



NORTHERN HEALTH REGION

Accessibility Plan

2017-2019

If there are questions or comments to the Northern Health Region Accessibility Plan, how we can further improve accessibility or to request an alternate format, please contact:

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Accessibility Plan

1.0 Background

Effective November 1, 2015, the Manitoba government is introducing the first of five standards under *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act*: The Customer Service Accessibility Standard requires all of Manitoba's public, private and non-profit organizations with one or more employees to establish and implement measures, policies and practices to remove barriers to customer service. Public sector organizations will lead the way by creating accessibility plans by November 2016 as the standard becomes a regulation.

Accessibility standards are the building blocks of *The Accessibility for Manitobans Act* (AMA). They set out requirements to identify, prevent and remove barriers within a designated time period. To meet this standard organizations providing goods or services must have policies, processes and practices to deliver accessible customer services for persons with disabilities.

1.1 The Accessibility Standards will target:

- Customer Service-Current Standard to achieve
- Employment
- Information and Communication
- Transportation
- Built Environment

1.2 Main Goals:

Identify, prevent and remove barriers to everyone participating in the Northern Health Region ("NHR). The NHR will commit to achieve significant progress by 2023 to make Northern Manitoba more inclusive for everyone.

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2.0 Statement of Commitment

NHR Accessibility Commitment in accordance with the Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA), legislated in December, 2013:

Vision

Healthy People, Healthy North.

Mission

The Northern Health Region is dedicated to providing quality, accessible, compassionate health services.

Values

Trust, Respect, Integrity, Compassion & Collaboration

The NHR commits to create unbiased opportunities that encourage access and participation for all - patients, clients, residents, staff, students, visitors, physicians, volunteers, and the public.

Through the strategic directions set and approved by the Board of Directors:

We commit to improve population health

We commit to accessible health services

We commit to be a sustainable and innovative organization

We commit to be an employer of choice

We commit to provide services that respect the dignity, diversity and independence of persons disabled by barriers. We commit to improve accessibility by increasing awareness and by identifying, removing and preventing accessibility barriers.

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3.0 Baseline Report

The NHR spans a land area of about half of the province of Manitoba.

Within the region there are 2 cities, 6 towns, 1 Rural Municipality, 1 local government district, 26 Indigenous communities and multiple hamlets.

3.1 Our Facilities

5 Hospitals-Flin Flon, Gillam, Lynn Lake, The Pas, Thompson

7 Personal Care homes-Gillam, Lynn Lake, The Pas, Flin Flon, Snow Lake, Thompson

15 Health Centers-Cormorant, Cranberry Portage, Flin Flon, Gillam, Ilford, Leaf Rapids, Lynn Lake, Pikwitonei, Sherridon, Snow Lake, The Pas, Thompson, Wabowden

3 Clinics-The Pas, Flin Flon, Thompson

3.2 Overview of Programs and Services

Aboriginal Liaison/Social Services

Flin Flon, The Pas and Thompson have Aboriginal Liaisons available. The Pas and Thompson also has Social workers who can assist you. They can help with services provided, such as interpreter services, providing emotional support, transportation, and help you maintain contact with your family.

Ambulance Services

Ambulance transportation will be arranged according to the patient's need and the doctor's order.

Behavioural Health

Behavioural Health is a diverse portfolio containing acute and community-based services in several areas:

Mental Wellness is a group of services that focus on all aspect of mental wellness and mental illness support and services, including, Mental Health Promotion, Suicide Prevention and the overall comprehensive Health of our Communities. Public knowledge exchange and specific programs to promote healthy behavior change are offered by our Health Promotion and Prevention

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Staff. This includes community based services for individuals who fall within the spectrum of addiction related issues and challenges.

Community Cancer Care

The Community Cancer Programs Network (CCPN) is a longstanding and innovative program of CancerCare Manitoba that works in partnership with the Regional Health Authorities to enable patients living outside of Winnipeg to receive their cancer care closer to home

Cancer Navigation Services

Cancer Navigation services facilitate timely and appropriate access to the cancer care system and can guide and support cancer patients and their families through the entire cancer journey.

Diagnostic Services

DSM sites are located within hospitals and health centers at Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids, Thompson, Gillam, Flin Flon, Snow Lake and The Pas. Our services include Lab, x-ray, CT, ultrasound, EKG and Mammograms.

