

2023-2025

Multi-Year Accessibility Plan



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

Pembroke Regional Hospital Tower Locations



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Pembroke Regional Hospital Commitment to Accessibility

Pembroke Regional Hospital (PRH) is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities in a timely manner that respects their dignity and independence. We embrace a broad definition of disability which includes those that may not be visible or apparent. PRH strives to provide patients, caregivers, staff, physicians, volunteers, and members of the community with barrier-free access to its facilities, policies, programs, practices, and services. PRH endeavors to foster attitudes and behaviours that eliminate barriers for persons with disabilities.

About Pembroke Regional Hospital's Accessibility Plan

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005*, formerly Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), requires public organizations to prepare annual and multi-year plans to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.

In addition, the [Ontario Regulation 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards \(IASR\)](#) is a grouping of five standards that the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) developed.

The IASR includes five standards in the areas of:

- Information and Communication
- Employment
- Transportation
- Design of Public Spaces
- Customer Service

The AODA complements, but does not supersede, the requirements for accessibility and accommodation described under the **Ontario Human Rights Code**.

To fulfill our responsibilities for the AODA and IASR, we have prepared a multi-year accessibility plan that covers a three-year period and outlines our strategy to identify, prevent, and remove accessibility barriers and meet our requirements. The PRH Accessibility Planning Committee is responsible for overseeing the development of this plan in collaboration with multiple internal and external partners, including people with disabilities, from the identification to the removal and prevention of barriers within PRH.

We are committed to providing equitable treatment to people with disabilities with respect to the use and benefit of services, programs, goods, and facilities. We are committed to providing *the right services, in the right place and at the right time*.

We welcome your support and feedback as we strive to make PRH a leader in providing accessible healthcare. Please contact us by email accessibility@prh.email or by phone (613) 732-2811 ext. 6172 and our team will be pleased to hear from you.

The Accessibility Planning Committee, Pembroke Regional Hospital

Summary of Objectives

The following is a summary of the objectives as recommended by the Accessibility Planning Committee and endorsed by the appropriate departments at PRH.

The areas of focus are as follows:

1. **Information and Communication** focusing on ensuring our internal and external web content conforms to accessibility guidelines, creating a more consistent process to gather real-time feedback for accessibility improvements.
2. **Employment** focusing on removing barriers to recruitment and employment through building community partnerships, focused recruitment, and providing accommodation to individuals as needed.
3. **Customer Service Training** focusing on annual accessibility training for customer service excellence for all new / existing employees (including student learners, physician, volunteers). (This also includes partnering with our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee to offer annual learning sessions. Annual review of all accessibility related policies and procedures.)
4. **Design of Public Spaces** taking into consideration the multiple construction projects that are currently in progress at PRH, and targeted to begin in the next two years, it is a priority to ensure accessibility is considered in the overall project design, washroom facilities, parking, sidewalk upgrades, and way finding.

Each objective has specific project target(s), timeline(s) and identification of the departments responsible. To view the plan in its entirety, see Appendix A.

About Pembroke Regional Hospital

Located approximately 150 kilometers north-west of Ottawa, the Pembroke Regional Hospital delivers a broad range of acute, post-acute, outpatient and diagnostic services to a mixed urban and rural population of approximately 55,000 residents in the City of Pembroke, the Town of Petawawa, and surrounding municipalities.

With the dedicated support of approximately 900 staff members, and an engaged physician community, the Pembroke Regional Hospital provides acute services in emergency and intensive care, medical/surgical care, acute mental health, orthopaedics, and obstetrics. The Hospital has a full range of rehabilitation services, is the designated District Stroke Centre for our region, and provides community-based mental health services throughout Renfrew County. Chemotherapy, dialysis, and a variety of ambulatory care clinics are offered on an outpatient basis through partnerships with regional centres and nearby specialists. The Hospital offers a full range of diagnostic services including computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), nuclear medicine and mammography. Bringing quality care closer to home is one of our guiding principles and this has resulted in significant growth in the breadth and scope of services that we are able to deliver. Today, the services and technology we have are state-of-the-art.

In addition, we continue to experience growth as a teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Ottawa's Faculty of Medicine, while also providing education experience for a wide range of students in various health disciplines on an ongoing basis.

Mission:

We are a regional community hospital committed to delivering a wide range of quality health services. Following Catholic tradition, we will meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of all.

Vision:

Delivering the safest and highest quality of care to every person, every encounter, every day.

