

## **SINAI HEALTH Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2024-2029)**

### **1. Sinai Health**

Sinai Health is comprised of Mount Sinai Hospital, Hennick Bridgepoint Hospital, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute and system partner Circle of Care. As an integrated health system, it delivers exceptional care from healthy beginnings to healthy aging, especially for people with specialized and complex health needs, in hospital, community and at home. Sinai Health discovers and translates scientific breakthroughs, develops practical health solutions, educates future clinical and scientific leaders, and leads efforts to eliminate health inequities.

The two main sites in Toronto are located at 600 University Avenue and 1 Bridgepoint Drive.

Additional sites are located on various floors at:

- a. Ontario Power Generation Building at 700 University Avenue;
- b. Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Building at 60 Murray Street;
- c. 522 University Avenue;
- d. Toronto Centre of Phenogenomics Building at 25 Orde St;
- e. Wellness Centre Scarborough at 3833 Midland Avenue;
- f. 250 Dundas Street West;
- g. 2 Sheppard Avenue East, 4th Floor;
- h. 200 Elm Street;
- i. 260 Spadina Avenue;
- j. Sherman Health and Wellness Centre, 9600 Bathurst Street;

Additional Information about the hospital and its activities can be found on the Sinai Health website: [www.sinaihealth.ca](http://www.sinaihealth.ca).

## 2. Aims & Objective of the Sinai Health Accessibility Plan

In September 2023, Sinai Health held an accessibility workshop, which was a pivotal step in renewing the organization's multi-year accessibility plan for 2024-2029. This workshop served as a platform to gather innovative change ideas, best practices, and key priorities, all seen through an equity, diversity, and intersectional lens. The event was enriched by the diverse perspectives of its participants who included accessibility experts, organizations dedicated to improving accessibility, individuals living with disabilities, patients, caregivers, families, and Sinai Health's own staff, physicians, volunteers, and human factors engineers. Leadership from various hospital areas also contributed to the depth of the discussions.

The forthcoming multi-year plan (2024-2029) aims to not only meet, but also exceed the standards set by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA, 2005). This objective will be achieved by weaving together the valuable insights from the workshop participants, the established standards of the AODA, the advanced recommendations from the Health Care Standards Development Committee, and other relevant accessibility standards. Together, these elements will enable Sinai Health to enhance accessibility and inclusion for individuals of all abilities.

An accessible Sinai Health means:

- Prioritizing the principle of 'Access over Accommodation,' ensuring that our spaces, programs, services, and workplace environment are designed with accessibility, inclusion, and belonging at the forefront. This approach aims to ensure that the needs of individuals with disabilities are integrated upstream into the organizations core hospital planning, design and quality improvement efforts.
- Individuals with disabilities are provided services and goods tailored to meet their unique needs, ensuring a personalized and effective approach to support.
- Sinai Health ensures that all information and communications are available in accessible formats, catering to the diverse needs of our patients, visitors, employees, volunteers, promoting inclusivity and ease of access for everyone.
- Sinai Health is committed to fostering a fully inclusive employee environment where persons with disabilities, whether they are current or prospective employees or volunteers, can participate fully and effectively in all aspects of our workplace.
- Sinai Health, in accordance with the principle of universal design, ensures full physical accessibility for persons of all abilities, both inside and outside our facilities, facilitating independent and barrier-free access to the greatest extent possible.



- All persons are able to provide feedback to Sinai Health on their experience and concerns related to issues of accessibility, contributing to a culture of continuous improvement, partnership and inclusivity.

The 2024-2029 accessibility plan is organized around the following general requirements of the AODA and Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation:

- Customer Service
- Information and Communication
- Design of Public Spaces
- Employment

### **3. The Health Equity & Accessibility Committee**

The Health Equity & Accessibility Committee at Sinai Health includes broad membership with representation of patient and family advisors with lived experience living with disabilities, employees and volunteer services at all levels across Sinai Health. The committee also includes membership from the community and senior level executive sponsorship.

The Health Equity & Accessibility Committee is responsible for guiding and directing the activities related to accessibility. Sinai Health also receives input from various sources to inform the activities, including:

- Feedback through patient relations
- Targeted feedback from patients, caregivers, families and staff
- Patient and Family Advisory Councils
- Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Department
- Human Resources
- Monitoring Social Media including Twitter
- Risk Management
- Security



The following priorities and commitments have been developed to advance the culture of accessibility and inclusion. The priorities are based on:

- Insights, feedback and expertise from internal and external stakeholders.
- Recommendations from the Health Care Standards Development Committee.
- Sinai Health's commitment to meet and exceed the AODA standards and requirements.
- Sinai Health's commitment to developing transparent and standardized processes across the system by harmonizing policies, procedures and practices.
- Sinai Health's pledge to review and refresh the multi-year accessibility plan annually.