Diabetes Program

The Regional Diabetes program provides support and education for people with diabetes. Annual foot assessments and blood pressure checks can be completed by your diabetes educator. Group sessions include resistance training, healthy holiday eating, traveling with diabetes, alcohol and diabetes, and managing your risks for diabetes complications just to name a few.

Dialysis

The NHR has five various hemodialysis units located throughout the region. Three units are provincially run, The Pas, Flin Flon and Thompson. The other two are located in Norway House and Garden Hill. Patients currently dialyze three times a week anywhere from 3 – 5 hours each treatment. The Manitoba Renal Program oversees the local renal health centers in partnership with the Regional Health Authorities.

Family Doctor Finder

It is important to have a family doctor or nurse practitioner to help you stay healthy, prevent illnesses, and address your health concerns. **Family Doctor Finder** is an easy and personalized service to help you and your family to get connected with a family doctor or nurse practitioner who best meets your needs.

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Health Links / Info Sante

Health Links /Info Sante is a 24-hour/ 7 days a week telephone information services staffed by registered nurses with the knowledge to provide answers to your health care questions and to guide you to the care you need.

Home Care

Home Care is a comprehensive community-based program that provides essential support in the home to anyone, regardless of age, who requires health care services or assistance with daily living activities.

Hope North Recovery Center for Youth - (*tentative opening date June 2017*)

This service will include a Crisis Stabilization Unit, a Youth Addiction Stabilization Unit, and a Mobile Crisis Team. Currently our Mobile Crisis Team is up and running and provides crisis stabilization and assessment for youth age 17 and younger who may be experiencing a mental health and/or addictions crisis. These programs will follow the recovery framework and focuses too on risk reduction, recovery and resiliency.

Local Health Involvement Groups

Local Health Involvement Groups or “LHIGs” are made up of citizens who care about health and health services. They are established to explore and provide advice to the Board of the NHR on issues that impact the delivery of local health services

Long Term Care Services

The NHR has 296 long term care beds in 11 facilities; 7 of those facilities are operated by the NHR and the remaining 4 facilities are federally funded and operated in Indigenous communities. The Long Term Care facilities are dedicated to meet the special and changing needs of our elderly.

MBTelehealth

MBTelehealth uses a secure link to provide videoconferencing support for health-care services, continuing education, meetings and family visits between communities across Manitoba. MBTelehealth allows you to see, hear and talk to a health care provider on a television screen.

Meals on Wheels

Meals on Wheels is a program offered in the communities of Flin Flon and The Pas. This program provides meals to community members that have been identified by our Home Care Services to be in need of assistance. The meals are prepared by the Nutrition Services staff at the hospital and delivered by volunteers in our community.

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Midwifery Services

The NHR Midwifery Program is a prenatal and postnatal service available in Thompson, The Pas, Moose Lake and Norway House. Midwifery combines an understanding of the social, emotional, cultural, spiritual, psychological and physical aspects of the childbirth experience. This program supports women and their families during prenatal care, labour and birth and postnatal care.

Northern Patient Transportation Program

This provincial program subsidizes medical transportation costs for treatment or medical services not available in your home community. These include:

- Emergency medical transportation via air ambulance within the province;
- Elective medical transportation via bus, car or air as determined by a doctor based on the patient's medical condition;
- Transportation costs for essential patient escorts for children and disabled adults may also be authorized (one escort per trip).

Nutritional Services

The hospital menu is developed by Registered Dietitians, following the Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. Dietitians also provide nutrition counselling and education to patients and their families both as inpatients and outpatients. Within the community, dietitians provide presentations, and work on nutrition policies to improve health outcomes for all.

Palliative Care

Palliative Care is committed to caring for individuals and their loved ones with a life limiting illness to maintain or improve the quality of life from the time of diagnosis through treatment, until the end of life and into the bereavement period. The philosophy encourages living life until death with dignity and comfort through physical, emotional and spiritual support for individuals in their home, in hospital, or in the Long Term Care facility.

Patient Registration

The NHR Registration clerks are committed to providing you with quality, timely and friendly service. We take care to ensure your personal health information is up to date by confirming the accuracy of your demographic information at each and every visit

Patient Well Wishes

Patient Well Wishes are designed to provide family and friends convenient access to patients/residents at NHR by using e-mail to send messages. This service can be accessed through the NHR's website.

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Primary Care

Primary Health Care is your first contact with the health care system. The focus of this program is to provide the right service, at the right time, at the right location. It may be important for you to see your doctor or nurse practitioner when you go home. You get the best care when you see your own family doctor or nurse practitioner.

