



Scarborough Health Network (SHN) Accessibility Plan

Annual Status Report 2022

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This publication is available on the hospital's website and in alternative formats upon request.

www.SHN.ca

Introduction

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) is to develop, implement and enforce standards for accessibility for Ontario employers, related to ensuring that goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodation and buildings are accessible and inclusive.

The AODA highlights the following five standards:

1. Customer Service Standard
2. Information and Communication Standard
3. Employment Standard
4. Transportation Standard
5. Design of Public Spaces Standard

Our Actions to Achieve Excellence in Accessibility

This Annual Status Report outlines our progress on actions taken in 2022 to meet the requirements of the AODA. In 2022, Scarborough Health Network (SHN) continued to comply with its requirements under the AODA and undertook several accessibility-related initiatives outlined below:

SHN continues to move forward with our Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2020-23). To access the SHN Accessibility Plan 2020-23, visit the SHN website, <https://shn.ca>

Our Volunteer Services department introduced a wayfinding app at the Birchmount hospital as a resource for patients to use when volunteers are not available to provide wayfinding. Our plan is to roll out a Corporate Wayfinding App, (which will integrate the patient wayfinding app as well). SHN continues to work to develop a new and consistent wayfinding system for all three hospitals to improve accessibility for patients and visitors. The digital format will improve the patient experience at our hospitals by providing straightforward, intuitive and clear directions when navigating through the hospitals. Volunteer Services worked with facilities to ensure compliance with accessibility standards for images (i.e., pictograms) and with multi-lingual volunteers to ensure a variety of languages were taken into consideration.

Another corporate wayfinding project is also underway, where all our existing signage from

all 3 sites will be standardized and harmonized. We engaged a wayfinding consultant, formed a hospital wayfinding committee, connected with all key staff and reached out to our patient family advisors to put the package together, considering accessibility and perspective from all facets. Part of the wayfinding strategy in consideration of accessibility are:

- we had a clear wall blitz to accentuate the directional signs;
- the use of graphics or pictograms - which is a universal language format, cutting across language barriers - to aid patients as they navigate
- adding in the braille translation for the room signs;
- careful selection and use of appropriate colors that will be picked on by our color-blinded population; and
- use of landmarks to help patients navigate through the halls and quickly associate directions with these. Target installation is on January 16, 2023, aiming completion for the initial phase by end of March 2023. Succeeding phases include completion of internal signage and consideration of a digital app as a future solution.

Patients or visitors who require mobility assistance can call to reserve a volunteer up to 24 hours before their hospital visit through our Call Ahead Volunteer Assistance (CAVA) program. This program includes an option for departments to call ahead for a volunteer to support inpatients with finding the exit when leaving the hospital.

This year SHN's Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Specialist conducted an in-depth review of corporate policies that address discrimination in the workplace. The focus was on three policies: Code of Conduct policy; Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention policy; and the Recruitment policy.

At SHN, people with disabilities also reflect the cultural, linguistic and racial diversity of the Scarborough community. For our patients with disabilities who do not speak English (either fluently or at all), we made enhancement to the Video Remote Interpretation Service (VRI) at all three hospitals to provide interpretation support during virtual sessions to our patients with language barriers. This was particularly important in early 2022, as visitor restrictions were in effect due to the pandemic.

In July 2022, SHN launched our new public website, which follows AODA Communication Standards and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0. Level AA. The website is a main channel for sharing hospital information with the public, including continuing to help the community to access COVID-19 related services.

On October 26 2022, SHN invited Jennifer Hope, EDI Specialist, Ontario Disability Employment Network as a speaker to shed light on the lived experiences of our colleagues

who are living with disabilities. This session allowed us to discuss solutions, reflect on our perceptions of disability and collaborate on how to solve the critical issues impacting workers with disabilities. Most importantly, we want to centre the voices of workers living with disabilities to lead initiatives that will sustainably improve how we recruit, accommodate and retain workers with disabilities.

This year, SHN conducted several education and awareness events focusing on accessibility. During October, the hospital recognized Disability in Employment Awareness Month. On October 27, staff, professional staff, learners and volunteers had the opportunity to attend a virtual session with Canadian Hearing Services (CHS). In order to create an environment that is more accessible to deaf, deafened and hard of hearing patients, and to raise awareness about our interpretation program, we arranged a virtual training session with two guest speakers from CHS. At SHN, we offer both in-person and video remote sign language interpretation through CHS.

Additionally, In January 2023, SHN in partnership with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) will host a virtual training session for all staff and volunteers. The focus of this training will be to work more effectively with patients who are blind or have a vision impairment. We are offering these training sessions in addition to the mandatory training on accessibility, which new hires complete during SHN's employee orientation. All other individuals are required to complete a web-based training module at minimum, every two years.

Lastly, multiple redevelopment plans that are in the design stages, have integrated design considerations around accessibility and compliance with standards. The main part of renovations recently undertaken to improve our physical spaces include new automated doors, rest areas, installation of ceiling lifts, installation of other equipment to support accessibility and, upgraded elevators.