



ST. JOSEPH'S CARE GROUP

St. Joseph's Care Group

Accessibility Plan 2018-2023

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Prepared for

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St. Joseph's Care Group's commitment to an inclusive and accessible environment: A message from Tracy Buckler, President and CEO

At St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG), we are guided by our values of Care, Compassion and Commitment. SJCG is committed to promoting and providing an environment that fosters respect, independence, dignity, integration, and equal opportunity for all people. Together, we will reduce barriers and increase accessibility for people with disabilities.

This multi-year accessibility plan outlines SJCG's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet all the regulatory requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) which provides a way for Ontario to become barrier free. It builds on our previous 2013-2018 plan and outlines the next steps in our efforts to identify and remove barriers for people with disabilities with respect to customer service, information and communication, employment, procurement, and public spaces. We are striving to become increasingly accessible which is evident in our newly developed spaces, employment practices, client engagement initiatives, communication strategies, dedicated accessible parking spaces, highly-visible signage, and so much more.

By seeking the views of our clients and their families, volunteers, and staff through surveys, emails, and on-site sessions, we have incorporated their suggestions into our next five-year plan. SJCG is committed to improving accessibility to people with disabilities at all of our SJCG locations through our multi-year accessibility plan.

Introduction

SJCG strives to meet the needs of its clients and families, staff, volunteers, and students with disabilities and is working diligently to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility. Standards were developed for the AODA with the first accessibility standards, Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) which came into effect on January 1, 2008. As an organization defined under the Act as part of the broader public sector, SJCG became compliant with the customer service standard requirements as of January 1, 2010. The Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11) were then added on June 3, 2011 outlining required standards for information and communications, employment, transportation, and built environment. In October 2012, this regulation was amended to include the design of public spaces.

Our organization is committed to fulfilling all requirements under the AODA by creating an inclusive and equitable environment. This accessibility plan outlines the steps SJCG is taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

Our plan for 2018-2023 identifies how SJCG will play its role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians. At SJCG, accessibility means:

- People with disabilities receive services and goods in a manner that meets their individual needs

- Information and communications are available in accessible formats to all clients and their families, visitors, staff, students, and volunteers
- People with disabilities who are employed or volunteer, or wish to be employed or volunteer at SJCG are able to participate fully in the environment
- People with disabilities are able to physically access the space, inside and outside, of the various SJCG facilities
- All persons are able to provide feedback to SJCG on their experience and concerns related to issues of accessibility, and be responded to in a prompt and courteous manner

The Accessibility Steering Committee

SJCG has an Accessibility Steering Committee that includes a broad representation of employees, clients, and community partners. The committee is chaired by the Director of Organizational & People Development and guided by the leadership of the Vice-President, People, Mission & Values. The purpose of the Accessibility Steering Committee is to provide a forum for discussion and recommendations related to improving accessibility for people with disabilities within SJCG, in keeping with the AODA and related standards. The terms of reference guide the Steering Committee and all documentation relating to meeting minutes, plans of action, information guides, and more is available at www.sjcg.net/accountability/accessibility.aspx.

The Chair of the Accessibility Steering Committee is also a member of Accessible Thunder Bay, a community partnership comprised of accessibility leads for Lakehead University, Confederation College, Lakehead District School Board, City of Thunder Bay, SJCG, Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, the Northwest Local Health Integration Network, and the Thunder Bay Catholic District School Board. This partnership originally formed in January 2004 with the goal of sharing information and strategies to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in their respective organizations and the City of Thunder Bay as a whole, and to seek opportunities for collaboration in meeting the requirements of the AODA standards.

In order for the SJCG's Accessibility Plan 2018-2023 to be relevant and appropriately prioritized, it was important that stakeholders were provided the opportunity to be meaningfully engaged. An Accessibility Plan Working Group was established with members of the Accessibility Steering Committee to develop a strategy for clients, residents, families, visitors, volunteers, and staff at SJCG to provide input.