Public Health Care

Public Health services are community based throughout the NHR in diverse settings such as health centers, schools, day care centers, and other community sites. Public Health activities focus on health promotion, health protection, disease prevention, injury prevention, health surveillance, population health assessment and responding to the needs of individuals or families. Some of the programs offered by Public Health include: sexual health, communicable disease, Tuberculosis care, Immunizations, travel health, teen health, postnatal and breastfeeding support, prenatal education, school health, midwifery, nutrition services, diabetes education and family support programs.

Rehab Services

Within Behavioral Health there are a number of services which focus on rehabilitation from physical injury or conditions that restrict mobility and functional living. Included are audiology, physical and occupational therapy, speech and language, as well as rehabilitation for Acquired Brain Injury.

Respiratory Care

Respiratory Therapy has developed with the increasing sophistication of therapies directed towards cardio-pulmonary disorders. Services offered by the Respiratory Therapy Program include:

- 24-hour emergency/critical and acute care services
- Outreach clinics
- Pulmonary function tests
- Home oxygen assessments
- Adult and pediatric asthma and COPD education
- In-services for staff and patients
- Respiratory assessments and consults
- Intubation for adult, pediatric and neonatal patients
- Invasive and non-invasive ventilatory support

Rosaire House Addiction Centre

Rosaire House is a 20-bed residential addiction treatment center, with a day program, aftercare addictions counselling and modified program options available to meet individual needs.

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Spiritual Care Services

Please inform staff any time you feel that you need spiritual care, so they can help arrange this for you.

Volunteer/ Health Auxiliaries

Volunteers are a tremendous asset to our health facilities. Volunteers currently assist with our Health Auxiliaries, deliver Meals on Wheels, provide escorts for community seniors and numerous recreation activities in our Care Homes.

4.0 Accessibility Achievements

- The Northern Health Region Mission, Vision, Values and Strategic Directions are committed to accessible living, working and enjoying the region.
- Current policies that promote accessibility throughout the organization.
- Best practices are in place.
- MBTelehealth is available.
- Staff education and awareness has begun on accessibility issues.
- Patients with support persons are accommodated to the best of the ability with consideration to physical space and patient care requirements.
- Workplace Safety and Health barrier-free audits.

Thompson General Hospital- Sidewalks have sloped or flush curbs, well-lit public areas, all public doors have automatic feature, doorways have 36-48" opening, wide hallways, directional signage, entries are ramped, public elevators have braille visual and audio floor indication, accessible parking, mothers with child parking, security, supportive safe environment.

Flin Flon General Hospital- 24 hour porter service, sloped sidewalks at entrances and drop off points, access ramps, good lighting at all entrances, adequate parking lighting, automatic public entrance doors, doors are 36 inches minimum, Staxi rental wheelchairs available at main entrance, braille visual and audio floor indication in main public elevator, braille and visual floor indication in all public elevators located in personal care home and Northern Lights Manor, visual floor indication in service elevators, signage throughout facility, and designated accessible parking located closest to main entrance.

St Anthony's General Hospital-The Pas- Sloped access entrance with drop off point for accessible vehicles, designated accessible parking, well-lit emergency public parking, automatic public entrance door openers, doorways are 36", Staxi rental wheelchairs are available in main lobby and The Pas Clinic area, security, automatic door for dialysis, braille, visual and audible floor indication in public elevators.

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Lynn Lake Hospital- New entrance doors with automatic opener, improved ramp, designated parking, flexible visiting hours, wide hallways with 36” interior doors, Wayfinding on floor.

Leaf Rapids Health Center- Health Center located within the Town Center and accessible by lift from the main area for those unable to manage stairs. Emergency Room entrance is sidewalk level entrance. Reception/ security staff 24 hours a day.

Snow Lake Health Center-sloped sidewalks, good lighting at entrances and parking lot, automatic public doors, doors are 36” or wider, 1 large and 1 medium wheelchair available for ER transport, designated parking, appropriate signage, buzzer system, cameras in place at entrances.

Wabowden Health Center-one level building with barrier free access to all rooms, accessible designated parking, public accessible WIFI, Skype utilization, MBTelehealth services, home visit options to ease mobility barriers.

Iford, Thicket Portage, Pikwitonei and Cormorant – one level building with ramp access, accessible washroom and clinic room. Home visit options to ease mobility barriers and Skype utilization.

Sherridon Health Center- Home visit option to ease mobility barriers, Skype utilization.

