



The Ottawa Hospital | L'Hôpital d'Ottawa

January to December 2019

The Ottawa Hospital Annual Report on Accessibility



The Ottawa Hospital and Affiliates:



The Ottawa Hospital | L'Hôpital d'Ottawa
RESEARCH INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE



UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA
HEART INSTITUTE
INSTITUT DE CARDIOLOGIE
DE L'UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA

An accessible place
for persons with disabilities
to work, volunteer and
experience compassionate care.

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Executive Summary

The Ottawa Hospital (TOH) continues to demonstrate a sustained commitment to accessibility. Through a variety of plans, programs and initiatives across the organization's three main campuses and 16 satellite sites, The Ottawa Hospital is continually improving the experience of patients, families, visitors, volunteers and staff with disabilities.

In line with our Vision to provide each patient with the world-class care, exceptional service and compassion we would want for our loved ones, we seek and act on feedback from patients, volunteers and staff to improve access to exceptional health-care services and promote an overall accessible environment.

Our initiatives range from enhancing the volunteer experience and offering specialized training to staff, to modifying our physical environment and engaging with the community as partners to ensure that together we make a difference.

This report demonstrates TOH's commitment to being an accessible hospital. All of the work identified in this report is either complete or well underway. Behind each initiative is a team of experts who understand what it means to be accessible. This is their commitment. This is their story.

Renée Légaré
Executive Vice President, & Chief Human Resources Officer

News from around the campuses

An accessible experience for volunteers with disabilities

TOH welcomes volunteers with disabilities as a vibrant and important part of the team. Many of our volunteers have undergone a significant life transition and come to TOH to gain confidence, gain experience and practice new skills in a safe, supportive environment. Through volunteering at TOH, many have new insights into how they can make a difference in the world in a new way.

Some of our volunteers with disabilities require accommodation. Accommodations TOH provides include adjusting schedules, duties or practices. We also provide partners and mentors so that volunteers feel supported in their growth. In other words, we are using a variety of techniques to remove potential obstacles and enhance opportunities for growth and success. Through accommodation and support, we help volunteers reach their potential on their own terms – and a fulfilled volunteer contributes to a positive patient experience.

TOH is a teaching hospital. In that context, Volunteer Resources considers it their duty and privilege to work with each volunteer to uncover, coach and develop their abilities. United behind TOH's Vision, volunteers with disabilities can represent some of the best of what humanity has to offer.

Testimonial – Erin (Volunteer)



“I arrived at TOH in 2015. I was in the midst of recovering from a terrible accident. Apparently, my needs were unlike anyone they’ve accommodated before. I needed quiet work spaces, a place where I could dim the lights, a place that could support the new technology

I needed to use. They provided me a support person when I needed to travel the hallways, all in an environment that was supportive and encouraging, where I could move at my pace.”

“Through these years, Erin has produced dynamic results, helped volunteer teams to success, and has allowed us to see beyond his limits to see the volunteer champion that he has become!” said Sherri Daly, Manager, Volunteer Resources.

TOH Nutrition and Food Services – A new, accessible model

TOH's Nutrition and Food Services is taking customer service to the next level for our patients. In 2019-2020, all patient food service staff are receiving specialized customer service training with a specific focus on accommodating patients with disabilities.

Food servers and attendants are enhancing their skills to observe and respond to the needs of patients (e.g. patient struggling to open a container). Staff are learning communication techniques to ask how they can best help and ensure that those needs are being met in a patient-focused way. For example, when entering a patient's room to deliver a food tray, food servers will ask a patient's permission before moving personal items or assistive devices such as a walker or wheelchair. Before leaving the room, the food servers will make sure to put any moved item back where it was.

Employees receive enhanced information about how to provide excellent customer services to patients who may have vision loss and hearing loss. For example, for patients with vision loss, food servers will use the clock method to describe where the food, utensils, cold and warm drinks are located on the tray. They will also tell the patient when they are about to leave the room.

