

Annual Status Report for Trillium Health Partners' Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2024)

In 2023, Trillium Health Partners established a new multi-year accessibility plan for 2024-2029 to prevent and remove barriers to accessibility and to meet requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* and the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR)*.

THP's mission of *a new kind of health care for a healthier community* is rooted in our values of compassion, excellence and courage. Achieving this requires deep commitment to delivering the best possible health outcomes and exceptional patient experiences through high quality, access and sustainability, in ways that leave no one behind. In response, THP is committed to identifying and eliminating barriers that limit inclusive, accessible and equitable care experiences for everyone who comes to our hospitals.

This Annual Status Report describes THP's progress on accessibility initiatives in 2024. The purpose of this document is to track THP's efforts towards enhancing accessibility and ensure staff and public awareness of ongoing initiatives.

This report is available online at:

<https://www.thp.ca/patientsupport/Pages/Accessibility.aspx>

To request an alternate format of this annual status report, please contact:

Communications and Public Affairs at 905-848-7538 or at public.affairs@thp.ca.

Service Accomplishments

- As originally reported in the [Annual Status Report for 2022-23](#), the Patient Food Preferences pilot program was launched in 2023 in collaboration with a third-party vendor. Following successful implementation of the program at M-site, it is being expanded to other sites in 2024. The teams are also exploring options to further diversify the menu with hand-held food items. This step will ensure optimum consumption of meals and enhanced accessibility for patients who may have a cognitive or physical impairment.
- THP has adopted practices that align with our Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) designation to support patients with accessibility needs to prevent pressure injuries. This involves investing in advanced equipment, such as new therapeutic beds and devices that aid patients in repositioning themselves independently.

- THP has developed a standardized approach for producing patient-facing documents in the top five languages spoken in the community: Arabic, Chinese (simplified), Chinese (traditional), Spanish and Punjabi. This standard approach has now become a consistent practice at THP for patient-facing materials.
- The “Talk, Listen and Connect” pilot program has been expanded to multiple units across multiple THP sites. This program connects volunteers with patients during mealtimes. Volunteers socialize with patients, and support individuals with physical or cognitive impairments by setting up meals and opening containers.
- In 2024, THP launched Integrated Bedside Terminals (IBTs) in patient rooms to increase accessibility around patient care, education, communication, and entertainment.
 - IBTs increase patient access to games for cognitive stimulation, entertainment services like television, internet browsing and radio, and provide an additional communication pathway between patients, caregivers, and the hospital.
- In 2023, THP implemented the Voyce application, a virtual language interpretation tool that connects patients across all sites with professional interpreters, designed to enhance language access and health equity. It is installed on the bedside tablets/iPads provided to departments, enabling effective communication in over 235 languages, including American Sign Language. It can also be accessed by calling 1-888-842-1768. For interpretation requests or queries across the organization, individuals can reach out via email to interpreters@thp.ca.

Information and Communications Accomplishments

MyChart

- In 2023, THP introduced *MyChart*, a personalized and secure patient-facing health portal. *MyChart* allows patients to have better access to their health information, seamless interactions between patient and provider, and improve overall patient experience. In 2024, *MyChart* has been expanded to include some of the following features:
 - Patients can cancel some diagnostic imaging appointments directly through their MyChart account and book earlier appointments as soon as cancelled appointments become available.

- The new chat feature enables patients to request direct access to their health records. This feature connects patients with a member of the health records team (the only team authorized to release this information).
- The new questionnaire feature allows patients to complete various patient care and experience surveys to increase the accessibility of providing feedback.
- The new electronic check-in feature enables patients to complete the check-in process at home.
- Some *MyChart* features that support accessibility include compatibility with screen readers, high contrast themes for users, and zoom-in functionality to increase font size.
- In 2024, THP temporarily introduced a digital literacy pilot effort consisting of additional support for individuals having difficulty accessing their health records through *MyChart*. Volunteers were recruited, trained and positioned onsite to walk patients through the *MyChart* set-up process using their personal devices or ones available at THP. A trouble-shooting guide has also been created to help increase access.

Websites

- THP has updated its internal website to enhance accessibility and become more user-friendly, as guided by the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Standards Level AA.
- The [THP Foundation](#) has rebuilt its website to promote AODA compliance and enhance mobile functionality. The site features high-contrast images and text to assist individuals with visual impairments, with an AODA contrast checker used to ensure compliance.

Other Technologies and Tools to Support Communication

- THP continues to offer translation services and alternative accessible formats (on request) for all printed materials at no additional cost.
- In 2024, THP introduced a new feature on hospital computers located in high traffic areas (for example, the emergency department) that allow staff to log-in with a single tap of their badges. This feature enhances accessibility for staff with visual or other impairments, who may have difficulty navigating the log-in portal.

