



CommunityCare
NORTHUMBERLAND

Multi-year Accessibility Plan

2024-2027

Mission

To connect our communities to the support, service and care they need throughout their lifelong journey.

Vision

A community where people experience connection and well-being.

Core Values

Relationships: we enter each relationship with care, ensuring equity, respect, and collaboration.

Accountability: we approach our work with integrity while balancing the voices of the people, community, and funders.

Community: we are engaged partners and together we celebrate our strengths and respond to the needs of our community.

Compassion: we deliver meaningful services supporting dignity and belonging through empathy, collaboration, and inclusivity.

Intent

This accessibility plan outlines the strategy of Community Care Northumberland to prevent and remove barriers for people with disabilities and comply with the requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

Statement of Commitment

Community Care Northumberland is committed to providing an accessible environment for all clients, residents, employees, job applicants, volunteers, and visitors who may enter our premises, access our information, or use our services.

As an organization, we respect and comply with the requirements of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and its associated regulation. We strive to provide an accessible and welcoming environment for everyone by identifying and removing barriers in our workplace and ensuring that new barriers are not created.

Community Care Northumberland ensures that persons with disabilities are provided with equal opportunities. We are committed to meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities in a timely and integrative manner that respects their dignity and independence. Accomplishing our accessibility goals requires systemic, cultural and behavioral change at all levels of the organization. CCN commits to making accessibility a priority through all levels of planning from designing the policies, program, facilities and services that our clients, residents and their families rely on.

Multi-year Accessibility Plan

This plan is reviewed and updated at least once every five years. This plan is in effect from January 1, 2024, to December 31st 2027. Employees and Volunteers are provided with required training under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and its associated regulation as soon as practicable after hiring, and when changes are made to the company's accessibility policies.

If you have any questions or concerns about this plan or its initiatives, or if you want to receive a copy of the plan in a different accessible format, please contact Trish Baird, CEO at t.baird@commcare.ca or 1-866-514-5774.

Completed Initiatives

Community Care Northumberland has completed the following initiatives to prevent and remove barriers and comply with the requirements of the *Integrated Accessibility Standards* regulation under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*:

Training

- Training and education on AODA standards were integrated into orientation for all agency employees and volunteers.

- Additional training opportunities were offered to employees through community organizations such as Canadian Hearing Society, CNIB & DeafBlind Ontario.

Information and Communication Standards

- Continued to have an active contract with CEOTIS – (Central Eastern Ontario Translation and Interpretation Services) for use when required.
- Ensured agency webpage has accessibility tools available to users who require various methods to access information (text changes, color variations, readable font etc.).
- Ensured written communication is available in larger font size and clear black and white features.

Employment Standards

- All job postings for employees highlight accommodation for individuals with disabilities as well as making candidates aware of commitment to accommodation
- Policies and procedures are in place to support an accessible workplace and respond to accessibility needs with the development of accommodation plans as needed.
- Ensured our commitment to inclusiveness and access to a barrier free environment throughout all stages of the recruitment and selection process for employees and volunteers.

Transportation Standards

- Ensured service was available and safe during COVID 19 pandemic by adapting spacing in vehicles and maintaining strong cleaning protocols.
- Supplied Personal Protective Equipment to all clients and transportation drivers to ensure Specialized Transportation was available during COVID 19 pandemic.
- Incorporated a limited 'stretcher transfer service' for clients requiring this type of accommodation for their transportation.

Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)

- Ensured that Ed's House Hospice Care Centre was built adhering to all accessibility requirements and standards.
- Standard practice for space leased or rented by CCN is that all space is physically accessible to persons with disabilities through either ramps into the building, elevators and accessible parking.

Customer Service Standards

- Reviewed and updated policies related to our commitment to service animals and supporting people.

New and Ongoing Initiatives

Community Care Northumberland plans to take or is in the process of completing the following initiatives to prevent and remove barriers and comply with the *Integrated*

Accessibility Standards regulation under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005:

General

- Review Terms of Reference and workplan for the agency Accessibility Committee to ensure multi-year plan initiatives are supported and accomplished.
- Ensure AODA compliance monitoring is a standing item at all Accessibility Committees.

