



# St. Joseph's Care Group

## Accessibility Plan 2018-2024

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### **Prepared for**

Leadership Quality Safety &  
Risk Committee  
St. Joseph's Care Group  
35 Algoma St. N.  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5G7

### **Prepared by**

Lisa Beckwick  
Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee  
St. Joseph's Care Group  
35 Algoma St. N.  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5G7

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## **St. Joseph's Care Group's commitment to an inclusive and accessible environment:**

### **A message from Kelli O'Brien, President and CEO**

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St. Joseph's Care Group (SJCG) is committed to providing services to our clients and families in a manner that respects independence, dignity, integration, and equal opportunities for all people. Guided by our values of Care, Compassion and Commitment, SJCG is committed to upholding our standards of exceptional care to people with visible and non-visible disabilities by continually enhancing accessibility at all of our SJCG locations.

This multi-year accessibility plan is a roadmap for SJCG to prevent and remove barriers while meeting all the regulatory requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). It outlines the strategy and 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 continually strive to become increasingly accessible which is evident in our outdoor spaces, employment practices, client engagement initiatives, communication strategies, dedicated accessible parking spaces, highly-visible signage, and so much more.

We welcome feedback from our clients and their families, volunteers, and staff through surveys, emails, and suggestions, and incorporate their ideas into our living multi-year accessibility plan.

### **Introduction**

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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 2018-2024 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

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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](http://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 2018-2024 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](mailto: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

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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 Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre, regional healthcare providers, shared services organizations and group buying organizations to procure goods and services, SJCG Purchasing Department participates on the Accessibility Steering Committee. The SJCG Purchasing Department:

- 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**

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In order for the SJCG Accessibility Plan 2018-2024 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 2018-2024

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 2024 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 2024.

## 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.

<b>Legend:</b>	Complete	Ongoing	In Progress	On hold
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Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources	Status
Improve wayfinding at HRM	2018	HRM Director	Signage in front lobby directs families and visitors to the information desk located in the finance office	Complete
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	Complete to code



<b>Legend:</b>	Complete	Ongoing	In Progress	On hold
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Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources	Status
Support implementation of the Senior-Friendly Care Framework across SJCG	2018/19	Manager, North West Regional Seniors' Care Program	<p>Manager, North West Regional Seniors' Care Program, will participate on accessibility committee</p> <p>A member of the Accessibility Steering Committee will participate on the Senior Friendly Care Task Force</p> <p>Accessibility committee will consider senior-friendly principles in decision-making</p>	Ongoing
Smudging room options at HRM	2019	Building Services	Explore options to offer onsite smudging	Complete
Provide easier access to sound system in HRM vestry	2019	Building Services	The sound system in vestry is too high to access for volunteers. Options to lower the system will be explored.	Complete
Cafeteria additions at SJ Hospital	2019	Food and Nutrition Services	Purchase an elevating table to accommodate powerchairs, and revamp the utensil placement to better accommodate persons in wheelchairs	Complete
Gender-neutral washroom signage at HRM	2020	Building Services	Single-person washrooms will have signs updated	Complete
Enhance wayfinding at SJ Hospital	2022	Accessibility Committee	Explore opportunities to enhance electronic wayfinding at SJH	
Increase knowledge of volunteers	2022	Volunteer Services	Provide additional training to increase knowledge of volunteers who support people with disabilities	Ongoing

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

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

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources	Status
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	Complete
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	Complete
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)	Complete
CECR-Driven Development	2020	CECR	Development driven by CECR meets WCAG 2.0 standards	Complete
Launch of New SJCG Website	2022/23	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	In progress
Consultation on Website	2022	CECR	SJCG will launch a new external website. Prior to launch, extensive consultation will take place to help determine things like priority themes, navigation, and so forth	

## EMPLOYMENT

SJCG is committed to fair and accessible employment practices.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources	Status
Supporting staff vision requirements	2018	Occupational Health and Wellness	Support from IT for optional settings is available upon request	Complete
Accessibility training during orientation	2019	Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee	Update classroom training presentation	Complete
Accessibility training for managers	2019	Human Resources Manager	To be included in management training module	Complete
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	Complete
Interview and onboarding processes offered virtually	2020	Human Resources	Interviews conducted virtually. Sign-on and onboarding processes modified to be offered in an electronic format.	Complete
Work with community partners	2021	Human Resources	Continue to build partnerships with organizations who support people with disabilities	Ongoing
Review recruitment, onboarding, and orientation	2022/23	Human Resources	Identification of opportunities to create inclusive recruitment process	

## PROCUREMENT

SJCG is committed to accessible procurement processes.

