



*Enhancing Lives*

# **North York Seniors Centre**

## **Accessibility Plan**

**2018 - 2023**

**Web Version 1.1**

## Executive Summary

The purpose of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (ODA) is to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to facilitate their full participation in the life of the Province. To this end, the ODA requires each organization to prepare an Annual Accessibility Plan; to consult with persons with disabilities in the preparation of this Plan; and to make the Plan public.

The Accessibility Plan also reflects North York Seniors Centre (NYSC) commitment to implement and monitor compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA). In particular, the Accessibility Plan takes into account the Customer Service Regulation, as well as the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, both of which are now law.

This document is NYSC's Annual Accessibility Plan for the years April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2023. The Plan describes:

1. the measures that NYSC has taken in the past, and
2. the process that NYSC will take during the upcoming years to identify, remove and prevent barriers for our stakeholders who live, work in or use the facilities and services of NYSC.

## 2.0 Definitions

NYSC uses the following definitions within this document:

“**Barrier**” means:

- Anything that prevents a person from fully participating in all aspects of society. In so doing NYSC looks at (revised April 2018):
- *architectural barriers*, i.e. width of doors, ramps, steps, narrow doorways, multilevel buildings without elevators, flooring, parking lots, building access
- *environmental barriers*, i.e. poor signage, low lighting, a noisy environment, scents and smells, heating and cooling, weather
- *attitudinal barriers*, i.e. assumptions based on age, ethnic background, health or socioeconomic status, gender, religion
- *financial barriers*, i.e. client's inability to pay for service, agency fees, lack of community resources, payment options, plans
- *employment barriers*, i.e. care attendants who speak different language than client, shortages in critical areas of employment, working conditions
- *communication barriers*, i.e. lack of translation resources, insufficient training on diversity issues, lack of assistive technology to augment communication, signage navigation, information technology, use of universal symbols
- *transportation barriers*, i.e. limited or no accessible transportation to get to services, high numbers of clients competing for limited spaces, limited vehicles, price of gasoline

- *community integration barriers*, i.e. lack of opportunities to engage with other community organizations, waitlists held by other organizations

**“Accommodation”** means:

- Acknowledgment that each person has unique needs
- The accommodation needs to be reasonable –meaning that providing an accommodation will not create a barrier for another, or cause financial hardship
- An accommodation may include providing an adaptive device or providing additional supports so that an individual may participate in programs, receive services or as part of their employment or volunteer experience
- Accommodations should be reviewed on a regular basis

Accommodations *do not* include adjustments to work hours, purchasing of routine supplies or issues related to employee engagement.

**“Disability”** means: (taken from Ontario Human Rights Code)

- any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,
- a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,
- a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,
- a mental disorder, or
- an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997; (“handicap”) Source: Ontario Human Rights Code

**“Stakeholders”** means:

- persons with disabilities
- clients, members, staff, volunteers, family members and community stakeholders without “defined” disabilities but who require accommodations to access our services and programs

### 3.0 Objectives

This plan:

- Aims to identify the mechanisms NYSC has in place to categorize, remove and prevent barriers for our stakeholders who live, work or use our facilities and access our programs and services
- Describes the measures that NYSC will take in the coming years to identify remove and prevent barriers for our stakeholders

## 4.0 Description of North York Seniors Centre

NYSC is a multi-site community support service agency who receives funding from the Central Local Health Integrated Network (CLHIN), United Way, Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility, and City of Toronto, grants, donations and user fees. NYSC offers a wide range of services and programs.

NYSC operates its services and programs in two sites and within three social housing buildings:

- *Hendon Site* – The main site is located at 21 Hendon Ave, located near the intersection of Finch Ave. and Yonge St. It houses an Active Living Centre (ALC) offering a variety of activities and services that encourage seniors to be active; live well and stay socially connected. Our Human Resource Department, Financial, Administration and Volunteer Services are also located at this site.
- *Sheppard Site* – Located at 80 Sheppard Ave West, houses our Community Support Services (CSS), which includes the oversight of homemaking, personal care, respite, case coordination, transportation, friendly visiting and our adult day programs.
- *Supportive Housing Sites* – located at 5430 Yonge St., 35 Park Home Ave. and 1 Hesperus Rd NYSC provides supportive housing services i.e. homemaking, personal care, emergency response services and medication management on a 24/7 basis, and an adult day program.

## 5.0 NYSC Accessibility Planning Committee

NYSC is committed to fulfilling the objectives of the ODA and AODA. To achieve this, an AODA Sub-Committee, was established in 2010 to oversee and coordinate accessibility training, policies and procedures and implementation within our organization in compliance with the “customer service standard” and “integrated accessibility standards”.

Since 2012, NYSC has had an Accessibility Committee that meets quarterly to review department plans, status reports and requests for accommodation.

The Committee also takes a proactive approach and looks ahead to see if changes to legislation and standards are planned for the coming year. If training is required, the Committee will source and/or review relevant training materials and plan for roll out to staff and volunteers.

As well, the senior leadership team has established a method of assessing for stakeholder accessibility of needs on a program or divisional basis, and will develop a template for each division or department to record any new or on-going barriers and well a record of accommodation.