Values:

- Compassion and Caring
- Excellence and Innovation
- Social and Fiscal Responsibility
- Sacredness of Life
- Mutual Respect
- Community Spirit

Why Accessible Health Care is Important:

Persons with disabilities represent a diverse and significant portion of the Canadian population. In 2017, one in five people in Canada aged 15 years and over, or about 6.2 million people, had at least one disability (Statistics Canada, 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability). There are different types of disabilities, and they can range from mild to very severe. In Ontario, approximately 2.6 million people have a disability. This means roughly one in four Ontarians live with a disability and face various types of accessibility challenges in their everyday life. Also, as the aging population is expected to grow over the next 25 years, it is projected that the number of people living with a disability is expected to grow in our province. This is why it is more important than ever to remove all barriers that impede accessibility for all (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Annual Report 2019).

PRH is using the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA 2005) to guide our improvement work to meet the accessibility regulation.

Communication, Review and Monitoring of the Plan

The Accessibility Planning Committee is responsible to ensure:

- The multi-year accessibility plan is posted on the external PRH website;
- The plan can be provided in an accessible format upon request;
- An annual status report is prepared on the implementation of the plan;
- The plan is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

Feedback and Barrier Identification Approach

The hospital has an accessibility email accessibility@prh.email and feedback form on our main website <https://www.pemreghos.org/>. All feedback is welcome, accessibility issues and concerns are brought forward to the Accessibility Planning Committee for follow-up. There are many other ways to share feedback, including by phone, email, or by a scheduled appointment with our Manager of Quality and Risk Management, if appropriate. Interpretation services are booked as needed. The concerns are then directed to the appropriate person and/or department to address the issue. Regular accessibility audits through different spaces within the hospital, with a team of patient advisors and Accessibility Committee members, are another way to capture areas for improvement. The feedback from these activities is then used for planning and prioritizing accessibility projects.

In addition, the PRH Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee ensures the voices of persons with disabilities are brought to all EDI discussions. This committee also helps ensure that all accessibility planning considers the realities and experiences of persons with disabilities from a diverse range of backgrounds, including economic status, gender identity, literacy and language, and race, to name a few. This helps guide the work of the Accessibility Committee.

The Accessibility Committee meets a minimum of two times per year and all accessibility concerns are raised in this forum.

New Projects and Design of Public Spaces

Planning for new construction or redevelopment of existing spaces considers the requirements as outlined in the Design of Public Spaces Standards (*O.Reg.191/11*). PRH is embarking on new and exciting projects including, but not limited to the planning and the implementation of:

- Expanding the existing Chemotherapy Clinic to include four additional treatment spaces
- Development of Schedule 1 Beds for our Acute Mental Health (AMH) Program
- Medication Systems Transformation – Installation of our Automated Dispensing Units (ADU) in Clinical Areas
- Surgical Program Redevelopment
- Tower C Ground Floor Redevelopment

APPENDIX A:

Pembroke Regional Hospital Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2023-2025)

Information and Communication

The Information and Communications Standards of the AODA list rules for organizations to create, provide, and receive information and communications that people with disabilities can access. The standards give all people an equal chance to learn and be active in their communities.

Information and Communication	Description	Strategy (ies)	Timeline
Accessible Websites and Web Content	To ensure the PRH website conforms to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0	The Public Affairs and Communications Coordinator will review the website annually and ensure compliance based on most recent Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.	Annual Review Last Review: February 2023
Feedback	To improve our process to capture feedback from multiple stakeholders regarding accessibility issues and areas for improvement.	New Email Feedback Form	Completed in 2023 Feedback Form Designed in 2023 and ready to implement
Clear Language	Improve readability and usefulness of content created by the hospital for a public audience of varying abilities.	Provide guidance and best practices to staff and departments when drafting content for the website or other public channels.	2024 - 2025

Information and Communication	Description	Strategy (ies)	Timeline
		<p>Arrange Learning Session for Management Team for creating public information.</p> <p>Create a Guidance Document</p>	
Digital Experience	To ensure major upcoming projects prioritize AODA compliance.	<p>Addition of IT representative to membership for the Accessibility Planning Committee.</p> <p>Monthly IT Advisory Committee attended by Accessibility Planning Committee Chair.</p>	2023 - Ongoing
Strategic Plan	Ensure language and all pieces in the strategic plan addresses and considers accessibility both internally and externally.	Strategic Planning Retreat	November 2023

Employment

PRH is committed to creating an inclusive, welcoming, and barrier-free work environment that promotes a diverse workforce. We work hard to attract and retain workers with disabilities through an active recruitment process. The PRH HR team looks for ways to connect with and attract candidates and create opportunities to promote the benefits of working at the hospital.

The HR Team ensures that hiring processes eliminate any barriers to people with disabilities, such as inaccessible locations for interviews, providing additional time for interviews, or providing the interview questions in written format.

In collaboration with clinical leadership, we ensure that the hospital's Emergency Management Plan and the local unit emergency plans consider the unique needs of team members with disabilities. Where applicable, we ensure that any employee with a disability has their own up-to-date personal emergency plan in place.

