

Norfolk General Hospital Accessibility Plan 2009-2010

Table of Content

Executive Summary

Aim

Objectives

Description of Norfolk General Hospital

Hospital Commitment to Accessibility Planning

Customer Service Standard

Services/Accommodation available at Norfolk General

The Accessibility Working Group

Members

Terms of Reference

Existing Processes for Identifying Barriers

Recent Initiatives and Successes

Barrier Identification Methodology Used

Barriers to be Addressed 2009-2010

Review and monitoring process

Communication of the Plan

Executive Summary

The purpose of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to full participation in the life of the province.

In June 2005, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act received Royal Assent and became law. Even though this new legislation has received royal assent the planning requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001, remains in force until the act is repealed. Hospitals are expected to activate an accessibility plan that considers the following:

- The plans must address a broad range of disability issues
- The plans must examine all aspects of the organization's operations
- Organizations must take into consideration their roles as service providers and employers
- The plan must identify steps to be taken over time to remove identified barriers and prevent new ones
- Organizations consider integrating accessibility planning into their business planning cycles
- Organizations are accountable to their communities, and therefore must make their accessibility plan available to the public

The Board of Directors and Senior Leadership Team is committed to the continual improvement of access to the hospital facilities, policies, practices and services for patients and their families, employees, healthcare practitioners, volunteers and members of the community with disabilities; and to the participation of persons with disabilities in the development and review of the Hospital's accessibility plan.

At the Accessibility Working Group meeting in December 2009, the members reviewed the Customer Service Standard and responded to each of the items to be reported by March 2010 included in the Customer Service Accessibility Report.

There is no funding provided by the provincial government for the implementation of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and this will present a challenge to the hospital in its efforts to remove and prevent barriers to individuals with disabilities.

Accessibility Plan 2009-2010

Aim

This plan describes the measures that Norfolk General Hospital is taking in 2009-2010 to identify, remove and prevent barriers associated with the Customer Service Standards of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act for people with disabilities who live, work in or use the hospital, including patients and their families, employees, healthcare practitioners, volunteers and members of the community.

Objectives of this plan

- Describe the process by which NGH will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities
- List the policies, procedures, practices and services that the hospital will review to identify barriers to people with disabilities
- Describe measures the hospital will take in identifying, removing and preventing barriers to people with disabilities
- Describe how the hospital will make this accessibility plan available to the public

Description of Norfolk General Hospital

Norfolk General Hospital is a progressive full service 121 bed facility which has been operating since 1925. Approximately 4,000 patients are admitted annually while scheduled out-patient visits every year total more than 70,000. The annual operating budget for the Norfolk General Hospital is in excess of \$40 million.

Services include: 24 hours Emergency Care, Intensive Care Unit, Maternal/Newborn, Inpatient Medical Care, Surgical Care, Operating Suites, Complex Continuing Care, Slow Stream Rehabilitation, Ambulatory Care Services and a wide range of diagnostic and treatment services.

Norfolk General Hospital is one of the largest employers in the area, and is also recognized as having one of the highest rates of volunteerism in the Province, providing our Hospital and Nursing Home with over 40,000 hours annually.

Hospital Commitment to Accessibility Planning

Norfolk General Hospital is committed to:

- Provision of quality services to all patients and their families and members of the community with disabilities
- The continual improvement of access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for patients and their families, employees, healthcare practitioners, volunteers and members of the community with disabilities through the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to service
- The participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of the hospital's accessibility plan
- Ensuring hospital policies are consistent with the principles of accessibility

The Customer Service Standard in the Accessibility Plan includes the following:

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing services to people with disabilities.
2. Establish a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to enable them to access and use our services.
3. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
5. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on our behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
6. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing our policies, practices and procedures on the provision of services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
7. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of our premises that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, other measures to provide services to the person with a disability will be used.
8. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing our services in premises open to the public or third parties.
9. Provide notice when facilities, or services used by people with disabilities are temporarily disrupted.
10. Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how our services are provided to people with disabilities and how our organization will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. The information about our feedback process will be readily available to the public.
11. Document in writing that all our policies, practices and procedures which govern accessible customer service meet document requirements set out in the standard.

12. Notify patients that documents required under the customer service standard are available upon request.
13. When giving documents required under the customer service standard to a person with a disability, the information will be provided in a format that takes into account the nature of the disability.

Services/Accommodation Available at Norfolk General

Printed Floor Plans

Printed floor plans are available at the Main Entrance. These floor plans help guide visitors/patients within the organization. Copies are available on request. Each floor level has floor plan graphics.

Accessible Entrances

Our Main entrances are well equipped with curb cuts for easy access. The Hospital has worked with the County to ensure that sidewalk access routes to the Hospital have adequate curb cuts.

The Main entrances are equipped with automatic door openers to Building Code standards.

Accessible Parking

The Hospital has 14 Handicap spaces conveniently located around the building to make for close access to our facility

Accessible Washrooms

The Hospital currently has 12 handicap washrooms available to the public, located in public and patient common areas. This does not include washroom space in patient care areas on the Hospital

Accessible Elevators

Norfolk General Hospital's main elevators are equipped with audio messaging and Braille buttons.

Easy Access Doors

Internally, our main access doors are equipped with automatic openers and/or hold open devices. The internal automatic doors are equipped with button operators, hand wave systems and/or proximity sensors that detect special devices on the resident's chair.

Our external entrances are equipped with automatic openers. There is a sliding door at the top of the ramp at Robinson Street.

Handrails

Main hallways are equipped with handrails

Pocket pagers

We have pocket pagers that vibrate for those with hearing disability

Amplified Telephone

Available at the main switchboard

Teletypewriter Text Phone

Available at Switchboard.