- THP continues to conduct virtual all-staff education sessions on accessibility features in new software to enhance awareness and ensure effective utilization.
- THP's Communications team is developing an internal *Written Style Guide* with instructions for creating more accessible documents, including PDFs.
- THP has taken steps to introduce closed captioning to videos shared on THP's internal and external websites to further promote accessibility.
- Prior to all staff events at THP, organization-wide memos are circulated to ensure staff are aware of the availability of accessibility supports and accommodation, should they require any.
- The THP Foundation has added alternative text and image descriptions to all donor reporting materials to ensure accessibility.
- The THP Foundation has introduced new e-news and all-staff memo templates to ensure that all mass communication materials are accessible in both the light and dark modes of Microsoft applications. Live text is enabled in all materials to support accessibility for individuals with hearing impairments.

Employment Accomplishments

- THP ensures all in-person learning events are recorded and available for staff to review on the internal website as per their convenience. THP also established an accommodations process for staff to submit requests to access live streams.
- Various hybrid approaches are currently being piloted at select events, like the annual Back to School event. A key feature of hybrid approaches includes virtual and in person interactivity to create more parity in the experiences for attendees, regardless of how they attend an event.
- THP continues to offer ergonomist services to hybrid and virtual employees, in addition to those working on-site.
- An opportunity to disclose any accommodation requirements has been integrated into the pre-placement health assessment process. This gives new employees an additional opportunity to communicate accommodation needs during the recruitment process.
- In 2023, Long Term Accommodations Specialists were responsible for managing long-term accommodations support. In 2024, the work has been integrated into the responsibilities of division-specific Disability Case Managers. This integration has created a streamlined and centralized support process.
- In the fall of 2024, THP launched a new HR, payroll and workforce management (staff scheduling, absence and time management) systems to make People

Services processes more efficient, improve the user experience and promote accessibility. The new systems support the majority of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 Standards Level AA.

- Prior to the start of the formal training period, multiple system demonstration sessions were delivered in a variety of formats (in person, virtual, self-paced, instructor-led, etc.). Recordings of all virtual sessions were posted to THP's internal website with closed captioning.
- Formal training began on August 26, 2024. Depending on the audience, training was delivered via self-guided learning on iLearn or via instructor-led training with supporting materials.
- All leaders were asked to inform the training team of any accessibility requirements they or their staff may require, ensuring the most appropriate training approach was deployed for them.
- In 2024, THP partnered with a new vendor to facilitate the annual Staff Opinion Survey in additional accessible formats:
 - To facilitate survey accessibility in areas with limited/shared computers, loan devices (iPads and phones) were provided via the Survey Cart. Leaders signed up to access the Cart in 1-hour slots through the sign-up form.
 - Staff and professional staff also had the option to complete the survey on non-THP devices by scanning a QR code, found on all communications materials.
 - The Opinion Survey interface includes accessibility features such as zooming in availability, and screen readers for multiple choice questions.
 - In 2024, THP expanded access to groups historically not included in the Opinion Survey, such as Volunteers.
- THP continues to provide hybrid models of employment where operationally feasible, including the option for staff to work-from-home, increasing flexibility and accessibility.
- In 2024, THP's Sick Leave and Accommodation Policy was updated to include various accommodations and details for supporting return-to-work with or without accessibility devices.
- THP's Invitation to Leadership (ITL) Mentoring Program is essential for helping THP staff achieve their personal leadership development goals and provides a platform for THP leaders to mentor emerging leaders within the organization. In

late 2023, ITL enhanced accessibility by expanding its application options for mentorship to include both video and written formats.

Transportation Accomplishments

- THP continues to offer shuttle services to all individuals across our sites. The shuttles operate Monday-Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm between all three sites.
- THP also has non-urgent patient transfer (NUPT) vehicles operating between all sites, to patient homes, and long-term care homes.
- All vehicles are well-equipped to accommodate mobility requests, including wheelchair access and allow service animals on board. The shuttles have screens displaying shuttle stops and schedules to help those with hearing impairments, and the drivers call out the stops for individuals that may be visually impaired.

Design of Public Spaces Accomplishments

- In 2024, a new parking garage was opened at the Queensway Health Centre. This garage offers a range of accessibility features, including clear wayfinding signage, improved lighting, tactile plates in stairwells, accessible parking spaces near elevators on every floor, spacious elevators for wheelchairs and mobile beds, and accessible push buttons at all doorways.
- THP continues to renew signage for renovated or newly updated locations across all sites.
- THP's Facilities and Grounds Maintenance teams continue to conduct annual maintenance activities across outdoor spaces and pathways to ensure accessibility.
- 3- to 4-inch yellow strips have been painted in the Credit Valley Hospital parking garage staircases to showcase the elevation of each step, improving foot traffic and accessibility.
- In late 2023, the curb-down passage at the Credit Valley Hospital parking garage entry/exit was repaired as an immediate response to collected feedback. This was done to ensure continued support for individuals needing to access the crosswalk in a wheelchair.
- The People Safety and Support team continues to support the Patient Relations team in effectively directing accessibility complaints related to public spaces to the appropriate departments.

