

# **Annual Accessibility Plan for Pathways Health Centre for Children**

**September 2009 - August 2010**

***Submitted to***

Jenny Greensmith  
Executive Director

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***Prepared by***

Dave Schaller, Chair  
Accessibility Committee

This publication is available on the Centre's website  
[www.pathwayscentre.org](http://www.pathwayscentre.org)  
and in alternative formats upon request

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of the Ontarians With Disabilities Act (2001) is:

- To improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province.
- To this end, the ODA requires each Centre to prepare an annual accessibility plan; to consult with persons with disabilities in the preparation of this plan; and to make the plan public.

Though the new Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) 2005 received Royal Assent on June 13, 2005, annual planning requirements under the ODA 2001 remain in effect until ODA 2001 is repealed.

This is [the seventh annual plan \(2009/2010\)](#) prepared by the Accessibility Committee of Pathways Health Centre for Children.

This past year, Pathways Health Centre for Children committed itself to:

- The continual improvement of access to Centre facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for clients and their families, staff, clinicians, volunteers, our community partners and the community of Sarnia-Lambton;

- The participation of persons with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans;
- The provision of quality services to all clients and their families, our community partners and the community of Sarnia-Lambton.

## 1. Aim

This plan describes:

- The measures that Pathways Health Centre for Children has taken in 2008/2009.
- The measures that Pathways Health Centre for Children will take during the next year (2009/2010) to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- This includes:
  - Clients and their families
  - Staff and volunteers
  - Sarnia-Lambton community

## 2. Objectives

This plan:

1. Describes the process by which Pathways Health Centre for Children will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
2. Reviews efforts at Pathways Health Centre for Children to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities over the past year.

3. Lists the by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services that Pathways Health Centre for Children will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities.
4. Describes the measures Pathways Health Centre for Children will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
5. Describes how Pathways Health Centre for Children will make this accessibility plan available to the public.

### **3. Description of Pathways Health Centre for Children**

- Pathways Health Centre for Children is a family-centred community agency that serves Lambton County children and youth who have physical, developmental and/or communication needs, and their families.
- This also includes some specialized services for adults.
- As one of 21 Children's Treatment Centres in the province of Ontario, Pathways provides a continuum of rehabilitation and support services in the community, as well as an on-site integrated Child Care service.
- Our Centre serves 2194 clients and has 150 employees.

## **VISION**

“Partners along the path to potential”

## **MISSION**

Pathways Health Centre for Children leads in the provision of a continuum of coordinated family-centred services for children and young adults in Lambton County who have physical, developmental or communication needs.

## **WE VALUE:**

- **P**artnering with our clients, their families and our community.
- **A**dvocating for our clients.
- **R**especting the individuality, diversity and dignity of our clients, their families, our staff and volunteers.
- **T**eam work
- **N**urturing an inclusive community.
- **E**ducating in an open learning environment.
- **R**ecognizing the roles and contributions of our clients, their families, our staff and volunteers.
- **S**upporting opportunities that encourage health, well-being and self-esteem.

## 4. **The Accessibility Committee**

### **Establishment of the Accessibility Committee**

The Accessibility Committee was formed in June 2003 and has been authorized to:

- Review and list by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services that cause or may cause barriers to people with disabilities;
- Identify barriers that will be removed or prevented in the coming year;
- Describe how these barriers will be removed or prevented in the coming year; and
- Prepare a plan on these activities, and after its approval by the Executive Director, make the plan available to the public.

### **Accessibility Committee Chairperson**

- Dave Schaller is the Chair of the Accessibility Committee at Pathways Health Centre for Children.

Dave is the Manager of Family and Community Services and co-ordinates a number of inclusive community programs and services for children and young adults with disabilities.

Dave is familiar with the strategies required to create inclusive environments for individuals with disabilities.

- Dave Schaller is a member of Sarnia’s Accessibility Committee and has been working closely with the City of Sarnia since September 2003 to develop the city’s Accessibility Plans in compliance with the ODA.

Members of the Accessibility Committee:

<b>Working Group Member</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Jenny Greensmith	Executive Director	(519) 542-3471 Ext. 237
Dave Schaller	Family and Community Services Manager	(519) 542-3471 Ext. 262
Brian Racher	Maintenance Supervisor	(519) 542-3471 Ext. 274

The Accessibility Committee also relies on input from Centre parents, staff and community groups for additional information for our plan.

- Kathy Arcuri-Arnott – Member of “Voice” / Parent of a client at Pathways
- Pathways Occupational Health and Safety Committee

- Sue Lambier – GO Housing Committee Chairperson / Parent of a client at Pathways
- Joanne Somlai – President: Sport For Disabled Lambton / Parent of a client at Pathways

## **5. Centre Commitment to Accessibility Planning**

At its meeting on June 24, 2003, the Board of Directors recommended that the Board adopt the following Accessibility Planning Policy:

Pathways Health Centre for Children is committed to:

- The continued improvement of access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for clients and their family members, staff, health care practitioners, volunteers and the community of Sarnia-Lambton;
- The participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans;
- Ensuring our by-laws and policies are consistent with the principles of accessibility; and
- The establishment of an Accessibility Committee to support, maintain and ensure that the Accessibility Plan is formally reviewed annually.