Translation Services

Available upon request in partnership with the Canadian Hearing Society.

Accessibility Working Group**Terms of Reference****Purpose**

To oversee the development, review, implementation and evaluation of the organizations' Accessibility Plan

Functions:

1. The Working Group will have an understanding of the organizations' facilities, by-laws, legislation, policies, programs, practices and services
2. The Working Group will have an understanding of the barriers to access issues for people with disabilities
3. The Working Group will:
 - a) Review recent initiatives and successes in identifying, removing and preventing barriers.
 - b) Identify (list or categorize) barriers that may be addressed in the coming year.
 - c) Set priorities and develop strategies to address barrier removal and prevention.
 - d) Specify how and when progress is to be monitored.
 - e) Write, approve (seek board approval), endorse, submit, publish and communicate the plan.
 - f) Review and monitor the plan.
4. The Working Group will plan for the promotion of knowledge and awareness of accessibility among staff, physicians and volunteers as it relates to improving customer service, programs and clinical practice.

Membership:

Representation from:

- Senior management
- Facilities management
- Information technology/ Communications
- Public Relations
- Rehabilitation Staff
- HR policy staff
- Nursing Services
- Quality and professional practice
- Volunteer Services
- Holmes House

Meeting frequency:

Reporting Relationship: To the Senior Management Team of NGH.

Existing Processes for Identifying Barriers

The Accessibility Working Group continually advances accessibility through barrier identification and reviews the status of initiatives.

In addition to the work of the working group, methods by which accessibility barriers may be identified and addressed on an ongoing basis are integrated into the daily operations at NGH. These include:

- The Quality and Professional Practice programs investigate and address patient and visitor incidents.
- Patient complaints are addressed through the office of the President and CEO and the Vice President of Patient Care.
- Patient feedback related to accessibility
- Occupational Health assessments of all staff are completed on hire and as required
- Ergonomic assessments are available upon request
- Special staff needs are identified and addressed through collaboration between the Director/Manager, Human Resources and Occupational Health Services
- The Patient Safety Team discusses and provides opportunity suggestions for improvement to the Accessibility Working Group.
- Nursing Practice Committee
- Patient Care Portfolio
- Management Forum
- Presentation to staff

Barrier-Identification Methodologies Used in the Development of the 2009-10 Plan

This plan has been developed as a continuation of the work initiated in the previous plans of 2003-07 and 2007-08 and ongoing efforts through each new plan to continually evolve accessibility planning and awareness. The focus for the last quarter of 2009 will be to address the Customer Service Standards (January 2010-March 2010).

The Working Group will provide leadership in the year 2009-2010 to enhance awareness, knowledge and skills of those who provide front line service. This will include educational opportunities for staff, physicians and volunteers as well as information for our customers/patients/families as it relates to disabilities and the impact of accessing services at Norfolk General Hospital

The Patient Safety Team will provide a forum for staff to participate in identifying barriers in providing services across the organization.

Orientation will include education for all staff and volunteers related to providing care to those with various disabilities. Educational information will be provided in a variety of learning styles so that staff has the opportunity to choose a venue appropriate to their learning needs. These opportunities will include access to educational information through the intranet, educational inservices during orientation, handbooks and power point presentations.

Barriers to be addressed in 2009-10

The Accessibility Working Group with the assistance of all out partners both internal and external will continue to identify barriers and develop initiatives. Barriers that will be addressed within this plan (2009-2010) are outlined and organized by type of barrier (attitudinal, communication/informational, architectural/physical, policy/practice, and technological).

Attitudinal

- Provision of training sessions for staff on assisting those with disabilities.

Communicational/Informational

- A tab entitled "Accessibility" will be located on the Home Page of the hospital website which includes the following:
 - > Policy on Customer Service – Providing Services to Persons with Disabilities
 - > Staff Training Program
 - > The Accessibility Plan for the Norfolk General Hospital for 2009/2010.
- Posting of Notices on the premises and hospital website that the documents required by the Customer Service Standard of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005) are available upon request in a format that takes a persons disability into account.
- Provision of a Sign Language Service on an as required basis.

- Floor plan on the hospital website with the identification of the washrooms accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Posting of notices in the event of a planned or unexpected disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities including the reason for the disruption and its anticipated duration and alternate facilities or services available.
- Feedback regarding the way the Norfolk General Hospital provides services to people with disabilities can be made by telephone, fax, email through direct contact or through the hospital website (Telephone 519-426-0130, ext. 1301; Email accessibility@ngh.on.ca; Fax 519-428-2946).

Architectural/Physical

- Enhanced symbol signage throughout the organization including Braille.

Policy/Procedural

- Approval of the Management Policy (Number 1-a-10) entitled “Customer Service – Providing Services for Persons with Disabilities”.

Technological

- Purchase of magnifying glasses for persons with vision problems.
- Purchase a lap top computer with software which transfers text to speech and speech to text.

Review and Monitoring Process

The Accessibility Working Group will review and monitor on a regular basis, the status of the identified objectives for the period of December 2009 to March 2011. Members of the working group will provide presentations as requested by other interested committees.

The plan may be reviewed and adjusted based on the approved available operating and capital funds as well as any additional requirements for standards compliance under AODA 2005.

Communication of the Plan

The approved Accessibility Plan for 2009-2010 will be communicated to staff, physicians, volunteers and the community through a variety of communication channels.
 Electronically: via the internet homepage of Norfolk General Hospital www.ngh.on.ca
 Electronically: via the intranet
 Printed copies will be made available through Public Relations as requested.
 Included in hospital orientation.