TOH branding with accessibility in mind

During this past year, TOH embarked on developing new branding guidelines that take accessibility into consideration. The new guidelines for The Ottawa Hospital make communications from the hospital more accessible for our patients, their loved ones, and the public. Some of the key changes to improve accessibility include:

- The new corporate font has wider lettering and spacing and has better accessibility in smaller formats (e.g. in social media imagery).
- The new PowerPoint template removes or improves some inaccessible elements from the previous template. This includes adding larger minimum font sizes and removing ALL CAPS headings.
- The colour palette guidelines include darker gradient instructions to ensure more accessible colours for printed and digital materials.
- The guidelines adopt using colour as another means of wayfinding. While TOH will continue to use clear wayfinding principles in terms of accessible words, fonts, and sizes, colour offers another element to help people get to their destination.
- The new branding guidelines, which will be available to all TOH staff, offer more information about accessibility and will guide them as they create new materials for TOH.

AODA compliance report 2019

Every two years, The Ottawa Hospital completes a provincial compliance report to confirm full compliance to the regulations of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005. The hospital adheres to more than 20 regulations in order to provide employment and volunteer opportunities, and accessible health-care services to people with disabilities. We are pleased to announce that, once again, we are in full compliance with the AODA requirements.

Interpretation services – Offering more options for Sign Language

In 2019, TOH added a third vendor to the list of approved vendors, aligning with the corporate desire to make Sign Language interpretation services even more accessible to members of the Deaf community. Patients now have the broadest possible choice of interpreters to meet their needs.

While face-to-face interpreting continues to be the preferred option, TOH also provides immediate sign language interpretation via video while using the Mobile Interpreter (MI) or other electronic devices with the proper application.

Testimonial – Derek B. (Staff)



“I was hired by TOH in December of 2018 and then took on the full-time role as the administrator of our e-Learning system in May of this year. I handle day-to-day trouble shooting for our ELM and DualCode learning management systems, as well as working to design and update new learning modules, and provide technical support to our Department of Education.

I am autistic, have sensory processing challenges, and am nonverbal. I use a speech-generating device to communicate and do most of my work and communication via email. TOH has been amazingly accommodating towards me; my coworkers give me space in conversations, respect my method of communication, and have largely moved phone meetings over to Skype where I can type directly into the chat window. Having my own office allows me to have a safe, private space where I can self-regulate, and my department’s management have been very understanding of this. TOH is the best employer I have ever worked for, and I am overjoyed to be part of the team.”

The University of Ottawa Heart Institute (UOHI)

On April 26, 2019, the new lobby was opened offering an attractive space that is accessible. Final completion of the lobby is expected in 2020.

While the lobby, the first floor (H-1) and second floor (H-2) are still under partial construction, signage has been clearly posted to help visitors navigate to the S-Level (basement), the link to TOH, and to the Cardiac Devices Clinic.

The S-Level was officially re-opened on June 24, 2019. It is the new home of the Cardiac Imaging Centre and the Prevention and Wellness Centre. The fully-accessible, state-of-the-art space is the result of efforts from teams in Planning and Administration, Cardiac Imaging, Prevention and Wellness, Biomedical Engineering, Information Technology and UOHI physicians.

Testimonial – Stephanie B. (Staff)



“My story started seven years ago when I had two strokes that left me paralyzed on my dominant side. After months and years of rehabilitation I finally got to the point where I wanted to give back to the place that saved my life. I contacted the Volunteer Resource Department of The Ottawa Hospital and inquired about becoming a volunteer. Then, in March of 2017, I challenged myself by accepting a permanent

role as the administrative assistant at the Civic Campus with the Volunteer Resource Department.

From day one, TOH has been extremely accommodating when it comes to my health. They are very flexible in my work hours and break times. They allow me to attend my medical appointments and are very compassionate when things might not be going as planned. The Ottawa Hospital has even purchased special software and equipment for my computer so that I can dictate, and it will then transcribe it into text.

When I came out of my coma seven years ago and discovered my deficits, I was sure that my life would never be the same again, but to my surprise, it’s better than I could have ever imagined! I found a position where I can honestly say that I have never been happier, and I love my career. So, thank you to The Ottawa Hospital for seeing beyond my limitations and for putting accessibility first!”

Updates on the TOH five-year accessibility plan

Employment

TOH has partnered with the Employment Accessibility Resource Network (EARN) – a community initiative, led by United Way, to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities. In March, 2019 TOH was featured in [EARN's e-newsletter](#).