Training

- Review and update AODA related training materials for employees and volunteers of the agency and their roles and responsibilities as it relates to providing service.
- Provide refresher training to employees and volunteers when there are revisions to policies, procedures, program and/or communication tools.
- Continue to share training opportunities to all employees and volunteers through DeafBlind Ontario and the Canadian Hearing Society.

Information and Communication Standards

- Planned update and renewal of website that clearly incorporates AODA standards for information and communication.
- Undertake focused feedback with clients with disabilities on the accessibility features of revamped website.
- Renewed contract with CEOTIS – (Central Eastern Ontario Translation and Interpretation Services) for use when required.
- CCN Accessibility Committee and CCN Communications Specialist review material that is used for communication ensuring it adheres to accessibility standards.
- Ensure AODA Policy Manual and Multi-Year are available to the general public both in printed form and through the agency website.
- Review and update annual status report and post to website.

Employment Standards

- Highlight policies relating to accommodation and accessibility to employees during orientation and at regular intervals to promote awareness and adherence.
- Ensure all individuals in a supervisory role are provided education regarding redeployment of employees that considers the accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities and any individual accommodation plans.
- Review and update if required all accommodation and return to work policies in conjunction with Human Resources Generalist.

Transportation Standards

- Review and update all protocols and policies related to orientation of transportation drivers.
- Review and update all record keeping related to transportation drivers to comply with AODA standards.
- Continuing with AODA training for all new transportation drivers and volunteer drivers.
- Review and update emergency preparedness procedures relating to the safety of individuals while in Specialized Transportation vehicles.

- Review and update current procedures related to dealing with potential equipment failures in agency-owned vehicles including;
 - ensuring that all transportation drivers have been trained on procedures for equipment failure when a vehicle is carrying passengers or when the vehicle is empty.
 - Ensuring each accessible vehicle has information available regarding equipment failures and instructions for client safety and security.
 - Ensuring each accessible vehicle has information available regarding equipment manual and/or vehicle maintenance contacts.
 - The current process for accessible equipment failures, whether for an accessible equipment part or the accessible vehicle itself is not functioning and, an equivalent service cannot be provided Community Care Northumberland will ensure one agency accessible vehicle is available for backup and take reasonable steps to accommodate persons with disabilities who would otherwise use the equipment. The equipment will be repaired as soon as is practicable.
- Review and modify (if feasible) booking procedures to reduce the time required for advance booking and allow for additional same day booking opportunities.
- Review and confirm procedures for notifying clients of service delays and disruptions.
- Review and adapt current process for estimating the demand for specialized transportation services and ways to respond to demand including addressing reduction of any wait times for service. This is completed by reviewing the previous 12-month cycle of bookings by 'date of booking' to ensure any changes in resources are deployed during 'high booking days' and that sufficient vehicles are available to address 'high-booking days' to shorten any wait times recorded. As of the 2025/2026 fiscal year, this review of bookings will be completed every 6 months.
- Review and update process for training transportation drivers on operation of accessibility equipment and dealing with equipment failures.

Design of Public Spaces Standards (Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment)

- Review tracking of maintenance requirements for all accessible features at Eds House Hospice Care Centre.
- Continue to incorporate AODA requirements into any space relocation or renovations including identification of specific standards for such things as service counter, walkway and parking.
- Receive input and feedback from clients when considering space design for programming purposes.

Customer Service Standards

- Incorporate APCA considerations in reviewing and updating the organization's client feedback process
- Incorporate AODA considerations in the review and updating of the Client Bill of Rights and responsibilities.
- Consult with stakeholders locally such as accessibility groups to maintain awareness of advancements in technology, protocols and standards.
- Ensure there is strong employee support for individuals with a disability to move through agency services and to other services in the community.
- Update notification procedures for temporary disruptions in services/operations.