



London Health  
Sciences Centre



Children's Hospital  
London Health Sciences Centre

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# 2023 Accessibility Status Report

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**Great people. Great care.**



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# Land Acknowledgement

Victoria, University and Children's Hospitals are situated on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnonton Nations, on lands connected with the London Township and Sombra Treaties of 1796 and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum.

We also acknowledge our neighboring Indigenous communities: the Chippewas of the Thames, Oneida Nation of the Thames and the Munsee-Delaware Nation who continue to be sovereign Nations and who continue to thrive with their own unique languages, cultures, and ceremonies.

London Health Sciences Centre (LHSC) is deeply committed to building and maintaining reciprocal relationships with Indigenous communities. We are committed to value and respect Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and healing. We are dedicated to becoming better allies, advocates, and partners in the journey towards Truth and Reconciliation by reflecting on our commitments, our attitudes, policies, and the environment in which we deliver care.



**Image:** The Indigenous Healing Space at Victoria Hospital features a mural called Ka-Bzindmin, created by Tsista Kennedy, an 18-year-old, local Indigenous artist, from Beausoleil First Nation, and Oneida

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# Fundamental Commitments

The LHSC 2023-2027 Strategic Plan includes our fundamental commitments as an organization. These commitments will guide how we deliver on our strategic priorities over the next four years.

The following Fundamental Commitments were developed in consultation with community partners and LHSC staff:

- We commit to creating an inclusive and safe environment for our staff, providers, affiliates, learners, patients, care partners, and community by dismantling systems of oppression, discrimination, racism, and bias.
- We commit to seeking out, listening to, and working with those who experience inequities and our system partners to address the social determinants of health, and to ensure we provide wholistic and equity-oriented care.
- We commit to truth and reconciliation and working with Indigenous peoples to integrate Indigenous ways of knowing and healing and co-create solutions for health and wellness.

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# Accessibility Highlights

## Overview

The purpose of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005) is to develop, implement and enforce standards for accessibility for Ontario employers, related to ensuring that goods, services, facilities, employment, accommodation, and buildings are accessible and inclusive.

This Annual Status Report outlines our progress on actions taken in 2023 to meet the requirements of AODA and advance accessibility and inclusion at LHSC. While specific departments may be identified in this report, LHSC develops this work through an organization-wide approach.

## Customer Service

- Developed fundamental commitments to advancing equity, inclusion, and accessibility at LHSC as part of the organization's Strategic Plan 2023-2027.
- Developed and launched a new patient experience survey, including accessibility-related questions.
- Developed socio-demographic question related to disability and integrated within the patient experience survey.
- Automated closed captioning was introduced as a Webex feature, making it more accessible for patients who are deaf or hard of hearing to participate in their virtual care appointments.
- Improved access to booking with the Pediatric Emergency Department Virtual Care Clinic for patients and/or caregivers who are blind.

## Employment

- Integrated on-demand interpretation, including American Sign Language, within various employment support services.
- Human Resources developed a partnership with Equitek Employment Equity Solutions to assist with expanding employment opportunities for equity-denied communities.
- Created new recruitment marketing material, both print and digital, that is AODA compliant.
- Updated job postings to include phone number and email address for individuals requesting accommodation through the application and/or interview process.

- Partnered with WILL Employment Services, Hutton House, Project SEARCH, YMCA, and other community organizations to advance opportunities for employment within equity denied populations.
- Introduced more accessible options for staff to complete their health reviews, including testing and vaccinations within Occupational Health and Safety.
- Revised the return-to-work accommodations process to clarify that the process applies to both temporary and permanent disability. Process enhancements included:
  - The Occupational Health and Safety Team may request an evaluation by an external medical expert to clarify functional abilities required to determine safe and suitable workplace accommodation;
  - Consideration of an alternative accessible format if/when requested for accommodation memos;
  - Providing the reason for accommodation denial (if denied) to the employee either verbally, written or through other means of communication as requested.
- Revised the LHSC Workplace Accommodation Policy to include the following enhancements:
  - Providing the steps taken to protect the privacy of employee's personal health information;
  - Describing the frequency with which individual accommodation plans will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done;
  - Clarifying the manner in which the reasons for an accommodation denial will be provided;
  - Updated the format of the policy to align with new policy/procedure framework
  - Expanded accommodation considerations to include employees unable to use N95.
- Revised *Individualized Evacuation Plans* to *Individualized Emergency Plans* (IEPs). In addition to identifying evacuating from an emergency, the newly revised plans also articulate notifications during an emergency, communicating with others during an emergency and sheltering in place during an emergency.
- Updated the Emergency Code ilearn module to include the process for staff to request an Individualized Emergency Plan if a workplace accommodation is not already in place.

## Information and Communications

- Completed an external accessibility audit of [www.lhsc.on.ca](http://www.lhsc.on.ca).
- Website vendor was contracted to support full compliance to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA standards.
- Redeveloped [www.lhsc.on.ca](http://www.lhsc.on.ca) website to ensure AODA accessibility compliance with the following updates:
  - Reviewed and edited 7,322 webpages/override web content
  - Reviewed and edited 135 subsites
  - Engaged over 100 teams/departments/content owners
  - Improved website navigation experience
- Since 2022, Communications and Public Engagement has added three new roles to assist in digital accessibility initiatives: Web and Digital Product Developer; Digital Content and Web Development Consultant; and Assistant.
- Developed governance guidelines to ensure web updates follow LHSC brand standards.
- Updated corporate brand to include a digital color palette with corporate accessible templates.
- Created a new strategy for fillable forms and continued to update manual resources.
- Created a digital accessibility governance SharePoint resource with best practices for staff and departments to reference when responsible for posting/sharing content for patients and families, on [www.lhsc.on.ca](http://www.lhsc.on.ca) website, social media platforms, and other public channels.

## Design of Public Spaces

- Completed multiple sidewalk repairs and added more curb cuts to ensure the outside of the organization is physically accessible.
- Created additional barrier-free exterior seating areas.
- Installed power door operators in defined barrier-free paths of travel in clinical areas. This work will continue in 2024 across all sites.
- Updated public washroom signage from white to dark backgrounds, added braille and included international barrier free symbols. This work will continue in 2024 across all sites and include staff washrooms later in the year.
- Increased the number of accessible parking spaces, including:
  - 13 accessible spaces added in Lot 1 at Victoria Hospital across from the London Regional Cancer Program (LRCP) entrance;
  - 2 additional accessible spaces added outside of Victoria Hospital Emergency Department (Adult and Children's);
  - 1 additional space added in Lot 5 between Buildings 15 and 16 at Victoria Hospital.