Gillam Hospital-flat entranceway, automatic public doors, most doorways are 43 inches, wide hallways, designated handicap parking, flexible visiting hours, access to French and Cree speaking staff, computer access for all staff, MBTelehealth services for community health groups.

A working group has been developed to help with developing the plan and identifying barriers. Many members provide direct “customer” contact in their place of work in the organization.

5.0 Barriers to Accessibility

5.1 Methodology

A survey was completed by public and staff of the Northern Health region to help with identifying accessibility barriers. Email, regional radio advertisements, regional newspaper advertisements, posters, word of mouth, Facebook and twitter were used to promote the survey. Survey data was collected online with additional formats on request to participate.

Attitudinal Barriers result when people think and act based on false assumptions

Northern Health Region identified barriers are:

- Customers do not feel valued
- Insufficient Communication
- Non-compassionate staff

Information and Communication Barriers are created when information is offered in a form that suits some, but not all, of the population.

Northern Health Region identified barriers are:

- Appropriate Comprehension level;
- Cultural awareness;
- Language diversity;
- Technology issues;
- Visual identification.

Technological Barriers occur when technology, or the way it is used, cannot be accessed by people with disabilities.

Northern Health Region identified barriers are:

- Access to technology;
- Technological roadblocks to access services;
- Customer buy-in for technology;
- Multiple access points required for efficiency.

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Systemic Barriers are policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded.

Northern Health Region identified barriers are:

- Appointment process issues;
- Lack of customer engagement/consultation;
- Customer labeling;
- Human Resource process/qualifications;
- Jurisdictional accountability;
- Lack/limited services.

Physical and Architectural Barriers are physical obstacles that make it difficult for some to easily access a facility.

Northern Health Region identified barriers are:

- Difficult navigation in and around facilities;
- Doorway;
- Elevators;
- Flin Flon Emergency Department Renovation;
- Parking;
- Lack of Patient Lifts when needed;
- Ramps and Inaccessible areas.

6.0 Policies – current policies that promote accessibility

AD-01-160 Service Animals Policy

AD-02-25 Social Media

AD-02-45 Employee Communication

AD-04 Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)

AD-06-10 Complaints Management Patient Experience program

AD-07 Personal Health Information

AD-12-10 Breastfeeding Policy for Hospitals and Community Health Sites

HR-02-55 Respectful Workplace Policy

HR-04-90 Workplace Breastfeeding

HR-04-105 Interpreter Services Policy

HR-06-30 Ability Management Program (AMP)

HR-09-105 Ergonomic Program Commitment

HR-06-10 Scent/Fragrance Awareness

CPS-02-AD.25 Bill of Rights

Protection of Persons in Care Act

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7.0 Initiatives, Actions and Expected outcomes

Attitudinal Barriers:

Initiatives/Actions	Expected Outcomes
Customer Service Education offered in various formats	Customers can expect a caring environment that includes everyone
Cultural awareness education in various formats	Cultural competency for all staff
Support person policy development	A more inclusive environment for those requiring assistance

Information and Communication Barriers:

Initiatives/Actions	Expected Outcomes
Assess current interpreter policy for efficiency	New Interpreter Services policy to be rolled out (WRHA Interpreter Services)
Implement act of offer on all communication (available in alternate formats on request)	Documents will be accessible to all
Develop a concerted wayfinding initiative (orientation and journey through physical space)	A plan to integrate into future planning
Assess content of website	A user-friendly site that allows everyone to easily navigate
Apply “SMOG” reading level test to all public documents for reasonable reading levels	Customer confidence in publications
Review public documents through indigenous lens	Improved cultural awareness

Technological Barriers

Initiatives/Actions	Expected Outcomes
Computer software upgrade	Improved access to staff online education
Research alternatives to maximize technology such as MBTelehealth	Increased access

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Systemic Barriers

Initiatives/Actions	Expected Outcomes
Incorporate physical abilities analysis into hire process	Candidates are clear of expectations
Adapt performance reviews to include accessibility awareness accountability and attitude metrics	Staff are clear of expectations
Enhance the NHR values that are integrated into the hire process	Potential candidates would have an understanding of organizational values
Adopt the Eden Philosophy for long term care	Patient centred care

Physical or Architectural Barrier:

Initiatives/Actions	Expected Outcomes
Assess employee accessible parking	Identify accessible parking needs
Implement an Active Design Checklist when planning new capital projects	Barrier free development
Evaluate opportunities for accessible parking	Identify accessible parking needs