

Ongoing planning for accessibility at Trillium

Preparing for change under Ontario's Customer Service Standard – the first of five “standards” under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) -- will be led at Trillium by a new Accessibility Steering Committee. Leah Martuscelli is Trillium's new Accessibility Officer.

As part of its commitment to meet the Customer Service Standard, Trillium's Steering Committee will facilitate an accessible environment through the identification and elimination of barriers as well as the monitoring of our implementation of the five Standards under AODA. In addition, the Accessibility Steering Committee will develop an Annual Accessibility Plan which will be available for download from our public web site. The plan will identify accessibility barriers and assign accountability for their remediation.

In addition, a Community Panel will be assembled by invitation each quarter to provide community stakeholder consultation on issues related to disabilities. The panel will have the opportunity to respond to Trillium's plan and identify additional barriers to influence the elimination of barriers moving forward.

Accessibility word search

This word search will familiarize you with some of the words you will be hearing as you begin to learn more about Ontario's accessibility standards and Trillium's plan to comply.



independence	language	procedures	enable
communication	equality	disability	policies
barriers	standards	support	access
understanding	behaviour	practices	integrity
obstacles	training	dignity	age



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Trillium Health Centre is one of Canada's largest academically affiliated tertiary care hospitals with highly-specialized regional programs in advanced cardiac, vascular, stroke, neurosciences, orthopaedic, and sexual assault/domestic violence services

ACCESSIBILITY @ TRILLIUM

New standard for serving persons with disabilities

Independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities.

These ideals are at the core of Ontario's Customer Service Standard, a regulation which requires that, as of January 1, 2010, public sector organizations put in place policies, practices and procedures to address how they serve persons with disabilities. All employees, physicians and volunteers must be trained to understand and carry out these policies.

“Diversity – which includes accessibility for persons with disabilities

– is a core commitment at Trillium,” says Janet Davidson, O.C., president and CEO. “It is reflected in our attitudes towards our patients and families, through our ‘Philosophy of Care’, and with each other through our ‘Standards for Behaviour’.

“Now, as we implement Ontario's Customer Service Standard, we are creating new policies, new awareness through training and new initiatives that, taken together, further enshrine accessibility as an important reflection of our strategic theme, Quality By Design.”

By the end of 2009, Trillium will launch its training program for employees, physicians and volunteers with the distribution of self-directed learning materials available on iLearn.

The Accessible Customer Services Standard is just the first of five standards that the Ontario government is developing under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The AODA, passed by the provincial government in 2005, aims at making Ontario fully accessible by 2025 through the development of province-wide, enforceable standards on accessibility for people with disabilities.

Trillium volunteer receives Community Action Award

Long-time volunteer and community activist, Bill Alexander, was presented with the Community Action Award, by The Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the honourable David C. Onley on Tuesday, December 1, 2009.

Bill has been an active and longstanding community volunteer, heavily involved in both the City of Toronto and Trillium. He is an acknowledged leader who has raised accessibility issues over the years.

He is a past member of the City's Disability Issues Committee and a current member of the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Disability Steering Committee.

It is also worth noting that Bill has also influenced the business community and Toronto Business Improvement Areas.

Trillium congratulates Bill for being recognized for his outstanding achievement. It is so well deserved!



Above: Bill Alexander accepts the Community Action Award from Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the honorable David C. Onley on December 1 in Toronto.



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What Trillium has to do to comply

Among other requirements, the new Customer Service Standard requires Trillium to:

- Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing services to people with disabilities.
- Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing services in areas open to public or third parties.
- Train staff, physicians, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public.
- Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.

- 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.



Did you know?

About 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability. That's one in seven persons. Over the next 20 years as people grow older, the number will rise to one in five Ontarians.

- Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises we own or operate that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law.
- Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities use to access our services are disrupted.
- Establish a process to provide feedback on how we provide services to people with disabilities and how we respond to feedback and take action on complaints.
- Make the information about our process readily available to the public.