TOH's initiatives related to employment of people with disabilities are as follows:

- TOH's Talent Acquisition team participates in monthly job match calls where the objective is to match available jobs with appropriate candidates.
- In partnership with EARN, TOH has participated in a number of career fairs that focus on job seekers with disabilities.
- TOH participated in a panel discussion in August 2019 along with representatives from United Way, Payments Canada, BMO and Accenture to share insights on how recent graduates with disabilities can best articulate their soft skills in an interview and on their résumé.
- Talent Acquisition will continue to encourage staff and potential candidates to request any accommodations throughout the recruitment process.
- TOH continues to promote the development of Work Emergency Response Plan (WERP) for employees with disabilities during Corporate Orientation, Safety Week and fire drills.
- The Emergency Management team manages the WERP template, and the Accessibility Committee reviews its content on a yearly basis. WERPs are managed at a unit level and updated as needed.

Patient care standards

Again this year, staff and volunteers at TOH were provided with training to help them better respond to the accommodation requests of patients with disabilities. In total,

- 1,928 new staff completed the 'Accessibility in a Health Care Environment' online training module
- 339 volunteers received face-to-face training on 'Accessibility at TOH – It Starts with You'
- 39 new leaders completed TOH Management Essentials training
- 55 Food and Nutrition Services employees completed accessibility related training
- A lecture on an accessible health care was provided to 120 medical students at a local university

This year, a new Accessibility Guide was developed specifically for members of The Ottawa Hospital's Board of Governors. This guide focuses on two main areas: information related to the Board of Governors compliance to the AODA requirements as well as their responsibility as individuals. This guide was shared with all existing members and is now part of the orientation package for new members.

Information and communication

The Communications Department at TOH leads and supports a variety of initiatives to promote inclusiveness and improve accessibility throughout the organization.

They do so by:

- Actively seizing opportunities to reflect the diversity of TOH staff and volunteers in promotional materials, as well as internal and external and communications channels.
- Leading plain language workshops for staff.
- Developing resources for staff about how to create accessible Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents.
- Offering clear language and clear design consultations and editing services for documents with high readership.

Built environment

New campus – TOH formed the Campus Engagement Group (CEG), a deliberative body that will help foster informed dialogue and consolidate views throughout the various planning stages for the new campus. In particular, the CEG will consider values-based issues related to the campus' design and recommend “win-win” solutions that will help ensure its successful integration into the community. A member of the Ottawa Disability Coalition is an active member of the CEG, speaking on behalf of 16 local agencies that provide support services to persons with disabilities.

Renovations – TOH continues to be guided by Ontario Building Code, AODA, Canadian Standard Association, Ottawa Accessibility Design Standards and other federal/universal guidelines/standards/codes during renovations. We continue to work with key stakeholders to make sure that the renovations meet the desired outcomes.

Parking and sidewalks – A few projects have been undertaken to improve sidewalk and parking garage accessibility. Those projects are either in progress or in planning stages. New on-street parking meters were purchased and delivered in September. This new accessible equipment was chosen after taking into consideration comments made by Patient Parking Advisors consisting mainly of persons with disabilities. Special emphasis on the height, the lighting and the user interface of the equipment was taken into consideration by the advisors and TOH.

Wayfinding – Improving wayfinding around the hospital continues to be a focus. When identified, outdated signs are replaced. With TOH's new branding guidelines, signs will be further enhanced by departmental colors to help staff, patients, families and visitors reach their desired destination.

Closing Remarks

Our Vision:

To provide each patient with the world-class care, exceptional service and compassion we would want for our loved ones.

The Vision of The Ottawa Hospital goes beyond the boundaries of how we care for patients. It inspires the hospital to be a leader in this community, the region, the country and the world. Our vision energizes the dedicated people who work and volunteer here.

This year, we added the testimonials of TOH staff and volunteers with disabilities. Their personal reflections of their experience at the hospital are great examples of how their expertise and dedication benefit this organization.

Meeting the standards is only part of our work. Raising the bar is part of our ambition and dedication to accessibility. TOH is appreciative of its community partners, patients and their families, staff and volunteers. Their voices are heard.

Serge M. Falardeau

Accessibility and Interpretation Services

Human Resources – Organizational Effectiveness

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