

Executive Summary

This is the first annual plan (2003-2004) prepared by the Accessibility Working Group of Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital. The plan describes: (1) the measures that Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital has taken in the past, and (2) the measures that Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital will take during the year (2003-2004) to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who live, work in or use the facilities and services of our Hospital, including patients and their family members, staff, health care practitioners, volunteers and members of the community.

This year, Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital committed itself to the continual improvement of access to hospital facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for patients and their family members, staff, health care practitioners, volunteers and members of the community with disabilities; the participation of persons with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plan; and the provision of quality services to all patients and their family members and members of the community with disabilities.

The Accessibility Working Group identified over 6 barriers to persons with disabilities. The most significant findings were that the majority of the hospital's washrooms and the Main Entrance were not accessible, also forms and records as well as patient brochures, were only available in print. Over the next several years, the Accessibility Working Group recommends focusing on 2 different barriers. This year, the Working Group recommends removing and preventing 4 barriers.

1. Aim

In the past Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital has always considered the accessibility issues when constructing or renovating an area of its establishments. Some examples of these are that when the Emergency Department was remodelled, a desk at wheel chair height was put in and large automatic doors were installed. On the Acute Care floor a large wheelchair access bathroom was constructed to enable patients to take a bath or a shower. Also Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital was a major partner in the purchasing and contracting out a handy transport bus that not only provides transport for disabled citizens to the hospital but to many location within the town limits.

Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital is starting a 20-month renovation project that will remove many barriers that presently exist. The renovation plans incorporate all the modern demands for a barrier free environment. Within the next year, a new handicap ramp, parking and automatic doors will be constructed at the main entrance of the hospital, which will facilitate the access to all the services the facility has to offer.

2. Objectives

This plan:

- 1. Describes the process by which Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital will identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.**
- 2. Reviews efforts at Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities over the past year.**
- 3. Lists the by-law, policies, programs, practices and services that Hôpital Notre- Dame Hospital will review in the coming year to identify barriers to people with disabilities.**
- 4. Describes the measures Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital will take in the coming year to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.**
- 5. Describes how Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital will make this accessibility plan available to the public.**

3. Description of Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital's Corporation

Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital is a complex health care facility with a broad range of public services. Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital has committed itself to the continual improvement of access to its facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for patients and their family members, staff, health care practitioners, volunteers and members of the community with disabilities. This plan was establish with the participation of persons with disabilities and staff members that consider the accessibility of their environment a very important part of their work.

Our hospital serves approximately 10,000 patients and has 186 employees.

4. The Accessibility Working Group

Establishment of the Accessibility Working Group

R. G. Lafleur (Chief Executive Officer), in consultation with the Board of Directors, formally constituted the Accessibility Working Group in June 2003. The board of Directors recommended that the Working Group:

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- Review and list by-law, 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 Chief Executive Officer, make the plan available to the public.

Coordinator

Mr. Frederic Potvin was appointed as the Coordinator of the Accessibility Working Group.

Mr. Potvin has served as Coordinator of Maintenance and Ambulance Services at Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital for the past two years. He also has broad knowledge of disability issues obtained from years of living with a disabled family member.

Members of the Accessibility Working Group

Mr. Potvin appointed the following members to the Working Group:

<i>Working Group member</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Contact Information</i>
Fred Potvin	Maintenance, Ambulance	372-2913
Andre Veilleux	Capital Project Coordinator	372-2940
Fabien Hebert	V.P. Human Resources	372-2910
Linda Morin	Exec. Leader Acute & LTC	372-2936
Myrka Comeau	Business Office	362-4291, ext. 2117
Jeanette Vaillancourt	Systems Support	372-2905
Monique Beaulieu	Community Representative	362-4772

5. Hospital commitment to accessibility planning

On Sep. 25th 2003, the Board of Directors approved by resolution the following Accessibility Planning Policy:

The Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital Corporation is committed to:

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- **The continual improvement of access to facilities, policies, programs, practices and services for patients and their family members, staff, health care practitioners, volunteers and members of the community;**
- **The participation of people with disabilities in the development and review of its annual accessibility plans;**
- **Ensuring hospital by-law and policies are consistent with the principles of accessibility; and**
- **The establishment of an Accessibility Working Group at the hospital.**

The Accessibility Working Group was authorized to prepare an accessibility plan that will enable Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital to meet these commitments.