SJCG also receives input from various sources on an ongoing basis to inform plans and activities including:

- The accessible.sjcg@tbh.net email address
- Feedback through the compliments and complaints database
- Social media
- Targeted feedback from clients, families, volunteers and staff
- Client satisfaction and employee engagement surveys

Section One: Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers

This section includes a summary of the accessibility initiatives SJCG has completed. To better support a barrier-free environment, our organization has:

- Built a new facility at Hogarth Riverview Manor (HRM) and a large addition to St. Joseph's Hospital (SJH), which meet or exceed the Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment outlined in the AODA
- Provided Staxi chairs to support movement across larger distances for those in need of assistance available at the entrances of SJH and HRM
- Dedicated accessible parking spaces at all SJCG facilities
- Worked collaboratively with Lift+, a community service transportation provider for people with disabilities, to identify key drop-off and pick-up locations at the various SJCG facilities
- Invited client and family partners and community partners to join the Accessibility Steering Committee
- Engaged volunteers at the hospital and long-term care homes to provide support to clients and families thereby enhancing the quality of care

CUSTOMER SERVICE

SJCG is committed to improving accessibility to all people with disabilities by complying with both the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA. When feedback on accessibility concerns is received, the request is provided directly to the Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee, who communicates with the lead person required to address the concern. Generally, responses are provided within 24-48 hours, although resolution may take longer depending on the concern. Additionally, all policy and procedure changes are reviewed and approved every three years by their respective quality committee.

Past initiatives have included:

- Strengthened feedback mechanisms through a dedicated email address and a compliments and complaints feedback database
- Availability of assistive devices such as Staxi chairs
- Creation of an accessibility for customer service policy
- Welcoming service animals
- Welcoming support persons
- The purchase of bariatric chairs for various SJCG facilities
- Collaborative partnership with Lift+, a community services provider for people with disabilities
- Enhanced accessibility training for staff, volunteers, and students
- Training designed specifically for management staff on their responsibilities in relation to accessibility standards

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

Past information and communications initiatives have included the following:

- Information provided in alternate formats upon request in a way that meets individual needs and in accordance with the legislation
- Standards created for navigational building signage incorporating written information with symbols
- A Visual Identity Guide was implemented establishing key characteristics of and standards for SJCG's public-facing documents. This includes standards for minimum font size, relief/contrast, captioning of images, use of Styles, and more.
- Standards developed for SJCG video production to allow for closed captioning
- Feedback mechanisms strengthened through the development of a compliments and complaints feedback database

EMPLOYMENT

Employment-related initiatives in the past few years have included:

- Development of a policy on accessibility in employment to ensure that people with disabilities have the same opportunity to access employment opportunities within SJCG
- Training provided to management staff on their responsibilities with regards to accessibility in employment
- Enhanced job postings, interview templates, recruitment ads, performance reviews, and more to include information relating to providing any accommodations required, ensuring equal opportunity
- Support to organizational leaders, through the Occupational Health and Wellness team, by providing appropriate and timely accommodations to employees to ensure their ongoing participation in the workplace and to facilitate early return-to-work when applicable

PROCUREMENT

SJCG works collaboratively with the Northwest Supply Chain to procure goods and services, and a member of the Northwest Supply Chain participates on the Accessibility Steering Committee. The Northwest Supply Chain:

- Works closely with the requisitioner of the goods and/or services to ensure that their procurement activities are in accordance with AODA regulations
- Reviews policies with the Infrastructure Quality Committee on a three-year term
- Includes accessibility considerations in the capital budget approval process
- Supports other accessibility considerations, as needed
- Seeks opportunities for standardization (i.e. adjustable furniture, mix of accessible versus standard types of items)

PUBLIC SPACES

The public spaces within SJCG are subject to ongoing review and redevelopment. Initiatives have included:

- Communicating service disruptions and offering accessible alternatives to the public
- Upgrading elevators to include voice annunciation
- Installing touchless (proximity sensor) paper towel dispensers and touchless taps

- Installing automatic door openers where need is identified
- Upgrading toilets to include flush sensors
- Widening of identified interior doors to accommodate wider-width wheelchairs at SJH
- Creating designated accessible parking spaces at all facilities
- Making seating/rest areas available on the exterior and interior of SJH and HRM
- Applying an anti-slip coating to the outdoor patio at SJH to provide greater safety for clients
- Adding ten additional accessible parking spaces at the rear of HRM to fulfill a request from the HRM Family Council.