#### **4. Engagement Strategy**

Sinai Health utilizes a broad engagement strategy to inform the work of the Health Equity & Accessibility Committee. The strategy includes:

- Collection and analysis of themes from Patient Relations, the engagement of patients/families, visitors and staff who identify as living with a disability (i.e. experiential review of physical space).
- Partnership/Shared Leadership on Health Equity & Accessibility Committee with intentional recruitment of patients, caregivers and staff with lived experience of disabilities.
- Establishment of the Patient and Family Advisory Council and focus groups with patients and caregivers with lived experience.



Customer Service			
Requirement/Change Idea	Plan	Responsibility	Status
Engagement with persons with disabilities in hospital accessibility planning and design.	<p>Inclusion of people with broad range of disabilities in hospital planning.</p> <p>Sinai Health will develop formal processes to consider the needs of, and meaningfully secure representation of, persons with lived experience of disability and organizations that represent people with a broad range of disabilities and diverse identities to participate in hospital planning. (e.g., participation in hospital service planning, quality improvement, capital planning and procurement process).</p>	<p>Quality &amp; Patient Experience</p> <p>Professional Practice</p> <p>Facilities and Capital Development</p> <p>Procurement</p>	To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2025/2026
	<p>Include persons with disabilities in all Patient Family Advisory Committees.</p> <p>The hospital will proactively recruit persons with disabilities/lived experiences for all Patent Family Advisory Committees and other community advisory committees.</p>	<p>Quality &amp; Patient Experience</p>	
Facilitate barrier-free access to health services for patients with disabilities.	<p>Review and update policies and procedures to facilitate access to health services. Policies and procedures will ensure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A process for informing patient and caregivers on what to expect regarding accommodation plans at the earliest possible time in their care journey.</li> <li>Staff aware of how to secure and ensure that patients have access to personally owned essential devices/items at all times (including during a pandemic and emergency situations).</li> <li>Updating inventory and location of specialized equipment intended to accommodate patients with disabilities.</li> <li>Health care providers use specialized equipment to meet accessibility-related patient needs including assistive devices, communication devices/materials, medical equipment, etc.</li> <li>Education on process to report damaged or faulty equipment in need of repair.</li> </ol>	<p>Professional Practice</p>	To be completed in FY 2024/2025
	<p>Make funding available to purchase, repair and replace specialized equipment to meet the patient's accessibility-related needs</p> <p>As part of the annual equipment planning process, an allocation shall be made for the purchase/repair/replacement of specialized equipment used to meet accessibility-related patient needs.</p>	<p>Procurement</p>	To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2028/2029
	<p>Effective patient-provider communication in all healthcare services, and provision of informed consent</p> <p>Sinai Health will review, update, and, where necessary, develop policies, procedures, and practices to provide persons with disabilities with the individualized accommodations and supports they require to ensure understanding of the information provided, retain and</p>	<p>Professional Practice</p>	To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2028/2029

	weigh consequences of options, and make and communicate their decision(s).		
Inclusion of accessibility accommodations in the Electronic Medical Record.	<p>Sinai Health will review, update and develop, where necessary, policies, procedures, and practices that ensure the accommodation needs of persons with disabilities are identified, recorded, shared, and acted upon at each point of contact within the hospital. With patient consent, such information will be shared by hospitals when transitions to community care are required.</p> <p>Sinai Health will ensure that critical information about accommodations is reviewed and updated in the admission module of the Electronic Health Record with each admission to facilitate the continuity of health care information.</p>	<p>Professional Practice</p> <p>Clinical Informatics</p> <p>Information Services</p>	To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2028/2029
Build staff capacity to support individuals living with disabilities through Training and Education.	<p>Update accessibility training for healthcare providers to address provider knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The hospital will mandate updated accessibility training for all staff.</p> <p>Training to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant legislative responsibilities pertaining to healthcare and accessibility (i.e., Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, AODA, Human Rights Code)</li> <li>• Person-centered care, as viewed through an intersectional lens</li> <li>• Duty to accommodate</li> <li>• How to go beyond duty to accommodate (addressing attitudinal barriers, implicit bias, negative stereotypes)</li> <li>• Community-based supports for persons with disabilities</li> <li>• Specific recommendations based on role of hospital staff</li> <li>• How to provide equitable access to care during an emergency or pandemic situation</li> <li>• Guidelines for working with essential third-party support partners</li> <li>• How to ensure that persons with disabilities can communicate and direct their care independent of other people's interests</li> <li>• Input from people living with disabilities, and be made accessible in alternative formats and English and French</li> </ul> <p>Formal written acknowledgement of health care workers' understanding, adherence, and commitment to providing accessible and inclusive care.</p> <p>Acknowledgement includes providing the same quality care based on free and informed consent, adherence to human rights, intersectional lens and respect for dignity, autonomy, and diverse needs of persons with disabilities.</p>	Education and Academic Affairs	To be completed in FY 2024/2025

