier Identification for 2011/2012

Barrier Identified: By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing
Helping People Live Independently		
Accessible space in day centre at Maple Health Centre.	Assess the existing set up to identify the barriers and increase accessible space.	2011
Access to computer technology for people with cognitive and physical disabilities.	Assess and identify the physical requirements (space, furniture) and cognitive requirements (software) that will increase the access to and use of internet and other computer software programs by clients.	2011
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Access to Newmarket Health Centre.	Investigate the possibility of installing an accessible push button to all entry/exit doors at Newmarket Health Centre.	2011
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Employment opportunity for a person with a disability.	Work with Human Resources to investigate this possibility, research funding and employment options, and seek senior management approval to proceed.	2011

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2011/2012

Barrier Identified Indicate where the barrier was found	Barrier Type	Disability Type	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier	Means to prevent/remove the barrier	Indicators of success	Timing When will this be completed?
Helping People Live Independently						
Limited capacity in day centre programs.	Informational	Physical, Cognitive	Increased participation in community programs by people with physical and cognitive disabilities who live in the community.	Program capacity will be increased to accommodate the additional clients from the community.	Increased number of participants in day program.	2011
Limited access to computer technology at Maple Health Centre for people with physical and cognitive disabilities.	Technological	Physical, Cognitive	Clients with physical and cognitive disabilities will be able to communicate with family and friends via email through use of the internet.	Three new computers will be provided and set up with wheelchair accessible workstations. Increased access to computers will be achieved by reconfiguring computers to include speech to text software and touch screen for clients who have lost speech and/or are without hand dexterity.	Increased access to computers for people with disabilities.	August 2011

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2011/2012

Barrier Identified Indicate where the barrier was found	Barrier Type	Disability Type	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier	Means to prevent/remove the barrier	Indicators of success	Timing When will this be completed?
Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	New tiles will provide safer footing, providing greater independence for people with physical disabilities.	Floor tiles in laundry room and foyer are slippery when wet. All existing tiles in the foyer, landings and laundry room at Heritage East will be removed and replaced with a non-slip variety.	Greater accessibility for people with disabilities. Customers can now travel without risk of slipping and falling.	2011
Helping People Live Independently						
Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	New energy efficient lighting will provide more light to assist seniors and people with disabilities.	Common area lighting upgrades at the following seniors' buildings: 75, 76, 78 Dunlop Street, 125 Pugsley Avenue in Richmond Hill, 275 Woodbridge Avenue in Woodbridge and 16105 Yonge Street in Newmarket. The new lighting will be brighter and have better colour rendering qualities.	Better visibility for seniors and people with disabilities.	2011
Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	Mailboxes will be relocated inside building.	Mailboxes located in foyer are exposed to elements at 37 and 39 Northview Court in Sutton. Mailboxes will be relocated inside the building providing better security and a heated environment.	Greater accessibility for people with physical disabilities.	2011

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2011/2012

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Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	Bathrooms will be more accessible.	Bathrooms at 39 North Street in Sutton will be equipped with raised toilets and grab bars in the tub area.	Greater accessibility for people with physical disabilities.	2012
Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	Bathrooms will be more accessible.	Bathroom upgrades at Glenwood Mews will provide uniform grab bar installations.	Greater accessibility for people with physical disabilities.	2011
Making It Easier to Move Around the Region						
Facility upgrades to assist people with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	Trip and slip hazards due to water pooling in the parking lot will be reduced for people with physical disabilities.	Replacement of parking lot at 125 Pugsley Avenue in Richmond Hill includes subsurface drainage, new light standards and widened paths to accommodate assisted walking devices.	Greater accessibility for people with physical disabilities.	2011
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Physical	People with disabilities will have greater access to affordable housing.	Construct a 38 bed shelter and transitional housing facility for single women with accommodations for people with disabilities.	Completion of a barrier-free building with modified units.	2012