- THP *Trillium HealthWorks* projects are ensuring the new builds meet the requirements of accessibility legislation in Ontario as outlined by AODA Design of Public Spaces Standards, Ontario Building Code Regulation, CSA Z3.17.14-17 Wayfinding for Health Care Facilities, CSA B651-18 Accessible Design for the Built Environment, and CSA Z8000 Accessible Design for Health Care Facilities.
 - THP *Trillium HealthWorks* teams are also identifying opportunities to enhance accessible design in the new capital development projects
 - THP's People Safety and Support is supporting the *Trillium HealthWorks* infrastructure projects to ensure that new facilities are compliant with the AODA, and that accessibility features are designed through a user experience lens.

General Accomplishments

Through 2023, THP worked towards preparing and launching the next [Multi-Year Accessibility Plan for 2024-2029](#). With various new AODA-informed initiatives promised and reported, the new Plan aims to ensure continued accessibility supports across all sites for staff, patients and families.

[THP's Accessibility Policy](#) guides all accessibility-related initiatives at the organization and is readily available on THP websites (both internal and external). The current policy includes an updated statement of organizational commitment, details regarding providing individualized accommodation plans for staff, a section for Design of Public Spaces, and an updated Training and Education section.

Next Steps

- Service:
 - Pending results of the Patient Food Preferences pilot program, the team will explore expanding the program across all sites in 2024/25. The program will continue to work with its third-party vendor to explore further avenues for collaboration to enhance accessibility.
 - The Volunteer Resources team will continue to grow the "Talk, Listen and Connect" program across various units.
 - The Patient Relations team will diligently continue to update the Patient Handbook as required.
- Information and Communications

- THP will continue to enhance the external website with the goal of increasing accessibility and improving user-friendliness.
- THP's Communications team will continue to assess and identify opportunities to increase the accessibility of internal communications.
- In 2024/25, THP plans to expand Integrated Bedside Terminal (IBT) services to include access to care-related information and patient education resources, video calling, and integration with the hospital's electronic health record system, Epic.
- Language Interpretation Services (*Voyce*)
 - THP is assessing the requirement to increase internal signage and advertising to inform patients about the availability of language interpretation services (*Voyce*) at THP.
 - THP will continue to educate staff regarding the utilization of *Voyce* to increase inclusivity and access.
 - THP's Communications team will further explore the use of THP's language interpretation tool, *Voyce*, at organization-wide events and announcements to enhance accessibility and inclusivity.

MyChart

- THP will explore the possibility of making *MyChart* services available to patients in multiple languages widely spoken in the community.
- THP will investigate expanding the *MyChart* digital literacy pilot program across multiple sites, pending results from the pilot project.
- THP will investigate expanding the *MyChart* patient care and experience surveys to other platforms for patients who are not using *MyChart*.
- Depending on its success, THP will expand the pilot program that allows patients to cancel diagnostic imaging appointments and book earlier appointments when they become available through their *MyChart* account.
- Employment
 - THP will continue to increase accessibility of all-staff events by offering hybrid options and enabling auto-transcription features within virtual platforms for both hybrid and recorded events.
 - THP's Human Resources team is in the process of revamping the Attendance Management Program. With the launch of the new HRIS, the future state will re-align banked time and vacation to THP policies and collective agreements.

- THP will review and add additional accessibility features to the AODA & IASR learning modules in the newly launched HRIS.
- THP's People Safety and Support team will provide leaders with a Sick Leave/Return-To-Work Toolkit to be further equipped to provide support to employees on long-term leave, returning to work, and requiring accommodation.
- The THP Foundation will review their recruitment processes to ensure that accommodation supports are easily accessible to all candidates and that interview methods effectively support diverse learning and thinking styles.
- Design of Public Spaces
 - THP will soon be opening a new parking garage at Mississauga Hospital with a variety of accessibility features, such as accessible doors to elevator vestibules with push or wave buttons, accessible parking spots, clear signage and sufficient lighting.
 - THP is working on installing new accessible washrooms in 2D Mental Health at Credit Valley Hospital in the next year.
 - THP will introduce a new Labor Assessment unit at Credit Valley Hospital complete with door operations, widened labor lounge door widths, and 3 new accessible patient washrooms.
 - THP's Facilities team will work with a third-party vendor to complete a review of the accessibility of the vestibules in the Credit Valley Hospital parking garage.
 - THP will revise the elevator naming at CVH by moving away from the current nature theme to a more traditional "alpha" designation that will be more universally understood. The signs and all patient information documents will be updated accordingly, and the changes will be communicated throughout the organization.
- General
 - THP's Learning & Organizational Development team will develop additional Anti-Black Racism learning modules, while ensuring compliance with AODA requirements during the design process.