Health Services Department

Environmental Scan

The Health Services Department will focus on the following objectives:

Building Strategic Partnerships to Enhance Accessibility to Programs and Services:

- Consult with community agencies and other Regional departments to develop and identify mechanisms to be incorporated into emergency preparedness plans that will address equal access to care and information needed to support clients and customers with disabilities.

Education and Outreach to Address Attitudinal Barriers

- Provide tools, information and training to staff to increase awareness and assist with the identification and development of solutions for York Region citizens with disabilities.

Addressing Information and Communication Barriers

- Work to remove barriers to information regarding services and programs and to increase and manage information for persons with disabilities.

Enhancing Accessibility to Facilities to Address Physical Barriers

- Continue to improve services, programs and facilities to increase physical accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Our Customers

The Health Services Department consists of three operational branches, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Long Term Care and Seniors and Public Health together with one support branch, Business Services. Its mission is to protect, promote and enhance the health, safety and well being of our community.

Accordingly, the Department provides a wide range of programs and services to the residents of York Region that support safe, secure and healthy communities, promote wellness and healthy lifestyles and respond to the needs of vulnerable residents and support health care needs at all stages of life.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

EMS 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 which require medical control along with the provisions of safe and timely transport.

Advanced Care Paramedics provide enhanced primary paramedic skills which enables advanced patient assessment and treatment to begin prior to arrival at hospital.

Ambulances are equipped with a variety of equipment in order to meet as many needs as possible of patients with physical disabilities. EMS continues to assess and implement new initiatives in order to ensure the safe transport of patients with disabilities.

Long Term Care and Seniors (LTC)

LTC provides programs and services that recognize the needs of individuals (18 years of age or older) who can no longer live independently. These programs and services focus on promoting the health, well-being, safety and independence of these individuals.

For example, medical/nursing and personal care services are provided to 232 residents at the Newmarket and Maple Health Centres. Special emphasis is placed on serving individuals with heavy, complex physical, cognitive and/or psychiatric care requirements.

LTC Day programs are also in place for adults who may suffer from cognitive impairment, physical disability, acquired brain injury, and/or communication disorders. These programs are offered in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of York Region, York-Durham Aphasia Centre, and York Central Hospital Behaviour Management Services.

The Alternative Community Living Program provides housing support services and essential homemaking to seniors so that they can stay in the community and remain independent and Client Intervention and Support Services for Seniors provides intervention and support services to vulnerable and at risk seniors and persons with physical disabilities. These programs are offered in partnership with Community Services and Housing, Schomberg Lions and Non-Prophetic Homes.

Public Health

Public Health delivers programs and services legislated by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (HPPA) to the residents of York Region. Public Health strives to ensure that programs and services are delivered in accordance with the provincial guidelines.

These programs and services encompass a wide range of approaches that are essentially population based and include such measures as restaurant inspections, immunization, prenatal and dental clinics, home visits, outbreak control, and health promotion activities designed to prevent the onset of disease. Public Health continues to evaluate, modify and adjust programs and services in an effort to address disability barriers and increase accessibility to persons with disabilities.

Business Services

Business Services ensures fiscal and program integrity within the Health Services Department through budget development and fiscal responsibility. It is also responsible for adherence to MOHLTC and York Region policies and procedures, human resource management, business continuity planning and emergency preparedness response. The Branch also provides administrative support and technical expertise related to a variety of program support needs which includes compliance under the *Personal Health Information Protection Act.*

Accessibility Statement

The Health Services Department will continue to identify barriers, implement strategies to increase accessibility and evaluate programs and services to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to fully participate in them.