<p>Access to third-party support services for persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>Sinai Health will review, updated, and, where necessary develop policies, procedures and practices to facilitate persons with disabilities in accessing and utilizing their own third-party support services, as required by the patient and wherever possible, while in hospital.</p> <p>Third-party support services are provided to a patient while in hospital by individuals not employed by the hospital, to support them in one or more areas such as: sensory support, communication, decision-making, personal care (meals, positioning, transfers, set up and use of assistive devices). This may include support from an essential care provider, service animal or private support.</p>	<p>Professional Practice</p> <p>Quality &amp; Patient Experience</p>	<p>To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2026/2027</p>
<p><b>Information and Communication</b></p>			
<p><b>Requirement/Change Idea</b></p>	<p><b>Plan</b></p>	<p><b>Responsibility</b></p>	<p><b>Status at Annual Review</b></p>
<p>The Integrated Accessibility Standard requires that Sinai Health websites meet criteria for accessibility.</p>	<p>Sinai Health will complete the website transformation World Wide Web Consortium <i>Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA</i> standards.</p>	<p>Corporate Communications</p>	<p>To be completed in FY 2024/2025</p>
<p><b>Design of Buildings and Spaces</b></p>			
<p><b>Requirement/Change Idea</b></p>	<p><b>Plan</b></p>	<p><b>Responsibility</b></p>	<p><b>Status at Annual Review</b></p>
<p>Design of Public Spaces - AODA</p> <p>The Design of Public Spaces standard outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) mandates that Sinai Health ensure the accessibility of newly-constructed or significantly renovated public spaces and Sinai Health people facing spaces.</p> <p>Our commitment to accessibility is foundational to Sinai Health and is embodied in our purpose, values and our legacy of caring for those who are vulnerable and marginalized. We have successfully transformed and enhanced many of the most important areas of Mount Sinai Hospital as part of our Renew Sinai Phase 3A project with accessibility in mind. Sinai Health is committed to continuing and building upon this progress to creating a universally accessible environment across all our sites and spaces. Our dedication to accessibility is inherent in the work we have undertaken, ensuring that the principles of universal design are embedded in our renewed spaces.</p>	<p>Continue to collaborate with the internal stakeholders, design professionals and on-going redevelopment initiatives to proactively review and address evolving accessibility requirements.</p> <p>Partner with patients and families to understand their experiences, collect feedback and recommendations to help inform and enhance the universal design of spaces.</p> <p>Approach all construction projects, whether new developments or modifications to existing spaces, with a dedicated commitment to accessibility standards.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p> <p>Facilities and Capital Development, Patient Relations</p> <p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>To be completed between 2024/2025-2028-2029</p>



