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Accessibility for Manitobans Act

The Accessibility for Manitobans Act (AMA) became law on December 5, 2013, with the goal to providing clear, proactive processes to identify, prevent and remove barriers to accessibility.

Under this legislation, accessibility standards will be developed to address barriers to accessibility in the following five key areas of daily living:

- Customer service
- Employment
- Transportation
- Information and Communication
- Built environment

All public sector organizations (which includes Prairie Mountain Health) must develop an Accessibility Plan to address accessibility barriers in policies, practices and procedures. The goal is to ensure Manitobans of all abilities have full access to programs and services designed to meet the public's needs.

Prairie Mountain Health's (PMH) first Accessibility Plan received PMH Board approval on April 27th, 2017. This update will be in effect for 2022 - 2024.

Part 1: Baseline Report

A. Overview of Programs and Services

- Prairie Mountain Health is the managing body for the publicly funded health services and programs that are available within Prairie Mountain Health
- The *Regional Health Authorities Act* provides the legislated responsibility and authority to Prairie Mountain Health to plan, manage, deliver, monitor and evaluate health services with in the region
- Prairie Mountain Health is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Minister of Health.
- The Prairie Mountain Health region has a population of over 168,000 people

- Prairie Mountain Health operates 20 acute care sites; 43 long term care sites; 9 transitional care sites; and 2 mental health centres.
- Prairie Mountain Health employs over 7,500 people.

B. Accessibility Achievements

- Accessible Customer Service
 - PMH has implemented a policy for Accessible Customer Service. This policy addresses communication needs, assistive devices, support persons, service animals, physical barriers to access, staff training and accessible public events.
 - PMH has a formalized process to receive and respond to client's complaints and concerns. Anyone experiencing accessibility issues will have an avenue to bring their concerns forward.
 - PMH welcomes service animals in all public areas.
 - Accessible customer service training is available to all PMH staff and volunteers through the "Accessibility for Manitobans – Customer Service" online course.
- Accessible Employment
 - PMH has an Ability Management program which provides support to ill or injured employees to return to work in a safe manner through a collaborative approach.
 - People with disabilities are encouraged to apply if they have the appropriate skills / training to perform the functions of the position.
 - PMH provides support to employees who may need specialized work spaces (or other accommodations).
- Workplace Emergency Response Plan Implemented
 - Employees are regularly invited to confidentially notify HR re: accessibility needs during an emergency. Individualized emergency response plans are developed to ensure staff safety during an emergency.
- Accessibility resources for staff
 - Accessibility resources and tools available for all PMH staff and volunteers on the PMH intranet
- Language Access services and training for staff
 - Clients of PMH will have access to interpreter services if needed when accessing service.
- Safe Patient Handling training
 - PMH employees who care for clients, patients and residents are provided with training to ensure safe patient handling regardless of the client's mobility.

- Assessment of PMH buildings
 - Annually, PMH has processes to assess the structural state and needs of PMH facilities, including accessibility barriers. Through the annual capital and safety and security process, PMH is able to identify and correct deficiencies when resources allow.
- Majority of PMH staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients accessing service
- PMH has undertaken a region wide survey asking staff, clients and the public to identify what barriers to accessibility they may have encountered when accessing PMH facilities or services.
- Members of the Board of Directors and Local Health Involvement Groups have had the opportunity to receive training on Accessibility legislation and to provide feedback on the development of PMH's first Accessibility plan.

C. Barriers to Accessibility

Prairie Mountain Health undertook a survey in November 2016, to ask staff and the public where they may have encountered barriers while accessing PMH facilities or programs. Although the number of responses was low (186), the feedback provided has been valuable in helping to develop the PMH Accessibility Plan.