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources	Status
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	Ongoing

## 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	Status
Accessibility Training	Ongoing	Corporate Learning Volunteer Services Coordinators  Director - Organizational & People Development	-All new staff are oriented to accessibility -Ensure records are maintained -New volunteers to continue to receive accessibility training -Training for students to be updated	Ongoing
Redesign online accessibility training module	2019	Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee	Online training to be reviewed to ensure it is comprehensive, current, and user friendly	Complete
Review accessibility information materials	2020	Chair, Accessibility Steering Committee	Review and update web content and accessibility materials for staff, students, and volunteers	Complete
Online modules	2022/23	Corporate Learning	All online orientation modules to be reviewed for full accessibility	

## 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	Status
Accessible Parking	2018	Building Services	Extensive accessible parking at SJ Hospital	Complete
Accessible Seating	2018	Building Services	Accessible seating created at SJ Hospital both inside the hospital and external to the building	Complete
Washroom accessibility	2018	Building Services	Adjustments to towel dispensers provide for greater wheelchair manoeuvrability in men's washrooms at SJ Hospital	Complete
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	Complete
Elevator rebuild and replacement button panels	2019	Building Services	Project starts November 2018 at Bethammi Nursing Home	Complete
Location change for automatic door openers at HRM to be reviewed	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	Complete
Staxi chair availability	2019	Building Services	Options for ensuring availability of chairs will be developed for SJ Hospital and HRM	Complete
Enhance accessibility at SJ Hospital entrances	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	Complete
Accessible door - Manor Room	2019	Building Services	Install a push button door opener at Heritage site	Complete

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Plan/Resources</b>	<b>Status</b>
Barrier free entrance at Amethyst House	2019	Building Services	Existing entry to be removed and replaced with a barrier free concrete entry	Complete
Information Services Desk at SJ Hospital	2019	Building Services	Modify the information desk to improve accessibility for volunteers and clients	Complete
Create accessible door access to volunteer office at SJ Hospital	2019	Building Services	Install a push button door opener for volunteer service office	Complete
Create easier access to volunteer office at HRM	2019	Building Services	A magnet will be added to the door to hold it open during daytime hours	Complete
Review procedures for notification of temporary disruptions	2019	Building Services	Review and recommend a standardized process	Complete
Walkway to gardens at Bethammi	2020	Building Services	Sidewalk added at Manor house to provide access to new Dementia client patio area	Complete
Gift shop access at SJ Hospital	2020	Building Services	Gift shop doors to be widened allow for larger wheelchair accessibility – gift shop relocated and door way is 47 inches	Complete
SJ Hospital Elevators	2020	Building Services	Rehab elevator to be operational by July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Complete
Widen entry to Spiritual Gathering Lodge	2020	Building Services	The door will be widened to accommodate a full-sized hospital bed	Complete

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Plan/Resources</b>	<b>Status</b>
Reconstruction of Central Registration	2020	Building Services	To enhance front desk accessibility for clients and families at SJ Hospital	Complete
Handrail in main corridor at Heritage	2020	Building Services	Handrails are now installed on both sides of main hallway at Heritage	Complete
Install fixed lifts in resident rooms at HRM	2020/2022	Building Services	In final year of 3-year process	In progress
SJ Hospital Algoma Entrance	2021	Building Services	Pedestrian canopy to be replaced by Fall 2020 to provide better overhead coverage	Complete
SJ Hospital Elevators	2021	Building Services	Main elevators to be rebuilt and brought up to code. This will assist with helping the door to remain open for extended time	Complete
Bariatric rooms at SJ Hospital	2021/22	Building Services	Create bariatric rooms including washrooms, wider doors, auto openers, grab bars, while keeping bedrooms functional and accessible on 2, 3 and 5 <sup>th</sup> floors of SJ Hospital	In progress
Elevator repair at Balmoral Centre	2022	Building Services	Operational upgrades and control upgrades complete	Complete
Nurse call upgrade	2022	Building Services	Upgrade the nurse call system at SJ Hospital. Design is now complete. Install to take place after sprinkler project	In progress
Automatic door openers for balcony doors at HRM	2022	Building Services	To be reviewed and included in budget. Considerable cost to put in place	On hold due to cost
Accessible Walkways at Sister Leila Greco	2022	Building Services	Grounds and accessible walkway improvements to the back yard	Complete

Actions	Target Date	Responsibility	Plan/Resources	Status
Accessibility review at Amethyst House	2022	Building Services	Significant office space is available in the basement of Amethyst House, but it currently does not have accessible access. Consultant engaged for design options	In progress
Courtyard resurfacing at SMSC	2022	Building Services	Main courtyard resurfacing – maintenance free patio and walkways	Complete
Lift tables in HRM Town Hall	2023	Building Services	Tables in town hall replaced with a lift model to accommodate wheelchairs	In progress

## 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](mailto:beckwicl@tbh.net). More information can be found on the SJCG website at [www.sjcg.net/accountability/accessibility.aspx](http://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

Box 3251

35 Algoma Street North

Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5G7

Canada

☎ Tel: 807.768.4455

✉ E-Mail: [accessible.sjcg@tbh.net](mailto:accessible.sjcg@tbh.net)



*Care  
Compassion  
Commitment*



35 Algoma St. N., Thunder Bay, ON P7B 5G7  
(807) 343-2431 • [sjcg@tbh.net](mailto:sjcg@tbh.net) • [www.sjcg.net](http://www.sjcg.net)