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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 2025 - 2027.

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 *Health System Governance & Accountability 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, Seniors & Long Term Care.
- 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; and 9 transitional care sites.
- Prairie Mountain Health employs over 7,500 people.

B. Accessibility Achievements

- Accessibility Provincial Chairs network
 - Chaired by Shared Health, a community of practice was established with representation from all SDOs, with the purpose of sharing information and strategies to address barriers to accessibility.
- Accessible Information and Communication
 - PMH ensures that the public and employees are aware that information can be provided in accessible / alternate formats upon request.
 - Training on the Information & Communication standard is available for all PMH staff and volunteers through the LMS system.
 - Processes are in place to review newly created PMH documents for compliance to Accessibility guidelines.
 - Work is continuing to review / revise existing PMH documents to ensure compliance to Accessibility standards.
- 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 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 advise of 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
- PMH has a formalized process to receive and respond to client's complaints and concerns. Anyone experiencing accessibility issues has an avenue to bring their concerns forward.
 - Summary reports available of accessibility related concerns to provide trending information
- PMH's public website was transitioned to a new platform to assist with ensuring compliance with WCAG standards.
- Website audits
 - quality reports are available through Shared Health to monitor progress towards compliance with WCAG Standards.
- 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.
 - Through the provincial Accessibility Chairs network, the Facility Accessibility Assessment tool (created by Shared Health) has been shared with PMH to trial in PMH facilities
- Majority of PMH staff are trained and familiar with various assistive devices that may be used by clients accessing service

C. Engagement / Consultation / Feedback

A critical component of preventing, identifying and removing barriers for people with disabilities when accessing care and services at PMH facilities or programs, is engaging with our clients / patients / residents, our staff and the public. A number of engagement opportunities have occurred to assist in the ongoing Accessibility activities and the development of the PMH Accessibility plans.

- Feedback from clients / patients / residents through Patient Relations. Feedback from our clients is compiled, investigated and resolved (if possible). Any concerns related to accessibility are tracked to identify trends etc.

- PMH tracks and investigates any incidents arising during the course of providing care to clients / patients / residents. Any incidents related to accessibility are tracked to identify trends and identify opportunities for improvement.
- 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. This survey will be issued again as part of the 2025 – 2027 Accessibility plan.
- PMH, with the support of Shared Health’s engagement team, undertook focus groups related to the design of the new Neepawa Health centre with specific questions related to accessibility.
- Staff feedback is encouraged through performance conversations, engagement surveys (eg. Global workforce survey) and through follow up related to identified incidents / concerns.
- Patient Partner focus groups related to the review of the 2025 – 2027 Accessibility plan are being planned for early 2025.

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 2025 – 2027

| ACTION | TIMELINE | LEADS |
|--|---------------|---------------------------|
| Seek feedback from Patient Partners on PMH’s draft Accessibility Plan for 2025 – 2027. | February 2025 | Accessibility Coordinator |
| Develop a formalized consultation process with clients and staff to better understand accessibility barriers and how to remedy them. | Fall 2025 | |
| 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 |

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| Provide training to employees to increase their awareness of accessibility and to be able to identify barriers | Ongoing | Accessibility Coordinator & Education Ser. |
| Monitor required training completion rates for all staff. | Quarterly | Human Resources |
| Review and update accessibility resources for staff through intranet | June 2025 | Accessibility Coordinator |
| Continue work to review / revise existing PMH documents to ensure compliance to Accessibility standards. | Ongoing | Communications |
| 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 |
| Assess / audit ongoing compliance for Accessibility Standard for Customer Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop action plan to address deficiencies | May 2025 | Accessibility Coordinator |
| Assess / audit ongoing compliance for Accessibility Standard for Employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop action plan to address deficiencies | September 2025 | Human Resources |
| Assess / audit ongoing compliance for Accessibility Standard for Communication & Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop action plan to address deficiencies | Spring 2026 | Accessibility Coordinator |
| Evaluate the progress of the Accessibility plan by re-issuing the Barriers to Accessibility Survey | Fall 2025 | Accessibility Coordinator |
| Initiate communication campaign as a reminder to ensure staff are aware how to access interpreter services | April 2025 | 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 trialing the Facility Accessibility Assessment tool (created by Shared Health) | 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.