<p><b>Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC)</b></p> <p>The Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) program works to help improve accessibility of the built environment in Canada – the places where we live, work, learn and play. RHFAC is a national rating system that evaluates and certifies the level of meaningful access in buildings and sites, surpassing current mandated standards in Ontario. As part of Sinai Health's commitment to accessibility, and in response to input we have received from patients and families, we are RHFAC standards with the goal of creating a fully accessible and inclusive environment across our campuses.</p> <p><b>Why Pursue RHFAC Certification:</b> Everyone will experience disability at some point in our lives, whether it's caused by the natural effects of aging, or by an accident or injury. Therefore, we need our communities to be accessible so that we can continue to participate and live full lives. Providing universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible public spaces ensures that everyone is able to participate and live to their full potential. The RHFAC offers a comprehensive set of guidelines that goes beyond the minimum requirements, reflecting our commitment to creating environments that are inclusive and accessible for all.</p> <p><b>Bridgepoint Campus</b> At Hennick Bridgepoint Hospital (HBH), our goal is to achieve the RHFAC highest certification, RHF Accessibility Certified Gold. This achievement would make HBH the first adult hospital to achieve certification in Canada, further positioning HBH as a leader in accessibility.</p> <p><b>Mount Sinai Campus</b> At our Mount Sinai Hospital (MSH), we aim to develop a roadmap to obtaining RHFAC, with the understanding that this may take some time. Our initial commitment is to first having a RHFAC assessment. Our aim is to identify and prioritize areas for improvement, aligning</p>	<p>In Year One (2024), Sinai Health aims to achieve Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certified Certification at HBH. This is the first level of certification by the Rick Hansen Foundation and the first milestone toward achieving gold certification. Sinai Health will work with a designated RHFAC Professional to conduct an on-site review and assessment of HBH to determine our rating and growing commitment to accessibility.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>To be completed in FY 2024/2025</p>
	<p>By Year Five (2029), Sinai Health aims to have created a roadmap and be making progress to achieving gold certification with clear milestones outlined. This will involve ongoing collaboration with the RHF, an assessment of HBH, and recommendation for areas that may need to be updated/improved in order to achieve gold. This effort will engage various stakeholders, including Sinai Health's executive team and capital funding team, to synchronize improvement areas and secure the required funding for necessary changes.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	
	<p>By Year Five (2029), Sinai Health will also conduct an initial assessment at MSH and create a roadmap to achieving Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certified Certification. This initiative aims to gather insights and identify areas for improvement with the ultimate goal of achieving Rick Hansen Foundation Certification for MSH.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2028-2029</p>





<p>with the overarching objective of eventually achieving RHFAC at this site.</p>			
<p><b>60 Murray Accessibility Audit and Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>Following valuable input from patients and families regarding the accessibility challenges at 60 Murray Street (Ambulatory Care and Research building that is part of Mount Sinai Campus), Sinai Health initiated an audit of the building to identify and prioritize areas that require improvements to meet accessibility standards.</p> <p>The audit covered key systems and elements of the facility, such as horizontal and vertical circulation, exterior/parking, entry points, and public spaces.</p> <p>Over the next five years, Sinai Health will focus on addressing priority accessibility areas of non-compliance identified in the audit. The proposed plan involves a phased implementation of improvements, taking into account severity, resource allocation, and organization goals.</p>	<p>Develop a comprehensive Implementation Roadmap identifying specific improvements and recommendations detailed in the accessibility audit. Sinai Health will continue to partner with patients and families throughout the planning process to ensure accessibility standards and best practices are met.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2026-2027</p>
	<p>Develop a signage and wayfinding strategy at 60 Murray that maintains operational functionality during the implementation of changes recommended in the audit report.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2028-2029</p>
<p><b>600 University Accessibility Audit and Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>In response to feedback from patients and families, and building upon the work at 60 Murray, Sinai Health will also assess and address accessibility challenges at 600 University, Mount Sinai Hospital. An audit will be completed, focusing on high-traffic, publicly accessible areas first (e.g. the 3rd and 4th floors).</p>	<p>In Year One (2024), conduct an accessibility audit on the 3rd and 4th floors to identify areas for improvement and ensure alignment with accessibility standards.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>To be completed in FY 2024/2025</p>
	<p>Partner with patients and families, Sinai Health People, and the Accessibility Committee to review the findings of the Accessibility Audit and develop recommendations for implementation.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	
	<p>Develop a comprehensive Implementation Roadmap identifying specific improvements and recommendations detailed in the accessibility audit. Sinai Health will continue to partner with patients and families throughout the planning process to ensure accessibility standards and best practices are met.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>To be completed between FY 2024/2025-2028/2029</p>
	<p>Establish an implementation roadmap, considering operational logistics, signage, and detour options to minimize disruptions for individuals on the 3rd and 4th floors.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	
<p>Sinai Health will continue to maintain accessible elements in public spaces through regular monitoring and planned preventative maintenance. Sinai Health will also continue to respond to temporary disruptions by notifying the public and prioritizing remediation when accessible elements are out of order.</p>	<p>Facilities and Capital Development</p>	<p>On-Going</p>	

Notes: Accessibility Standards - In this report, the term "accessibility standards" refers to the requirements outlined in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the Ontario Building Code (OBC), and other relevant regulations. These standards are essential benchmarks guiding our efforts to create an environment that is inclusive and accessible to individuals of all abilities.