## 6.0 Responsibilities and Deliverables

- To develop and implement an Accessibility Plan that ensures compliance with the Accessibility Standards, as they become law
- To develop a process for ongoing monitoring of compliance with the overall AODA

- To promote the spirit of the legislation as it pertains to the broader concept of diversity within the organization
- To report to the Executive Director on a quarterly basis

As well, the Senior Leadership Team will:

- Monitor the preparation of an annual **Barrier Plan** (See Appendix A) that addresses the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to all stakeholders who use our programs and services; and meets the requirements of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005
- Ensure that stakeholders are consulted in the preparation of NYSC accessibility plans;
- Monitor on an ongoing basis the implementation of accessibility improvement initiatives and to prepare an annual **Barrier Status Report**
- Monitor the documentation of all **Requests for Reasonable Accommodation** (See Appendix B) and to assess and review annually to identify and determine inclusion in future accessibility planning as appropriate
- Ensure that our website has our Accessibility Policy and a feedback form

## 7.0 Accessibility Committee

At minimum one (1) staff team member from each site/program will participate on the Accessibility Committee as assigned by department heads. Senior Leadership Team includes Executive Director, Directors, and Managers.

The Accessibility Committee has a Terms of Reference, which is reviewed on an annual basis.

## 8.0 Methodologies of Identifying Barriers

- Working closely with all departments to ensure they understand their obligations under the legislation, and reviewing policies, procedures and practices from the perspective of identifying barriers;
- Working closely with stakeholders in focus groups, client and member counsels and referral sources to ensure we include everyone's perspective. To include accessibility questions in exit interviews, client / staff / volunteer experience surveys and to analyze the complaints process data for strategic ways of gathering information on accessibility issues.
- Training staff, volunteers and 3<sup>rd</sup> party contractors to ensure they understand their obligations to ensure barriers are removed for people with disabilities, and bringing issues forward in situations where they are unable to take action themselves;
- Developing a comprehensive process for feedback, and reviewing feedback received with a view to making any necessary improvements that will improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

## 9.0 Communication of the Plan

NYSC's Accessibility Plan is available on the website and hard copies will be available from the Accessibility Team upon request. As required, the Plan can be made available in alternative formats, such as large print, or electronic text.

## 10.0 Summary of Previously Identified Barriers by Division or Department

Division/Dept.	Barrier	Issue	Status
Organization	Communication	-Ensure website, signage meets required standards	-Enhance. Will update as funding and need arises
	Attitudinal	-Ensure staff has adequate training on customer service and specific health concerns of clients	-Enhance. This is an on-going priority
In-Home/Assisted Living	Architectural	-Not enough parking spots at buildings for staff	-Accept
	Financial	-Some clients are not able to pay for service -Demand exceeds ability to provide service	-Continue to advocate for additional funding, based on need
	Employment	-Not enough workers to provide service	-Continue to address this in our Human Resources Hiring Strategy
	Communication	-Clients need workers who speak multiple languages  -Team members do not respond to requests for information in a timely manner	-Continue to address this in our Human Resources Hiring Strategy  -Consider adding this into Code of Conduct
	Attitudinal	-Workers need to be aware of cultural practices	-Provide staff with training on cultural sensitivity
Active Living Centre	Financial	-Negotiated a reduced	-Consider parking a

Division/Dept.	Barrier	Issue	Status
		<p>rate at nearby parking lot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Access to van for errands</li> <li>-Clients are not able to participate in programs due to cost</li> </ul>	<p>vehicle at location for use when needed</p> <p>-Enhance. More subsidies are made available. Consider developing more programs at a cheap cost.</p>
Active Living Centre	Architecture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Washrooms on both levels have been renovated and are now more accessible</li> <li>-Elevator needs upgrading</li> </ul>	<p>-Completed</p> <p>-Accept. This requires a large investment of capital funds</p>
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-PAR-Q form to be translated into other languages to allow for more participants to complete</li> <li>-Translate more signs, program information and materials into other languages</li> </ul>	<p>-Completed</p> <p>-Complete. More to be added as needed</p>
	Attitudinal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Ensure appropriate inclusion of clients, staff and volunteers in relevant conversations</li> </ul>	<p>-Enhance. “Nothing to me, without me”</p>
	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Need to ensure that staff speak multiple languages to facilitate better communication with clients</li> </ul>	<p>-Part of our HR strategy and volunteer recruitment</p>
Transportation	Community Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Increased number of vehicles to enable more rides</li> <li>-Drivers are more easily identified with</li> </ul>	<p>-Completed</p>

Division/Dept.	Barrier	Issue	Status
		uniforms	
	Attitudinal	-Staff provided with training on specific health conditions	-Completed
Senior Care	Architectural	-removed one parking spot to increase safety -Second floor received new paint and carpet	-Completed
Adult Day Program	Community Integration	-Now offering kosher and vegetarian meals	-Completed
	Environmental	-Equalized ventilation system to ensure adequate airflow -New flooring in kitchen -Staff have lockers to store personal belongings -Carpet removed for safety and allergens	-Completed
	Architectural	-New kitchen and appliances in Program One	-Completed
	Attitudinal	-Staff provided with training on specific health conditions	-Completed

## 11.0 Future Plan

A number of newly identified and on-going barriers need to be addressed. In April 2018, the Accessibility Committee held a joint planning session with members of the Joint Health and Safety Committee to identify, categorize and recommend which barriers still exist from the previous plan and which need addressing in the future.