

PRIMARY CARE ACCESSIBILITY CHECKLIST



Canadian Disability Policy Alliance
Alliance Canadienne concernant
les politiques reliées au handicap

This is a brief, practical, self-assessment tool intended to assist primary health care settings to increase their awareness of the needs of disabled patients, and to enhance accessibility in the practice. It is based on research conducted jointly by the Centre for Health Services & Policy Research and the Centre for Studies in Primary Care at Queen's University. This tool is offered by the Canadian Disability Policy Alliance to accelerate awareness of disability issues in primary care, and to assist practices toward becoming barrier-free, in accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005). When we hear about accessibility in primary care, there are a number of barriers that patients with disabilities may encounter:

- **Physical barriers** – the ability to enter and move around in the practice;
- **Attitudinal barriers** - the ability to receive service commensurate with needs and abilities;
- **Expertise** – a reasonable expectation of awareness of disability and its consequences;
- **Systemic** – rules and policies that place undue burden on patients with disabilities.

This self-assessment tool can be administered by walking around the practice, talking with staff, and observing the extent to which considerations are in place to permit people with disabilities access to your practice and your services.

PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY		☒
Building Entrance	• Is there a drop-off point near the main entrance? • Are there designated accessible parking spots? • Is the approach to the building free of barriers & obstacles (eg. uneven pavement, narrow path)? • Does the building have an access point for wheelchairs (eg. level entrance or ramp)? • Are there handrails present on all stairs? • Are doors wide enough to permit entrance of a wheelchair (~30") • Are there automatic doors for ease of opening? • Is signage clear and large enough to be seen by visually impaired patients?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Office Entrance	• Can someone with a wheelchair (manual or power) enter the office & and waiting room? • Are counters low enough to accommodate someone in a wheelchair, and free of barriers? • Is there adequate maneuvering room and wide doorways? • Are there wheelchair accessible washrooms available to patients? • Does the system for calling patients accommodate those with hearing impairments or visual impairments?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Exam Room	• Is there at least one exam room with adjustable examining table and/or ceiling lift? • Is there adequate maneuvering room for a wheelchair (~ 36" turning radius) • Is there adequate room for an attendant or interpreter? • Is the room free of distractions, including background music/noise?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

STAFF AWARENESS		☒
Personal Assistance	- Have all staff received disability awareness training? - Is there written policy regarding accessibility? - Are services available for hearing-impaired patients (sign-language interpretation, audio augmentation devices)? - Is assistance available and willingly provided for transfers, dressing/un-dressing?	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
Info	- Does any information available (pamphlets, hand-outs) take account of disability? - Is essential patient-related information (such as prescriptions, instructions) offered in alternative formats (eg. large-print, plain language, Braille, audio-enhanced)?	☐ ☐
Time	- Is sufficient time allocated to allow issues to be dealt with thoroughly? - Is additional time allowed for communication, explanation, examination, where necessary?	☐ ☐
KNOWLEDGE / EXPERTISE		☒
Medical	- Are physicians aware of natural course and complications of disability? - Are physicians aware of interactions of disability with common health problems? - Do medical recommendations take account of the implications for function and community living?	☐ ☐ ☐
Staff	Are staff familiar with disability-related procedures (e.g. transfers, leg-bag emptying, communication strategies)?	☐
System	Is someone in the practice aware of systems, benefits, community supports and entitlements of disability?	☐
ACCOMMODATIONS – Which are available to disabled patients?		☒
Schedule	- Longer appointment times - After-hours appointments - Special timing of appointments	☐ ☐ ☐
Telephone Contacts	- Telephone consultations (including alternative formats) - Telephone prescriptions renewals - Email contact	☐ ☐ ☐
Alternate Sites	- Home visits - Emergency room visits - Joint appointments with specialist	☐ ☐ ☐

(McColl et al., 2008)



A vision of Canada where people with disabilities enjoy full participation and citizenship, supported by a coherent framework of legislation, regulation and programs.