Health Services Department

Progress Report on Accessibility Achievements - 2006

Barrier Identified [1]	Barrier Type [2]	Disability Type [3]	How the barrier was addressed [4]
Helping People Live Independently			
Upgrading of bathrooms (shower/ bath) in the client centres of the ACL program sites Keswick Gardens, Genesis Place and Heritage East is required.	Architectural, Physical	All	Renovations to the bath and shower areas were completed to ensure full and safer access into shower areas.
Need for more physically accessible supportive housing units within the ACL program that provides essential homemaking and personal care to seniors and adults with physical disabilities in order for them to stay in the community and remain as independent as possible. (Hadley Grange site renovation of 14 units)	Physical, Architectural	Physical, Sensory, Cognitive	Renovation of specified units at Hadley Grange is underway. Awaiting response after submission of contract documents to MOHLTC. Awaiting response from MOHLTC to change renovation schedule to better meet needs of tenants. Due to increasing costs of project, the number of units was reassessed. Seven units will have renovations completed. A recent change in by-laws requires that a mechanical engineer must be consulted on renovations; this may further impact the project schedule and/or costs.
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Inclusion of persons with disabilities into Health Services emergency planning, specifically for Pandemic Influenza.	Physical, Communicational	Physical, Sensory	Consulted on mass immunization strategies. All sites selected were assessed for physical accessibility and are fully accessible. Informational handouts on Pandemic Influenza will be available in large print to accommodate people who are visually impaired. Will continue to consult with Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) and Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) on pandemic contingency planning.

1 Gives a description of the barrier and indicates where the barrier was found. For example was the barrier in a program, service, by-law, policy, practice and facility.

2 Indicates the type(s) of barrier (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).

3 Indicates the type(s) of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other)

4 Describes the action taken to identify, remove or prevent the barrier.

Barrier Identified [1]	Barrier Type [2]	Disability Type [3]	How the barrier was addressed [4]
Making Regional Services More Accessible			
Access to universally funded influenza vaccine at York Region influenza clinics by developmentally delayed or disabled individuals. Access difficulty is related to these individuals not being able to leave their homes or ability to obtain appropriate transportation to such clinics.	Physical, Communicational	Physical, Sensory, Cognitive	Upon investigation, it was discovered that adequate provisions have already been made by Community Living Associations to ensure that their clients receive flu shots (e.g. through family doctor, York Region Health Services Department or agency-run flu clinics). Whenever any clients with disabilities attend York Region Health Services Department (YRHSD) clinics, provisions will be made for expedited service wherever possible. No further action is required. After conducting further research, it is evident that little promotion has been done by organizations. Thus, several recommendations will be considered to increase influenza awareness for individuals served by these agencies. For example, distribution of pamphlets on Universal Influenza Immunization Program to these organizations for upcoming flu season.
ACL brochures, pamphlets and service agreements require review and revision to ensure they are readable and incorporate accessibility practices.	Communicational	Sensory, Cognitive	Current materials were assessed to make changes as necessary to meet accessibility standards. A service agreement has been reviewed and revised. Font changes are still pending. A one page program descriptor was developed and is being circulated to agencies/public for informational purposes. New brochures are currently pending approval to go to print.
Accessibility to private drinking water systems (PDWS) education and outreach program: PDWS testing service and retrieval of water test results from the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care lab.	Policy/Practice, Communicational	Sensory	Interviewed members of the York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee. MOHLTC are investigating feasibility of integrating TTY with the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system already in place. Policies and procedures revised to include York Region Accessibility Advisory Committee member's input.

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Barrier Identified [1]	Barrier Type [2]	Disability Type [3]	How the barrier was addressed [4]
Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness			
Staff awareness related to the ODA and incorporation of accessibility practices into daily activities within Health Services.	Communicational, Information, Policy/Practice, Attitudinal	All	Health Services staff were encouraged to attend and participate in education related to increasing awareness of the ODA as well as the integration of accessibility concepts into daily work practices where appropriate. 19 YRHSD staff attended two Sensitivity Training sessions conducted by Psychogeriatric Regional Consultants in March 2006. Staff evaluations from the sessions indicated better awareness of how to relate to individuals with disabilities. Many stated that they would pay closer attention to clients' needs in the future.
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Six staff members attended inclusivity training sessions and four staff members are enrolled in upcoming sessions.

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Barrier Identification for 2007

By-laws, policies, practices, services or facilities to be reviewed	Methods to be used to identify the barrier	Timing[5] (when will this be completed?)
Making Regional Services More Accessible		
Audit Public Health offices to assess accessibility.	Develop a checklist to identify accessibility issues.	Tool developed and at least one site audited by end of 2007.

5 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2006. 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.

