



Community and Health Services 2010 Draft Department Accessibility Plan

Presentation to
York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee

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Community and Health Services

The Community and Health Services Department provides a range of programs and services to York Region residents that promote safe, secure and healthy communities.

Our Core Businesses

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

Achievement Highlights - 2009

- ❑ *ACCESS-ability:*

2009 Departmental Plan included 24 initiatives.

- ❑ Achievements addressed a broad range of disability and barriers types.

Achievement Highlights – 2009 (Cont'd)

- ❑ Built a modified unit to support persons with disabilities in need of emergency shelter.
- ❑ Installation of new stair treads to support seniors with reduced or low vision and/or a physical disability.
- ❑ Upgraded elevators at 37 North St., to support greater independence for seniors with reduced or low vision and hearing.
- ❑ Upgraded lighting in multiple Housing York Inc. buildings for seniors with reduced or low vision.
- ❑ Conducted nine accessibility upgrades and eight playground upgrades across 13 of York Region's non-profit social housing sites.

Achievement Highlights – 2009 (Cont'd)

- ❑ Increased accessibility at breastfeeding clinics.
- ❑ Establishing an Ontario Works Consumer Reference Group for OW participants to provide input on how best to serve them.
- ❑ Implementation of publication standards to increase access to information for people with different types of disabilities.
- ❑ Increased access to recreational programs for children with disabilities.
- ❑ Redesign of the department's web pages on the Corporate website.

Achievement Highlights – 2009 (Cont'd)

- ❑ Access to staff communication/information by staff with low vision.
- ❑ Increased awareness among Long Term Care staff regarding the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*.
- ❑ Development of policies, practices, procedures and compliance for all regulations under the AODA.
- ❑ Improved customer service to individuals using EMS services.

Barrier Identification for 2010

- ❑ Consult with parents of children with special needs.

- ❑ Departmental reviews on:
 - ❑ Communication materials.
 - ❑ Web sites and technology.
 - ❑ Policy and procedures.

Barrier That Will Be Addressed for 2010

- ❑ Improvements to Housing and Long Term Care facilities:
 - ❑ Construct a link between 55 and 57 Orchard Heights.
 - ❑ Conduct bathroom upgrades in three housing sites.
 - ❑ Entrance upgrades in two Housing York Inc. buildings.
 - ❑ Completion of five modified units at Mapleglen Residences.

Barrier That Will Be Addressed for 2010 (Cont'd)

- ❑ Improvements to Housing and Long Term care facilities:
 - ❑ Construct four modified units at Kingview Court.
 - ❑ Expansion of Kingview Court through the addition of 39 seniors units.
 - ❑ Install elevator at Kingview Court.
 - ❑ Allocation of Federal-Provincial Economic Stimulus funding to non-profit social housing providers.

Barrier That Will Be Addressed for 2010 (Cont'd)

- ❑ To make it easier to move around the Region:
 - ❑ Improve customer service to individuals using EMS services that require transport of assistive devices.
 - ❑ Improve customer service to those using EMS services that require accommodation to ensure service animals are cared for during transport to destination.

Barrier That Will Be Addressed for 2010 (Cont'd)

- ❑ To make Regional services more accessible:
 - ❑ Expand opportunities for persons with disabilities in receipt of Ontario Works to provide input and feedback on how to best serve them.
 - ❑ Implement requirements and regulations under the AODA across all branches.
 - ❑ Increase access to staff communication/information by staff with low or reduced vision.
 - ❑ Provide ongoing support to the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC).
 - ❑ Eliminate accessibility barriers on Community & Health Services web pages of the corporate staff website.

Thank you.

Questions?

Community and Health Services

Environmental Scan

The Community and Health Services department continues to identify barriers within the themes that people with disabilities in our communities have told us have the greatest impact on their lives. For example:

Helping People Live Independently

- We will continue to help people with disabilities live independently in York Region through enhancements to customer service and improvements to accessibility of our social housing units and buildings.