- *Attitudinal Barriers (people with disabilities being treated differently than people without disabilities)*
 - Limited awareness amongst staff of Accessibility legislation
 - Discrimination or ridicule for bariatric clients
 - Addressing the support person rather than the client themselves
 - Treating individual with physical disability as if they have a cognitive impairment – talk to them slower and louder
 - Raising their voice and “yelling” at individuals who are hearing impaired
- *Information & Communication Barriers (arise when a person with a disability cannot easily receive and /or understand information available to others)*
 - Small font on posters or brochures
 - Signage at an inaccessible height for clients in wheelchairs
 - Fire warnings are not visual
 - Interpreter services
- *Technological Barriers (occur when technology, or the way it is used, is not accessible)*
 - Website is not accessible
 - Phone systems, computer audio, teleconference volumes are difficult to understand for those with hearing impairments

- The shift to online only and registration options leaves individuals with physical and mental disabilities without information and registration options.
- Systemic Barriers (*policies, practices or procedures that result in some people receiving unequal access or being excluded*)
 - Individuals with disabilities living in small rural communities may not have the same access to health services as those living in larger centres
- Physical / Architectural Barriers (*in the environment prevent physical access for people with disabilities*)
 - Aging infrastructure and limited capital dollars
 - Poorly surfaced concrete and improperly graded elevations for safe wheelchair access exist in some PMH locations
 - Entrances that are not wheelchair accessible – no automatic door opener available
 - Bathrooms are not always accessible
 - Hallways cluttered with equipment etc

Part 2: Accessibility Plan

A. Statement of Commitment

Prairie Mountain Health is committed to preventing, identifying and removing barriers that may interfere with the ability of people with disabilities to access care and services at any Prairie Mountain Health facility or program. PMH is committed to treating people with disabilities in a way that allows them to maintain their dignity and independence. This includes clients, families, staff, physicians, volunteers, students and residents of the Prairie Mountain Health region.

The Prairie Mountain Health Vision, Mission and Values will provide the foundation.

Vision: *Health and Wellness for All*

Mission: *Together, we promote and improve the health of people in our region through the delivery of innovative and client centred health care.*

Values: Our values define what we believe in, what we stand for. They provide us with a common understanding of what's important and provide us with a framework for our actions.

- ❖ Integrity
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Accountability
- ❖ Responsiveness

- ❖ Equity
- ❖ Engagement

B. PMH Policies

The following PMH policies are in place that assist in:

- preventing discrimination for individuals with disabilities;
 - ensuring the safety of clients, patients, residents who have a disability;
 - providing access to programs / services and / or employment for individuals with disabilities;
- a. Accessible Customer Service
 - b. Ability Management Program (for employees)
 - c. Safe Patient Handling
 - d. Pet Policy
 - e. HR Recruitment policies
 - f. Interpreter Services policy
 - g. Falls Prevention & Management
 - h. Abuse (client)
 - i. Respectful Workplace (employees)

C. Actions

Action Plan

ACTION	TIMELINE	LEADS
Continue with communication plan to promote accessibility within Prairie Mountain Health: For Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise awareness - Accessibility supports that are available for clients For Public <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What accessibility supports exist - How to request accessible supports and services - Promote the availability of alternate formats on request - Identification and reporting of barriers - Reporting concerns related to accessibility 	Ongoing	Communications
Provide training to employees to increase their awareness of accessibility and to be able to identify	Ongoing	Accessibility Coordinator &

barriers		Education Ser.
Review and update accessibility resources for staff through intranet	June 2022	Accessibility Coordinator
Workplace Emergency Response Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite employees to confidentially notify HR re: accessibility needs during an emergency - Develop individualized emergency response plans 	Monthly As Needed	Communications DEPP
Work with Shared Health ICT to update PMH website to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.	November 2022	Communications
Assess / audit ongoing compliance for Accessibility Standard for Customer Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop action plan to address deficiencies 	May 2022	Accessibility Coordinator
Assess / audit ongoing compliance for Accessibility Standard for Employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop action plan to address deficiencies 	October 2022	Human Resources
Evaluate the progress of the Accessibility plan by re-issuing the Barriers to Accessibility Survey	Spring 2023	Accessibility Coordinator
Initiate communication campaign as a reminder to ensure staff are aware how to access interpreter services	September 2022	Communications
Review existing PMH policies with an Accessibility lens	ongoing	Policy Committee
Develop a process with Capital & Infrastructure to identify, catalogue and address barriers to accessibility within PMH	Underway	Capital & Infrastructure

For more information, to provide feedback on PMH’s Accessibility Plan or to request an alternate format of the Accessibility Plan, please contact Prairie Mountain Health at pmh@pmh-mb.ca or toll free at 1-888-682-2253.

