

# **Davenport-Perth Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre's Compliance to the requirements under Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act**

## **Annual Report - March 2017**

### **Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)**

The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation establishes accessibility standards and introduces requirements for Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Built Environment. The Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation applies to all public, private and not-for-profit organizations, with at least one employee. DPNCHC falls under Large Private and not-for-profit organizations with 50+ employees' category.

A Statement of Commitment establishes the vision and the goals for an organization and it is a first step in the development of accessibility policies as it gives an organization purpose, clarity and direction. DPNCHC has written its Statement of Commitment and has made it available to the public by posting it on the agency website, in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page, and it is posted in the lobby of both the 1900 and 1892 DPNCHC sites. We will also provide our Statement of Commitment in an accessible format upon request.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014 and we have met this requirement.

### **Accessibility Policies**

In 2011, DPNCHC developed and wrote our Accessible Customer Service Policy and Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Training Policy, to comply with the Customer Service Standard. Both of these policies were presented to the Policy Review Committee and approved by the Board in December 2011.

In January 2014, we developed and wrote DPNCHC's Employment Policy and Information and Communications Policy, to meet the IASR standard. These policies describe what we do, or what rules and principles we will put in place to support achieving our accessibility goals to meet the requirements of the regulation.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014. DPNCHC's Employment and Information/Communication Policies were presented to the Policy Review Committee and approved by the Board January 2014. Both policies were made public and are posted on DPNCHC's website, in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page.

### **Availability of Policies**

Public sector organizations, as well as private and not-for-profit organizations with 50 or more employees must make their accessibility policies available to the public.

- DPNCHC has posted signs about our accessibility policies at both 1900 and 1892 sites, so that the public is aware the information is available.
- We must also provide a copy of our policies to any person who requests one. As well, the copy must be provided in an accessible format, if requested.
- Policies are living documents and should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect current practices of the organization. It is DPNCHC's standard practice to review and update policies every 4 years, unless a major change/update is implemented. July 1, 2016, the Ontario Government announced significant changes to the Customer Service standard. To this effect our policy was updated to include delivery of training on Customer Service to all staff, volunteers and

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Board Members, regardless of their interaction with the public and an expanded list of professionals are now authorized to provide documents indicating the need for a service animal.

- DPNCHC provides clients with the opportunity to provide feedback on the services provided. Information about the feedback process is made available by notice on the agency's website, located on the "About" menu, on the "Accessibility" page; "Customer Feedback Notice".

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014 and we have met this requirement.

## **Accessibility Plan**

An accessibility plan describes the actions an organization will take to prevent and remove barriers. The plan creates a road map to increase accessibility and puts into action the organization's commitment to accessibility and its accessibility policies. To meet this requirement DPNCHC must do the following:

- Establish, implement, maintain and document a multi-year accessibility plan, which outlines the organization's strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation.
- Post the plan on our website, and upon request, provide the plan in an accessible format.
- Review and update the accessibility plan at least once every five years.
- Establish, review and update our accessibility plans in consultation with persons with disabilities.
- Prepare an annual status report on the progress of measures taken to meet the requirement.
- Post this status report on our website, and provide the report in an accessible format upon request.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014 and DPNCHC's Accessibility Plan and Annual Status Report are both posted on the DPNCHC website in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page. The Annual Status Report was posted March 31, 2016 and will be updated by March 31, 2017.

## **Training**

The intent of this requirement is that all organizations train employees, volunteers, and those who participate in developing the organization's policies and all others who provide goods or services on behalf of the organization about the requirements in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, as well as the Ontario Human Rights Code as it relates to people with disabilities.

DPNCHC is continuously meeting this requirement. Since February 2014, we have been using HRdownloads Training Systems to train staff on the Customer Service Standard, Employment and Information/Communications Standards and Ontario Human Rights Code (AODA edition). Records of training for all staff are kept in the HR Coordinator's office. At same time, our accessibility policies were made available via internal memos and staff were asked to read them. Newly hired staff meet with the HR Coordinator before or within the first days at work for an orientation to DPNCHC's accessibility policies and they must sign a waiver that they have read these policies. The HR

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Coordinator sets up new staff for training on the AODA Standards by registering them with HRdownloads.

Since they participate in developing DPNCHC's policies, Board members on the policy committee, were asked if they have already had AODA training. The few that had not been trained, were set up with HRdownloads and completed the training on Accessible Customer Service, Employment and Information/Communication Standards and Ontario Human Rights Code (AODA edition). Committee members will review any changes to AODA policies at the beginning of the Board year and new members to the committee will receive the full on-line orientation.

Volunteers are trained on the Customer Service and Information/Communications Standard. The Volunteer Coordinator will train the volunteer on the 2 standards when meeting individually to complete the volunteer interview process, as this volunteer will be going through the process of becoming a volunteer at DPNCHC.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2015 and we have met and are continuously meeting this requirement.

The Information and Communications Standard outlines requirements for organizations to create, provide and receive information and communications in ways that are accessible for people with disabilities. This helps people with disabilities access sources of information and communications that many of us rely on every day.

### **Accessible Websites and Web Content**

The intent of this requirement is that the Government of Ontario, the Legislative Assembly, designated public sector organizations, as well as private and not-for-profit organizations with more than 50 employees make their websites accessible to people with disabilities by conforming to international standards for website accessibility.

- DPNCHC's website went through a major overhaul in May 2014 to ensure compliance with AODA regulations. Our website and web content conforms to the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, at Level A.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2014 and we have met this requirement. Our next level of compliance is to be at Level AA by January 1, 2021, and we are working towards meeting this requirement.

### **Feedback**

Every obligated organization that has processes for receiving and responding to feedback shall ensure that the processes are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communications supports, upon request. DPNCHC has provided the public with a feedback method in the agency's website, located in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page; "Customer Feedback Notice".