Making it Easier to Move Around the Regional Municipality of York

- We will continue to work with community partners to improve customer service to individuals using EMS services that require transport of assistive devices.

Making Regional Services More Accessible

- To identify potential barriers in our services and to make our services more accessible, we will create a Consumer Reference Group and Focus group to continue to look for opportunities to enhance services to Ontario Works participants and Positive Leisure Activities for children and Youth (PLAY) Summer Camp participants.

Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness

- To change attitudes and raise awareness, we will continue to review staff training procedures to ensure employees are learning in an environment that addresses their learning needs.
- We will do a comprehensive review of our internal policies and procedures associated with modifying employee work stations to accommodate accessibility.
- We will do a comprehensive review of our internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps and ensure incorporation of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA) Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation's core principles of independence, integration and equal opportunity.

Our Customers

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

We serve people of all ages, including children, youth, and seniors with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. Our clients 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.

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Emergency Medical Services provides emergency and non-emergency land ambulance services to residents and visitors of York Region. Paramedics perform patient assessment, life saving treatment, and provide skills and procedures that require medical oversight along with providing safe and timely transport.

Public Health Services delivers programs and services legislated by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, to residents of York Region. Public Health staff strive to ensure that programs and services are delivered in accordance with provincial guidelines.

The Social Services Branch provides employment and financial support to eligible residents of York Region including adults living in domiciliary hostels, and also provides Service System Management and financial assistance to support child care services along with direct developmental programming to children.

Our Housing and Long Term Care Branch manages social housing through Housing York Inc. and administers social housing through independent non-profit and co-operative housing providers. As well, the Branch manages two long term care facilities. In addition, we provide programs and services that meet the needs of adults and seniors who can no longer live independently. These programs and services focus on promoting the health, safety and independence of residents.

The Strategic Service Integration and Policy Branch provides support to the department, the corporation, and Regional Council by integrating program planning and providing cross-department analysis on policy and legislation that affects community and health services. We also lead accessibility planning for the coordination of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA)* and *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)*. This branch also provides program communications, implements community development and investment funding, coordinates homelessness programs and human services collaboration, and leads emergency social services planning.

The Business Operations and Quality Assurance Branch delivers direct services such as helping clients pursue support income, investigating and collecting revenue owed to the Region, as well as providing call centre services and referral and application services. We also support the Community and Health Services Department by providing knowledge and skills training for staff, accommodation services including modified work environments, technology support, and ensuring the Department's fiscal integrity through budget development and expenditure control.

Accessibility Statement

The Community and Health Services Department commits to enhancing accessibility for persons with disabilities to its programs, services, and facilities through partnerships with community agencies and by increasing our awareness of the needs of persons with both visible and invisible disabilities, so that we can better respond to those needs. In 2010, we will continue to consider accessibility planning a key component when reviewing, improving, and developing our programs and services to ensure our citizens and customers access to them. Our branches will work together to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in our programs, services and facilities.

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Community and Health Services Department Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements – 2009

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Helping People Live Independently			
Inadequate lighting levels in suites of Housing York Inc. seniors' buildings.	Physical	Sensory	The lighting in the suites of 11 seniors' buildings has been updated providing seniors with greater independence.
Inadequate lighting in parking areas and walkways at Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Sensory	Extra lighting has been installed in the parking area and walkways at 55 Orchard Hts., providing seniors with greater independence.
Inadequate lighting in common areas of Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Sensory	Lighting has been replaced in the common areas of 84 Oakridge St. and 190 Church St. improving safety and independence for seniors with reduced vision.
Facility limitation and the need to provide greater accessibility in elevators for residents living in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Physical	The elevators at 37 North St. have been upgraded by Housing York Inc. resulting in greater independence for seniors with reduced vision. Upgrades included both audio and visual improvements, including: • Improved lighting • Backlighting on buttons • Braille on buttons • Digital numerical display • Digital/verbal notification when passing every floor.
Facility limitation and the need to provide greater accessibility in stairwells for residents living in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Physical	Physical Sensory	New stair treads were installed at 190 Church Street providing seniors with better grip while using the stairs.