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2011/2012

Barrier Identified Indicate where the barrier was found	Barrier Type	Disability Type	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier	Means to prevent/remove the barrier	Indicators of success	Timing When will this be completed?
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Physical	People with disabilities will have greater access to affordable housing.	Construct a 140 unit residence in Richmond Hill to accommodate people with disabilities.	Completion of a barrier-free building with modified units.	2013
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Physical	Physical	Improve accessibility in non-profit social housing.	Allocate some of the Year 2 Federal and Provincial Economic Stimulus funding to non-profit social housing providers to improve accessibility and allow seniors to age in place.	Improved accessibility in non-profit social housing.	2011
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Provide ongoing support to the 2011-2014 York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC).	Policy/Practice	All	Under the ODA, barriers to accessibility will be identified, prevented and/or removed. Under the AODA compliance requirements will be met enhancing accessibility for people with all types of disabilities as the regulations are passed into law.	Staff will continue to support the YRAAC's efforts to advise Regional Council on annual accessibility plans as required under the ODA and review and advise Council on compliance with the standards under the AODA.	Compliance requirements for the ODA and each regulation under the AODA will be met, enhancing accessibility for people with disabilities.	Ongoing

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Corporate lead for the coordination and development of policies, procedures and compliance for all regulations under the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA).	Policy/Practice	All	Accessibility will be enhanced in the areas of Customer Service, Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and Built Environment.	The corporate coordinator and departmental leads will work together to assess and implement the requirements of the regulations under the AODA across all departments.	Compliance requirements of each regulation under the AODA will be met.	Ongoing
A new web based application for social assistance benefits.	Informational	All	Agencies who serve people with disabilities can support applicants with this new intake process, increasing accessibility to social assistance benefits.	York Region Social Services staff will conduct orientation sessions with specific agencies who serve clients with disabilities.	Increased access to social assistance benefits for people with disabilities.	2011

Making Regional Services More Accessible

Access to Public Health clinic services.	Technological	All	Increased access to information about Public Health clinic services on-line for people with all types of disabilities.	Improve Public Health's on-line information about their clinic services by making a request for proposals to hire a vendor to build the software to support the improvements.	Clients will have increased access to information about Public Health clinic services on-line such as scheduling, registration and payment.	2012
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Making it Easier to Participate in Regional Government

Community and Health Services

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2011/2012

Barrier Identified Indicate where the barrier was found	Barrier Type	Disability Type	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier	Means to prevent/remove the barrier	Indicators of success	Timing When will this be completed?
Update the Corporate Accessible Meeting Guidelines (2006) to meet the requirements of the Information and Communications standards within the Integrated Accessibility Regulation under the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA).	All	All	Increase participation in Regional meetings by people with disabilities.	Align the existing Corporate Accessible Meeting Guidelines with the requirements of the Information and Communications standard within the Integrated Accessibility Regulation under the AODA.	Greater participation of people with disabilities in Regional meetings.	2011/2012
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Need for greater staff awareness and sensitivity about how to make programs and services more accessible for people with disabilities.	All	All	Improved customer service to people with disabilities.	Design and implement activities to support and promote National Access Awareness Week in consultation with the Municipal Staff Reference Group (MSRG).	Greater staff awareness about serving people with disabilities, improving customer satisfaction.	2011
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Need for greater staff awareness about accessibility activities, initiatives and legislative changes under the ODA and AODA.	All	All	Improved awareness about regional and local accessibility activities, initiatives and legislative changes under the ODA and AODA.	Develop and implement a bi-annual newsletter that promotes and highlights activities, initiatives and legislative changes under the ODA and AODA to bring greater awareness to Regional staff about what is happening in the Region and surrounding areas.	Greater staff awareness about Regional and local accessibility activities, initiatives and legislative changes under the ODA and AODA.	2011 Ongoing

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Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2011/2012

Barrier Identified Indicate where the barrier was found	Barrier Type	Disability Type	What will be gained by removing or preventing the barrier	Means to prevent/remove the barrier	Indicators of success	Timing When will this be completed?
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Staff access to resources and information regarding client care, individual needs and people with disabilities.	Attitudinal	All	Greater staff awareness and sensitivity about the safety and quality of care for residents.	Ongoing information to staff about how to create a supportive environment that takes into account an individual's needs and disability.	Increased level of awareness amongst staff regarding the needs of people with disabilities.	Ongoing