6. Recent barrier-removal initiatives

During the last several years, there have been a number of informal initiatives at Hôpital-Notre Dame Hospital to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities. For example when the Emergency Department was remodelled, a desk at wheel chair height was put in and large automatic doors were installed. On the Acute Care floor a large wheelchair access bathroom was constructed to enable patients to take a bath or a shower. Also Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital was a major partner in the purchasing and contracting out a handy transport bus that not only provides transport for disabled citizens to the hospital but to many location within the town limits.

(a) Review of complaints received by Patient Representative

The hospital Ombudsman regularly conducts monthly reviews of patient complaints including references to accessibility.

(b) Site audit

The members of the working group conducted a site audit on Sept 9, 2003 and subsequently 6 accessibility barriers were identified.

(c) Barrier-free redevelopment planning

Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital is starting a 20-month renovation project that will remove many of the barriers that presently exist. The renovation plans incorporate all the modern demands for a barrier free environment. Within the next year it is expected that a new handicap ramp, parking and

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automatic doors will be constructed at the main entrance of the hospital which will facilitate the access to all the services the facility has to offer.

(d) Policy review and development by Human Resources

As part of the hospital's commitment to eliminate barriers, the Human Resources Management team has undertaken a review of all human resources policies in order to ensure that they are complete, up-to-date and barrier free. Once changes have been made to the proper policies they will be communicated to all staff members.

7. Barrier-identification methodologies

The Accessibility Working Group used the following barrier-identification methodologies:

Methodology	Description	Status
Audit	Site visit	6 barriers identified

8. Barriers identified

In its review, the Accessibility Working Group identified over 6 barriers. Over the next several years, the Accessibility Working Group has decided to focus on 4 barriers. This list is divided as follows: physical (3), attitudinal (1).

Type of Barrier	Description of Barrier	Strategy for its removal/prevention
Physical	Main Entrance stairs and sidewalk are not accessible.	Build a ramp and grind the sidewalk in order to render accessible
Physical	Public washroom door does not close itself and rails were installed that prevent wheelchair	Install a door closure mechanism and remove the rails. Install folding rails on the adjacent

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	access.	wall in order to have them if needed.
Physical	Doors at the Main Entrance are to narrow and heavy.	Install automatic doors with a push button on each side.
Attitudinal	Staff is often unaware/lack knowledge of non-physical disabilities (i.e., patients with mental health disabilities).	Educational sessions for staff and preparation of material for the staff orientation binder.

9. Barriers that will be addressed 2003-2004

The Accessibility Working Group will address 4 barriers during the coming year.

Barrier	Objective	Means to removal / prevention	Performance criteria	Resources	Timing	Responsibility
Wash-room	To provide a washroom that is accessible to the disabled people	To modify according to needs	Accessible washroom	Architect/engineer	By Sept. 2004	The Accessibility Working Group
Main entrance	To be accessible to the disabled people	To modify according to needs by building a ramp	Accessible entrance to the disabled people	Architect/engineer	In the next year	The Accessibility Working Group
Main entrance doors	Easy access to the main entrance	Automatic doors	Accessibility provided to the disabled people	Architect/engineer	In the next year	The Accessibility Working Group
Attitudinal	Staff awareness of various disabilities	Staff workshops and update of orientation binder	Well informed staff	Consultant for physical disabilities /advocate	In the next year	The Accessibility Working Group

10. Review and monitoring process

The Accessibility Working Group will meet bi-monthly to review progress. At each meeting, the Working Group will remind staff, either through personal contacts or by e-mail, about their roles in implementing the plan. The Chairperson of the Working Group is also committed to report to the Occupational Health & Safety Committee.

11. Communication of the plan

The hospital's accessibility plan will be posted on Hôpital Notre-Dame Hospital's website and hard copies will be available from the Human Resources department. On request, the plan can be made available in alternative formats, such as computer disk in electronic text and in large print if required. The plan will also be included within the hospital orientation package to new staff.