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Helping People Live Independently			
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Policy/Practice	All	\$480,000 of the Housing Innovations Fund was allocated in 2008 and 2009 to conduct nine accessibility upgrades and eight playground upgrades across 13 of York Region's non-profit social housing sites. The nine accessibility upgrades included bathroom modifications in three accessible units, including roll in showers at Annswell Court Foundation and the installation of a wheelchair accessible ramp and stairs with handrails at Machele's Corners Housing Cooperative and Inter Faith Homes. The eight playground upgrades included the replacement and repair of equipment from wear and tear and to ensure compliance with current playground safety standards.
Access to emergency shelters for people with disabilities.	Architectural	Physical	Persons with disabilities have access to the newly constructed Leeder Place Shelter (family shelter).
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Physical	Five units within Mapleglen Residences will be modified to accommodate people with disabilities providing greater access to affordable housing.
Enhance opportunities for people with disabilities, who receive Ontario Works, to provide input on the services provided.	Policy/Practice	All	The Ontario Works Consumer Reference Group has been established and meetings will begin in Fall 2009.

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Helping People Live Independently			
Effective communication with Long Term Care patients, relatives and people with sensory disabilities.	Communication	Sensory	Assistive listening devices have been purchased for use at both Long Term Care Centres and are available for use by those who have a hearing loss. Communication boards have been developed and are available for use by those who experience barriers to communication as a result of aphasia or other neurologic impairments.
Making it Easier to Move Around the Region			
Access to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) vehicles by patients, relatives and people with physical and sensory disabilities.	Physical	Physical	A bariatric unit has been implemented to assist patients with mobility issues access EMS vehicles.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Need to create additional opportunities for people with disabilities receiving Ontario Works to provide input on how best to serve them.	All	All	The Ontario Works Consumer Reference Group has been established and meetings will begin in Fall 2009. Plans are underway for other meetings in other sites.
Access to recreational programs for children with disabilities.	Policy/Practice	Physical, Cognitive	Training of staff for PLAY and summer camp programs has been completed with regards to access to recreation programs for children with disabilities. • 25 special needs children participated in Summer Camp in 2009. • 23 special needs children participated in PLAY. • 8 participants registered for FALL '09 PLAY.

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Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Accessibility of breastfeeding clinics.	Physical, Informational	All	The Breastfeeding Team used the corporate Accessible Meeting guidelines checklist to conduct an audit of all four clinic locations (Tannery, Markham, South Service Centre and the Children's Treatment Network site). Many of the accessibility items on the checklist were available. The Breastfeeding Team will continue to use the checklist when selecting future locations for clinics to ensure accessibility.
 Access to Emergency Medical Services (EMS) vehicles by patients, relatives and people with mental illness disabilities.	Policy/Practice	Mental Illness	EMS operates under the Mental Health Act consistent with York Regional Police's protocol. This protocol includes Professional Standards that provide guidance on interacting with individuals with mental illness disabilities.
The implementation of publication standards will increase access to information for people with different types of disabilities.	Informational	All	The proposed Information and Communications Standard has not passed into regulation as of yet. In the interim, the CNIB's clear print design standard has been adopted as a guide for the department to use.
Access to staff communication/information by staff with low vision.	Informational	Sensory	Computer stations have been configured to default to a larger display font. All printed materials have been generated (and continue to be printed) in a larger font size.