- The Executive Director authorized the Accessibility Committee to prepare an Accessibility plan annually that will enable Pathways Health Centre for Children to meet these commitments.

**6. Barriers and accessibility projects that were reviewed at Pathways Health Centre for Children between 2008/2009 are as follows:**

**Barriers / Accessibility projects #1**

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario regulation 429/07) under the AODA came into force on January 1, 2008.

As a provider of services and designated as a public sector organization, Pathways Health Centre for Children must comply with these standards by January 2010.

This will include:

1. Establishing a Customer Service Training program to ensure that staff and volunteers are knowledgeable in providing services to customers with disabilities in a fair, sensitive and respectful way.
2. Developing a schedule to ensure all staff and volunteers receive this Customer Service training by 2010.

3. Establishing a policy, practice or procedure that reflects our commitment to allow customers to use their own personal assistive devices to access our services and includes information about other measures our organization offers (additional assistive devices, services, or methods) to enable them to use our services.
4. Establishing a policy, practice or procedure that reflects our commitment to allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of our Centre that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, identify alternative measures we would use to provide services to the person with a disability.
5. Establishing a policy, practice or procedure that reflects our commitment to permit people with disabilities, who use a support person, to bring that person with them while accessing our services. This would also include information about registration and admission fee requirements to support persons who are accompanying clients.
6. Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how we provide services to people with disabilities and how we will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. The information about our feedback process must be readily available to the public.

## **Outcome #1:**

1. The AODA Accessible Customer Service Training program for staff and volunteers at Pathways Health Centre for Children is ready for implementation. Training for staff and volunteers will begin September 2009 and be completed by January 1, 2010.
2. The AODA Customer Service Training program has been integrated into our Staff and Volunteer orientation process and is available on our Centre's intranet system.
3. The written policies, practices and procedures required for compliance with the Accessibility Customer Service Standards are in draft form and will be complete by January 1, 2010.

## **Barriers / Accessibility projects #2**

Pathways Health Centre for Children does not currently have signage in Braille for individuals who are blind. This may be a barrier for clients and should be assessed before the physical expansion of the Centre begins.

## **Outcome #2**

Signage for all clients will be reviewed by the Expansion Project Steering Committee as we move forward with the expansion project. We plan to use the new Accessible Information and Communications standards from the AODA, once they have been approved and become law.

## **Barriers / Accessibility projects #3**

Water fountains at the Centre do not have push bars. This limits access for other users with disabilities.

## **Outcome #3**

There were no additional funds or grants available this year to support new equipment purchases. The purchase of an accessible water fountain in the main foyer will remain as an accessibility project for 2009 / 2010.

## **Additional Accessibility Enhancements in 2008/2009:**

- All paper dispensers (50) in the Centre were replaced with automatic “hands-free” dispensers, increasing accessibility for our clients.

## 7. Methods Used to Identify Barriers for 2009/2010

The Accessibility Committee used the following methods to identify barriers:

<b>Method</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
Asking all staff at Pathways Health Centre for Children	The Accessibility Committee asked staff to identify areas of concern	The requests were made throughout the year and were directed to the Occupational Health and Safety Committee
Reviewing previously identified barriers	The Accessibility Committee	The Accessibility Committee reviewed previous Centre Accessibility plans
Community consultations	Pathways provided a draft copy of the plan to a number of community partners/stakeholders and requested their input and comments	This request was made in September 2009

## **8. Barriers / Projects that will be addressed in 2009/2010**

### **Project #1**

1. We will complete the remaining requirements of the Accessible Customer Service Standard.

### **Project #2**

2. The Accessible Information and Communications standards are the next standards under review.

Once they become law and available to the public, we will begin our review to assess how they will impact our services in how we provide information to the public.

### **Project #3**

3. Explore funding options to install one accessible push-bar water fountain in the main foyer.

## **9. Review and Monitoring Process**

- The Pathways Accessibility Committee will meet bi-monthly to review progress.
- At each meeting, the committee will remind staff, either through personal contacts or by e-mail, about their roles in implementing the plan.
- The Pathways Accessibility Committee will also commit to making quarterly presentations to the Management Committee and the Occupational Health & Safety Committee.

## **10. Communication of the Plan**

- The Centre's accessibility plan will be posted on Pathways Health Centre for Children's website.
- Hard copies will be available in the Centre's Family Resource Centre.
- On request, the plan can be made available in alternative formats such as large print (18-point font).