Key deliverables:

- Collaborate with external partners;
- Update external postings to include statements of inclusivity aligned with the EDI strategy;
- Educate the team of recruiters to promote the benefits of hiring persons with a disability;
- Monitor requests for accommodation during the recruitment process to ensure we are offering successful solutions to remove barriers to employment;
- Audit the Corporate Emergency Management Plan and Personal Emergency Plans to ensure currency;
- Improve the Corporate Code Green Plan to ensure that all evacuation plans consider persons with disabilities.

Employment	Description	Strategy(ies)	Timeline
Job Postings	Update job postings to include statements of inclusivity aligned with the EDI strategy.	HR Department will update job postings.	2023 – Ongoing
Recruitment Process	Monitor requests for accommodations during the recruitment process to ensure we are offering successful solutions to remove barriers to employment.	HR Department will monitor request for accommodations and work with the hiring Manager to implement solutions.	2023 – Ongoing

Customer Service

With a workforce of approximately 900 employees, Pembroke Regional Hospital ensures that it is achieving regulatory compliance with the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005**, (with everyone who interacts on its behalf with the public participating in **mandatory** training in accessible customer service). An online training course is available to all physicians, staff, student learners, patient experience advisors and volunteers.

Customer Service	Description	Strategy(ies)	Timeline
Ensure that training is provided on the requirements of IASR accessibility standards and Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities to: All physicians, staff, student learners, patient experience advisors and volunteers	Online AODA training is completed for all new hires and annually for existing physicians, staff, volunteers and patient advisors	Annual update and refresh of all accessibility education and training offered at the hospital. Present an audit of eLearning completion twice yearly to committee.	2023 – Ongoing
Partner with our EDI Committee to ensure accessibility training and EDI training are aligned	Leadership / Other Training	Twice yearly meetings will be held between Chairs of the EDI and the Accessibility committees to ensure alignment.	2023 - Ongoing
Corporate Orientation for all New Employees, Physicians & Volunteers	Accessibility awareness at Corporate Orientation	Work with the leads of Corporate Orientation to ensure accessibility awareness is included.	2024 - 2025
Ensure Updated Policy & Procedures	Annual review of our existing policies and make updates as required	Update policies that are due for revision through our electronic Policy & Procedure System.	2023 – Ongoing

Design of Public Spaces

Accessible public spaces make it easier for people with disabilities to move through and use the environment. The requirements of the standard that are within scope for consideration in our multi-year plan include:

- Exterior paths of travel (sidewalks or walkways) and their associated elements, such as ramps, stairs, curb ramps, rest areas, and accessible pedestrian signals
- Accessible off-street and on-street parking spaces
- Obtaining services (service counters, fixed queuing guides, and waiting areas)
- Maintenance planning
- Building new public spaces
- Making planned significant alterations to existing public spaces

Design of Public Spaces	Description	Strategy(ies)	Timeline
	Rehabilitation Program Outdoor Space Redesign	Install hand railings at two areas identified on deck. Install gate at exit ramp from deck towards parking lot.	2024 2024
	Sidewalk / Walkway on inclined surface between Tower A and Tower D Parking Lot	Purchase two additional benches to place as resting spots along walkway. Signage to indicate alternate route to access Tower D for anyone with limited mobility. Scripting for appointment booking.	2024

Design of Public Spaces	Description	Strategy(ies)	Timeline
	Tower D and ED Accessible Parking and Signage	Review the number of accessible parking spots designated in Tower D and ED parking lots; ensure the proper signage.	2024 - 2025
	Accessible Washrooms	Replace handles. Improve way finding signage.	2023 - 2025
	Horse and Buggy Designated Parking	Installation of hitching post and signage.	2024 - 2025

Appendix B:

Accessibility Planning Committee Membership
Administrative Assistant, Clinical Administration
Coordinator of Procurement and Project Management
Coordinator of Public Affairs and Communications
Director of Information Technology (IT)
Director of Mental Health Services
Director of Plant Services
Director of Rehabilitation, Medical, Ambulatory Programs and Environmental Services
Director of Surgical, Operating Room and LDRP
Manager of Acute Mental Health (AMH) and Environmental Services
Manager of Emergency Department (ED)
Manager of Human Resources
Manager of Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) and Policy & Procedures
Manager of Labour and Delivery Program (LDRP) and Clinical Education
Manager of Materials Management
Manager of Quality and Risk Management
Occupational Therapist
Patient / Family Experience Advisor
Physiotherapist
Vice President Clinical & Support Services / Chief Nursing Executive
Vice President Clinical & Support Services / Partnerships & Integration
Ad Hoc Members: Members of the Hospital and broader community and partners who can represent the interests of persons with disabilities on an as needed and/or consultative basis.

To contact the committee about this plan or to provide PRH accessibility feedback, please e-mail: accessibility@prh.email.