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Making Regional Services More Accessible			
The re-design of the website with focus on accessibility, allowing people with different types of disabilities to see the information and understand it.	Informational, Communicational, Technological	Sensory, Cognitive	The re-design of the corporate website is in progress. Web pages for Community and Health Services programs and services continue to follow the corporate standard for those who use screen readers: 'alternative tags' on images (text description of image), focus on text based information and few tables, option to increase font and to zoom in, and information available in PDF formats.
Comprehensive review of the recently initiated Application Support Worker Pilot project to determine best practices.	Policy/Practice	All	The Application Support Worker pilot will continue to the end of 2009. Plans to start evaluating the pilot data are underway.
During the website redesign, barriers to accessibility will be reviewed.	Technological	Sensory	The re-design of the corporate website is in progress. Barriers to accessibility are being identified during this process.
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Awareness among Long Term Care staff regarding the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)</i> .	Informational	All	Training regarding the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities, 2005 (AODA)</i> has been included in the annual care training module. To date, 80% of staff have completed their annual core training including the AODA component. The remaining 20% of staff will receive this training before the end of the fourth quarter. In addition, staff will participate in the corporate Accessible Customer Service Training as it rolls out Fall '09.

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Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Corporate lead for the coordination and development of policies, procedures and compliance for all regulations under the AODA.	Policy/Practice	All	The draft Accessible Customer Service Policy which identifies policies, practices and procedures to meet compliance with Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation by January 1, 2010 was adopted by Council in November 2009. A compliance monitoring and communications strategy will be implemented by end of year. Other standards under the AODA are in development and are being closely monitored. Senior Management is provided with ongoing AODA updates as the legislation develops.
Review department's training procedures to ensure employees with disabilities are learning in an environment that best suits their needs.	Policy/Practice	All	Training procedures have been reviewed and alternative formats have been developed to accommodate different learning needs of employees as necessary. A question has been included in the registration process so that employees can identify their specific learning needs prior to attending a training session so that alternate formats can be made available to them.
Review department's internal policies, practices and procedures to ensure incorporation of the <i>Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005</i> (AODA) Accessibility Standards for Customer Service's core principles of dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.	Policy/Practice	All	A review of all internal departmental policies, practices and procedures to identify gaps in the core principles of independence, integration, and equal opportunity was initiated during the development of the Accessible Customer Service Policy.

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Community and Health Services Department – 2010 Barrier Identification for 2010

By-laws, policies and practices to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing (When will this be completed? The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2010. The nature of the action may be phased in over a number of months or years depending on the resources and priorities of the Department)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Communication materials used in long-term care and community programs.	A review of client communication materials using the CNIB Print Design Standard as a guide in order to identify best practice standards for accessible communication tools.	2010
Communication materials and processes at Housing York Inc. buildings.	A review of current communication materials and processes used in Housing York Inc. buildings will be conducted to ensure all tenants can access tenant information in accessible locations within Housing York Inc. buildings.	2010
Access to recreational programs for children with disabilities.	Establish a focus group consisting of parents of children with special needs who have participated in the 2009 York Region's summer Camp and (Need to Play) PLAY programs. Their input will help develop best practices to improve delivery of the program and enhance access.	Fourth Quarter 2010
Access to corporate staff website.	Assess the new website to identify any barriers to identification to ensure all information remains accessible.	2010
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness		
Incorporate the Accessible Customer Service Policy into specific departmental policies and practices.	Internal Departmental policies and practices will be reviewed against the corporate Accessible Customer Service Policy.	2010

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Helping People Live Independently						
Facility limitation and the need to provide greater accessibility in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural	Physical	Greater independence and accessibility for residents.	Construct a link between 55 and 57 Orchard Hts. that will provide tenants of 55 Orchard Hts. access to an elevator.	Greater accessibility for persons with physical disabilities.	Third Quarter 2010
Facility upgrades to assist persons with physical disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural Physical	Physical	Greater independence and accessibility for residents.	Conduct bathroom upgrades. • 190 Church St. • 48 Wilsen Rd. • 90 Dew St.	Greater accessibility for persons with physical disabilities.	Second Quarter 2010
Facility upgrades to assist persons with disabilities in Housing York Inc. buildings.	Architectural Physical	Physical	Greater independence and accessibility for residents.	Upgrade the entrances at: • 64 Patchell Cres. • 37 Bates Way	Greater accessibility for persons with physical disabilities.	Third Quarter 2010
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Architectural	People with disabilities will have greater access to affordable housing.	Construct Mapleglen Residences in Vaughan to accommodate persons with disabilities.	Completion of a barrier-free building with five modified units at Mapleglen Residences.	First Quarter 2011