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2015 and we have met this requirement.

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### **Accessible Formats and Communication Supports**

The intent of this requirement is that all organizations must provide information and communicate in an accessible manner about their goods, services or facilities to people with disabilities, on request. The information must be provided in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular price charged to others.

The deadline to meet this requirement is January 1, 2016 and we have substantially set up processes to meet this requirement. Adobe Acrobat Pro software has been purchased, so that we are able to create accessible pdf documents for those who request it. In the process of making accessible documents available to the public, a disclosure is posted on DPNCHC's website, in the "About" menu on the "Accessibility" page, "Customer Feedback Notice", "Notice of Documentation Availability", where it discloses who the contact person is and their contact information.

A general statement is included in flyers, brochures, and registration forms that invites individuals to let us know about their assistance or accommodation needs when registering for a program or event.

### **Emergency Procedures, Plans or Public Safety Information**

The intent of this requirement is that publicly available emergency and public safety information is provided in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request.

Organizations are not required to develop or create new emergency or public safety information.

Further, organizations are not required to convert this information into accessible formats or provide communication supports if they do not share the information publicly. Some organizations have confidential internal plans, such as those for security lockdowns that are not shared publicly. As DPNCHC does not have emergency and public safety information available to the public, we do not have to develop or create this information. However, organizations may have requirements under the Accessible Employment Standard to provide individualized emergency information to its employees.

The Human Resources Department sent out an anonymous survey to all staff in October 2013. The intent of this survey was to collect information on employees, to help us identify barriers that could arise in an emergency situation and provide suggestions on how to overcome them. Only one respondent self-identified as having a disability but chose not to fill out the Employee Emergency Information Worksheet.

The HR Coordinator meets with every newly hired staff for a "New Staff Hire Orientation"; at that time newly hired staff is made aware of DPNCHC's accessibility policies and are asked if they self-identify as having a disability and require accommodation. DPNCHC will work with anyone requesting an accommodation to create an Individual Accommodation Plan. A written section in the Staff Emergency Information Sheet form addresses this disclosure.

The deadline to meet this requirement was January 1, 2012 and we have met this requirement.

### **Employment Standard**

This standard requires employers to provide for accessibility across all stages of the employment life cycle. By pro-actively removing barriers across the employment life cycle, employers can help to create workplaces that are accessible and which allow employees to reach their full potential. This standard applies to paid employees and includes, but is not limited to, full-time, part-time, and

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seasonal employment. As good business practice, employers may apply the Standard to volunteers and other forms of unpaid work. The Employment Standard is a framework for integrating accessibility into regular workplace processes.

### **Requirements under the Employment Standard**

The requirements covered in this section are:

- Recruitment, assessment and selection
- Accessible formats and communication supports for employees
- Workplace emergency response information
- Documented individual accommodation plans
- Return to work processes
- Performance management
- Career development and advancement
- Redeployment

Currently we advertise in all job postings that "DPNCHC encourages applications from candidates whose background is diverse in terms of culture, race, language, religion, class, gender/sexual orientation. Reasonable accommodation or any other special needs will be provided in all parts of the hiring process. If you require any accommodation, please advise Human Resources".

As well, job offer letters include the statement "DPNCHC has an accommodation process in place and provides accommodation for employees with disabilities. If you require accommodation because of a disability or a medical need, please contact HR, so that arrangements can be made for the appropriate accommodations to be in place before you begin your employment" and in the process of conducting every "New Staff Hire Orientation", the HR Coordinator informs the newly hired employee that accommodation in the workplace will be provided upon request.

The deadline to meet this requirement is January 1, 2016 and we have met the requirement.

### **Transportation Standard**

The requirements in the Transportation Standard will help transportation providers as well as municipalities, universities, colleges, hospitals and school boards make their services and vehicles accessible to people with disabilities.

This standard does not apply to DPNCHC.

### **The Built Environment Standard**

The Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment focus on removing barriers in two areas:

- buildings
- public spaces

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In March 2014, DPNCHC was able to enhance our Main front doors, and a number of washrooms.

These improvements were made to:

- The Centre's front doors were replaced to allow easier entry by large size scooters, wheelchairs and children's strollers.
- The men's and women's public washrooms on the main floor were fitted with accessible height sink counters and accessible handle style faucets and angled mirrors.
- Perth Hall bathroom door was fitted with a push button feature, a Braille Washroom sign and inside with a new angled mirror.
- New push button door openers were installed in Perth Hall door entrance, and the main floor men's public washroom.
- New push button door openers were installed in the Manse front door entrance and Manse washroom on the first floor.
- A large display cabinet was removed from the floor of Main lobby to allow easier access by clients/participants in wheelchairs approaching the Main reception counter.

In February 2017, a pharmacy was built in the main floor of the Health Centre, located at 1892 Davenport Rd. Taking the Built Environment Standard into account, a lower accessible counter is part of the design, as well as accessible seating area for clients in wheelchairs, scooters, etc.

The deadline to meet this requirement is January 1, 2016 and we have met this requirement. No upgrades were required for 2015-16.

In addition to the legislated requirements and to further improve accessibility in our community, a new activity in the 2016 Operational Plan was developed. DPNCHC partnered with the Stop Gap Foundation to create the Davenport Community Ramp Project. The DPNCHC Community Advisory Group invited community members to identify businesses and services in the neighborhood that needed accessible ramps. The project was led by a volunteer team who built and painted custom front-step ramps that made our community more accessible for people with disabilities, wheelchairs, and walkers, as well as those with children's strollers. By the end of the project, our 40 volunteers partnered with local shops and services agencies to install 18 new ramps, creating 18 more spaces where all members of our community can feel welcomed and supported.