Section Two: Strategies and Actions

In order for the SJCG Accessibility Plan 2018-2023 to be relevant and appropriately prioritized, it was important that stakeholders were provided the opportunity to be meaningfully engaged. An Accessibility Plan Working Group was established with members of the Accessibility Steering Committee to develop a strategy for clients, residents, families, visitors, volunteers, and staff at SJCG to provide input.

The goals of this strategy were to:

1. Plan, promote, and implement an engagement strategy to gather meaningful input to shape the next Accessibility Plan for SJCG
2. Ensure accessible engagement and feedback opportunities for stakeholders
3. Review, summarize and prioritize stakeholder input and develop recommendations for SJCG's Accessibility Plan 2018-2023

Key messages presented were:

1. SJCG has a vision of being a leader in client centred care
2. SJCG is committed to providing an accessible environment for clients, residents, families, visitors, volunteers, and staff
3. We value and seek stakeholder input that will shape a new Accessibility Plan for SJCG

Engagement strategy and data collection

Members of the Accessibility Steering Committee conducted the survey with client and family partners. They then collected data from engaged stakeholders by hosting open houses at the following locations:

- Hogarth Riverview Manor
- Independent Living Resource Centre
- St. Joseph's Hospital
- St. Joseph's Heritage
- Victoriaville

An electronic survey was also distributed via the intranet and sent to a number of community partners including:

- Lift+, Options Northwest, March of Dimes, Community Living Thunder Bay, BISNO, CMHA, CNIB, HAGI, Alpha Court, and more

A total of 109 responses were received representing:

- 19% community members
- 18% clients/residents
- 35% staff
- 18% volunteers
- 11% family, visitors, and retired staff

The responses were summarized, themed, and correlated to the various SJCG facilities. Accessibility Steering Committee members were asked to review and validate the findings and make recommendations for future actions. SJCG has identified the following projects and programs between now and 2023 to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities. This a living document that will continue to be updated between 2018 and 2023.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

SJCG is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods and services to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness as we would for anyone else.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Improve wayfinding at HRM	2018	HRM Director	Signage in front lobby directs families and visitors to the information desk located in the finance office
Extend elevator door opening times for increased accessibility	2018	Building Services	Elevator doors at HRM and SJH have been adjusted to maximize their opening period
Senior-Friendly Committee	2018/19	Chair, Senior-Friendly Committee	-The Chair, Senior-Friendly Committee, will participate on accessibility committee -Accessibility committee will consider senior-friendly principles in decision-making
Smudging room options at HRM	2019	Building Services	Explore options to offer onsite smudging
Enhance wayfinding at SJH	2020	Accessibility Committee	Explore opportunities to enhance electronic wayfinding at SJH
Gender-neutral washroom signage at HRM	2020	Building Services	Single-person washrooms will have signs updated

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

SJCG is committed to making information and communications accessible to people with disabilities.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Alternate Formats	2018	Document Owner	Accessibility contact is listed with publications and on sjcg.net to make SJCG's publications available in a format that meets the individual accessibility needs
Visual Identity and Style Guide	2018/19	Communications, Engagement, and Client Relations (CECR)	SJCG has adopted an iterative document to guide the creation of written, print, photographic, and video content including but not limited to: electronic templates, minimum font sizes, captioning, use of headers, contrast and relief
Program Awareness – opportunity to better share information about SJCG's Programs & Services	2019	CECR	Program & Service profile project underway to identify information about all SJCG programs and services. In the longer term, the profiles will be used to develop web architecture and content (web and print)
Consultation on Website	2020	CECR	SJCG will launch a new external website. Prior to launch, public and client/family consultation will take place to help determine things like priority themes, navigation, and so forth
Launch of New SJCG Website	2020	CECR	A Content Management System has been procured, servers purchased and configured. CECR will, within its span of control, produce a website that meets web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. Additional software has been purchased to test accessibility
CECR-Driven Development	2020	CECR	Development driven by CECR meets WCAG 2.0 standards