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Helping People Live Independently						
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Architectural	Physical	People with disabilities will have greater access to affordable housing.	Expand Kingview Court in King by adding 39 seniors units (to the existing 27 units) and installing an elevator. The building will be barrier free and include grab bars in the bathrooms. Four of the units will be modified to accommodate persons with disabilities.	Greater accessibility for residents of Kingview Court. Four units will be designated for persons with disabilities.	First Quarter 2011
Inadequate access to affordable housing.	Physical	Physical	Improved accessibility in non-profit social housing.	Allocate Federal-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.	Fourth Quarter 2010

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Making it Easier to Move Around the Region						
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	Improved customer service to individuals using EMS services that require transport of assistive devices.	Develop and implement departmental practice, procedures and protocols concerning the transport of assistive devices. Establish partnership with YRT for transportation of assistive devices.	Improved access to EMS services.	Ongoing
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	Improved customer service to individuals using EMS services that require accommodation to ensure service animals are cared for during transport to destination.	Develop and implement departmental practice, procedures and protocols concerning the transport of service animals. Conduct staff training related to use of harness and “All Dogs can Bite” workshop.	Improved access to EMS services.	Ongoing

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Expand opportunities for persons with disabilities in receipt of Ontario Works to provide input and feedback on how to best serve them.	All	All	The establishment of an additional Ontario Works Reference Group will provide the opportunity for input, enhancing service to people with disabilities in a second Ontario Works office.	Building on the success of 2009, create an additional Ontario Works Consumer Reference Group in one of the local offices to provide the opportunity for continuous direct customer input and feedback to enhance service including feedback from program participants with disabilities.	Recommendations from local Consumer Reference Group will be implemented as appropriate.	Fourth Quarter 2010
Corporate lead for the coordination and development of policies, procedures and compliance for all regulations under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA).	Policy/Practice	All	Accessibility will be enhanced in the areas of Customer Service, Information and Communications, Transportation, Employment and Built Environment.	The corporate and departmental leads will work together to implement requirements and regulations under the AODA across all departments.	Compliance requirements of each regulation under the AODA will be met.	Ongoing

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Access to staff communication and information by staff with low vision.	Informational	Sensory	Staff with low vision will have access to written and digital communication and information in a format that is appropriate to their needs as well as customized default screens on computer workstations.	All written communication will be available in large font. Staff will have access to information in an accessible format (i.e., verbal, large print) upon request. Computers will be defaulted to large text/icon display.	Staff will have access to written and digital communication and information in an alternate format that meets their needs.	Fourth Quarter 2010
Provide ongoing support to the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee (YRAAC).	Policy/Practice	All	Barriers to accessibility will be addressed and compliance requirements will be met, enhancing accessibility for people with all disability types.	Staff will support YRAAC's efforts to advise Regional Council on annual accessibility plans as required under the ODA and review and advise Council on compliance with AODA standards.	Compliance requirements for the ODA and each regulation under the AODA will be met.	Ongoing

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Eliminate accessibility barriers on corporate staff website.	Informational, Communicational, Technological	Sensory, Cognitive	Staff with different types of disabilities will be able to access Community and Health Services Department's information more easily.	Using the results from the review, address identified barriers to ensure that information posted on the redesigned website is accessible for people who use screen readers and is in a plain language format.	Increased access to information and services for those with cognitive and sensory disabilities.	2010
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Need for greater staff awareness about how to make programs and services more accessible to 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 other departments.	Greater staff sensitivity and awareness about serving people with disabilities; improved customer satisfaction.	Second Quarter 2010