Disability myths dispelled

People without disabilities often don't understand the barriers that people with disabilities face daily or what it's like to live with a disability.

Here are some common myths about people with disabilities:

Myth: People with disabilities are inferior to "normal" people and their lives are very different.

Reality: What is "normal"? We all have different abilities, talents, interests and personalities — you name it! People with disabilities go to school, get married, work, have

families, play, do laundry, go shopping, eat out, travel, volunteer, vote, pay taxes, laugh, cry, plan and dream — just like everyone else.

Myth: We need to feel sorry for people with disabilities.

Reality: That's patronizing. People with disabilities don't need pity. They need access to opportunities.

Myth: It's difficult serving customers with disabilities.

Reality: Customers with disabilities have the same preferences,

perceptions, attitudes, habits, and needs as those without disabilities, and they are looking for the same quality of products and services.

Myth: People with disabilities are brave and courageous.

Reality: Adjusting to a disability requires adapting to a lifestyle, not bravery and courage.

Everyone, regardless of ability, deserves to be treated with the same dignity and respect.

Source: Accessibility Ontario website www.accesson.ca



A long history of accessibility

It started with curb cuts to accommodate wheelchairs and new, closer parking spots for persons with disabilities. It progressed to the design and construction of patient-friendly, wheelchair accessible rooms in the new wing opened earlier this year at Trillium's Mississauga location.

For nearly a decade, Trillium has kept a close eye on serving persons with disabilities by identifying and breaking down attitudinal, communication, technological, policy and physical barriers.

In 2000, Trillium hired an outside consultant, Handidactis, to conduct

an audit of the two hospital properties, Mississauga and West Toronto. The resulting report was a 90-page document summarizing deficiencies and rating them in order of importance.

From 2003 to 2009, Trillium's Accessibility Advisory Committee followed up and followed through on the findings and identified additional barriers, addressing and correcting them.

The redevelopment project led not only to the construction of the barrier-free new inpatient wing but also to barrier-free renovations across the health centre.

More, the annual redevelopment infrastructure budget included an annual allocation for ongoing physical upgrades and retrofits to enable ongoing accessibility.

Just as the newly-launched Customer Service Standard initiative includes training for employees, physicians, and volunteers, Trillium's earlier accessibility efforts included a series of hands-on demonstrations and workshops conducted by representatives of organizations that advocate for persons with disabilities – Coalition for People with Disabilities, the Canadian Hearing Society and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Learning to talk the walk

Language isn't everything, but using the right words when speaking with or about persons with disabilities goes a long way toward generating an environment that is respectful and demonstrates our commitment to accessible health care.

In fact, how to speak with and serve persons with disabilities is at the core of the training materials that will be provided to Trillium employees, physicians and volunteers under the terms of Ontario's Customer Service Standard.

The standard takes effect in public sector organizations January 1, 2010.

The Accessible Customer Services standard is just the first of five standards that the Ontario government is developing under the Accessibility

for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The act was passed in 2005 with the goal of making Ontario accessible by 2025 through the development of province-wide, enforceable standards on accessibility for people with disabilities.

Did you know?

Policies are in place with regards to providing Accessible Customer Service. Search under "Accessible Customer Service at Trillium" and "Use of Service Animals" for more info.

You'll learn, for example, not to talk about "the handicapped" or "the blind" or "epileptics". They are persons with disabilities, persons with vision loss, persons with epilepsy. More, persons with disabilities are not "sufferers".

Those who use a wheelchair are not "confined" to a wheelchair. Those who do not have a disability are not "normal" – they simply are persons without a disability.

Trillium's training materials will also help dispel myths and ill-founded assumptions. For example, you'll learn that not everyone with a communications disability has an intellectual disability. You'll learn that not all service dogs assist persons with vision loss. Some assist people who are deaf or have impaired mobility. Some are therapy animals to cheer and motivate.

Most important, Trillium's Customer Service Standard training will confirm what you likely already know – the best way to help a person with a disability is to ask how to help.