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Information Boards	TBD	CECR	Exploring opportunities and options

EMPLOYMENT

SJCG is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Supporting staff vision requirements	2018	Occupational Health and Wellness	Support from IT for optional settings is available upon request
Accessibility training for managers	2019	Human Resources Manager	To be included in management training module
Review and refresh accessibility policies and procedures	2019	Human Resources/ Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee	-Review current policies and procedures every three years or refresh as necessary -Publish policies and procedures

PROCUREMENT

SJCG is committed to accessible procurement processes.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Review procurement processes	2020	Materials Management	Procurement staff participate on accessibility committee and provide an overview of requirements for new equipment and/or infrastructure upgrades

TRAINING

SJCG is committed to providing training in the requirements of Ontario's accessibility laws and the Ontario Human Rights Code as it applies to people with disabilities.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Accessibility Training	Ongoing	Corporate Learning Volunteer Services Coordinators	-All new staff are oriented to accessibility -Ensure records are maintained -New volunteers to continue to receive accessibility training

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
		Director - Organizational & People Development	-Training for students to be updated
Redesign online accessibility training module	2019	Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee	Online training to be reviewed to ensure it is comprehensive, current, and user friendly
Review accessibility information materials	2020	Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee	Review and update web content and accessibility materials

DESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACES

SJCG will meet accessibility laws when building or making major changes to public spaces. All construction and maintenance projects are viewed through an accessibility lens.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Accessible Parking	2018	Building Services	Extensive accessible parking at SJH
Accessible Seating	2018	Building Services	Accessible seating created at SJH both inside the hospital and external to the building
Washroom accessibility	2018	Building Services	Adjustments to towel dispensers provide for greater wheelchair manoeuvrability in men's washrooms at SJH
Rotation of HRM lift tubs	2018/19	Building Services	Lift tubs on all floors at are being rotated to provide easier access for both residents and staff
Elevator rebuild and replacement button panels	Winter-Spring 2019	Building Services	Project begins November 2018 at Bethammi Nursing Home
Create easier access to volunteer office at HRM	Winter 2019	Building Services	A magnet will be added to the door to hold it open during daytime hours
Staxi chair availability	Winter 2019	Building Services	Chairs to be asset tagged for retrievability. Options for ensuring availability of chairs will be developed

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources
Location change for automatic door openers at HRM to be reviewed	Winter 2019	Building Services	Automatic door openers on all units/floors will be reviewed and options for changing button locations determined to better meet the needs of the residents and families
Create accessible door access to volunteer office at SJH	Spring 2019	Building Services	Install a push button door opener for volunteer service office
Enhance accessibility at SJH entrances	Summer 2019	Building Services	-Curb cuts to be created at SJH entrance at Algoma and Camelot Street entrances - Replace front entrance to electronic sliding door at Algoma Street entrance
Walkway to gardens at Bethammi	Spring 2019	Building Services	Review options to improve wheelchair accessibility to gardens
Gift shop access at SJH	Summer 2019	Building Services	Gift shop doors to be widened allow for larger wheelchair accessibility
Washroom accessibility at St. Joseph's Health Centre	2019	Building Services	Review of barrier free washroom to determine if it allows for enough manoeuvrability for larger wheelchairs
Review procedures for notification of temporary disruptions	2019	Building Services	Review and recommend a standardized process
Automatic door openers to balcony doors at HRM	2020/21	Building Services	To be reviewed and included in budget
Tables in town hall to be replaced with the a lift model to better accommodate wheelchairs	2020/21	HRM Director	To be reviewed and included in budget

For More Information

For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact Lisa Beckwick, Chair – Accessibility Steering Committee at 807-346-2366 or beckwicl@tbh.net. More information can be found on the SJCG website at www.sjcg.net/accountability/accessibility.aspx

SJCG is committed to providing inclusive and barrier-free access to information, documentation, programs and services. SJCG shall, upon request and in consultation with the person making the request, make available any public document including public emergency procedures, plans, and safety information in an accessible format. Feedback or requests for accessible formats for this document and/or Corporate publications may be submitted by telephone, email, in person or in writing:

St. Joseph's Care Group – Accessibility

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