Barriers That Will Be Addressed for 2007

Barrier Identified[8]	**Barrier Type**[9]	**Disability Type**[10]	**What will be gained by removing or preventing this barrier?**[11]	**Means to prevent/remove the barrier**[12]	**Indicators of Success**[13]	**Timing** (when will this be completed?)[14]
Helping People Live Independently						
Need for more accessible external and internal environments at the Maple Health Centre, to provide essential care to seniors and adults with physical disabilities.	Physical, Architectural, Communicational	Physical, Sensory, Cognitive	Increased accessibility to Maple Health Centre facilities for clients.	Renovation of the following items at the Maple Health Centre: • Pedestrian access route • Central TTY Line • Staff change rooms • Power Assist Operator in Physiotherapy washroom • Updated signage • Assistive Listening Device	Completed renovations with accessible features such as TTY telephone line, assistive listening device and more accessible approach to the centre for pedestrians.	2007 Additional Items to be identified for completion in 2008 – ongoing.

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9 Indicate where the barrier type (physical, architectural, informational, communicational, attitudinal, technological, policy/practice).
10 Indicates the type of disability affected by the barrier (physical, sensory, cognitive or other).
11 Indicate how accessibility will be enhanced by removing or preventing this barrier.
12 Describe what action will be taken to remove and/or prevent the barrier.
13 Indicate how customer service will be improved by removing or preventing this barrier. Also indicate any other measure(s) that will be used to determine whether or not the Department was successful in removing/preventing this barrier.
14 The timing for addressing a barrier does not necessarily have to be set within 2007; 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.

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Helping People Live Independently						
Need for more physically accessible supportive housing units with the ACL program that provide essential homemaking and personal care to seniors and adults with physical disabilities in order for them to stay in the community and remain as independent as possible. (Hadley Grange site renovation of approx. 14 units.)	Physical, Architectural	Physical, Sensory, Cognitive	Increased number of accessible apartments	Renovation of specified units in Hadley Grange.	Completed renovations with accessible features such as lighting, flooring, kitchen and bathrooms.	2007
Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Need for more accessible internal environment and building system at the Newmarket Health Centre, to provide essential care to seniors and adults with physical disabilities.	Physical, Architectural, Communication	Physical, Sensory, Cognitive	Increased accessibility to Newmarket Health Centre facilities for clients.	Renovation of the Newmarket Health Centre to update the existing signage system and to install a Power Assist Operator in common washroom.	Completed renovations with accessible features.	2007 Additional Items to be identified for completion in 2008 – ongoing.

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Making Regional Services More Accessible						
Health Services fact sheets require review and revision to ensure they are readable and incorporate accessibility practices and Regional standards.	Communicational	Visual, Cognitive	Improved communication between service providers and clients.	Review and assess current materials and make changes as necessary to meet accessibility practices and Regional standards.	Written materials are completed and more easily understandable. Number of documents revised.	2007 – Safe Water pilot Ongoing – after pilot, rollout to additional program areas.
Inclusion of persons with disabilities into York Region Health Services Department (YRHSD) emergency planning process, specifically for Pandemic Influenza.	Physical, Communicational	Physical, Sensory	Will provide clients with equal access to care and information in preparation for and in the event of an Influenza Pandemic.	Consultation with CNIB and Canadian Hearing Society (CHS) on pandemic contingency planning.	Educational materials will be adapted to incorporate accessibility and Regional standards.	2007

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Changing Attitudes and Raising Awareness						
Increase awareness of staff to the needs of persons with disabilities through staff participation in inclusivity training.	Attitudinal	All	Will provide staff with an introduction to the information to effectively and respectfully serve persons with disabilities.	20 employees in the Health Services Department will participate in the inclusivity and accessibility training course being offered corporately.	Staff awareness is raised and staff report having a better understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.	2007 – Ongoing.
Staff awareness related to the ODA and incorporation of accessibility practices into daily activities within Health Services.	Communicational Informational Policy/Practice Attitudinal	All	Staff will feel an increased comfort level when dealing with persons with disabilities and more information will be provided or facilitated with accessibility concepts in mind, to be delivered in the community.	Promote opportunities, both external and internal, for Health Services staff to attend and participate in education related to increasing awareness of the ODA as well as the integration of accessibility concepts into daily work practices where appropriate.	Number of opportunities offered. Number of staff attending internal or external ODA opportunities.	2007 – ongoing.

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