

Human Resources Legislative Update

Ontario Seeking Input on Health Care Accessibility Standards under AODA

Date: May 13, 2021

On May 7, 2021, the Health Care Standards Development Committee (Committee) published [initial recommendations](#) for the development of health care accessibility standards under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* (AODA). The 22 recommendations provide guidance on how to integrate accessibility in health care planning and how to identify, remove and prevent recurring barriers.

The Committee is seeking public input on these recommendations and will review all feedback received by August 11, 2021. Some of these recommendations are summarized below.

- **Accessibility planning and engagement with persons with disabilities:** establishing mechanisms for engagement with persons and organizations that represent people with a broad range of disabilities regarding health service planning, quality improvement and capital planning.
- **Consultation on procurement for facilities:** establishing mechanisms for consultation with accessibility specialists and/or groups of individuals with disabilities on the procurement process for certain equipment, spaces, services or renovation/redevelopment projects.
- **Access to equipment:** working in collaboration with hospital accessibility specialists and groups of individuals with lived experience of disabilities to facilitate access to health services for patients with disabilities, including access to the location of specialized equipment intended to accommodate patients with disabilities.
- **Coordination of accessibility accommodations:** establishing policies, procedures and practices to ensure the accommodation needs of persons with disabilities are identified, recorded, shared and acted upon at each point of contact, including transitions to community care.
- **Electronic health records:** including mandatory fields/information in the demographic/admission screen of the electronic health/patient record that outlines the identification and provision of accessibility accommodations and support requirements for all patients with disabilities.
- **Support for accommodations and patient-centred care:** advancing a culture of accommodation within their person-centred care philosophy (or patient and family-centered care work) and ensure that their education reinforces practices that enable persons with disabilities to fully participate in their care.
- **Communication accommodation and respect for capacity:** establishing policies, procedures and practices and providing education to ensure health care providers recognize, understand and respect the capacity of all persons with disabilities to be full participants in their care and to ensure that persons with disabilities are provided with accommodations to improve communications between them and their health care providers.
- **Effective communication and informed consent:** establishing policies, procedures and practices, that comply with existing legislation, to provide persons with disabilities with the individualized accommodations and supports they require to ensure understanding of information provided, retain and weigh consequences of options, and make and communicate their decision(s).
- **Development and implementation of education and training in hospitals:** developing and implementing standardized AODA health care education and training modules to be used across all Ontario hospitals.
- **Training resources and core competencies:** addressing relevant topics when developing standardized AODA health care education and training modules.
- **Hospital declaration of values:** declaration of values and/or patient bill of rights to include a commitment statement to accessibility and a reference to the rights of patients to raise concerns and make complaints without fear of reprisal.
- **Accessible complaint process:** expanding current requirements for patient complaints processes by including certain accessibility measures.
- **Accessibility and disability during a pandemic or emergency situations:** following the end of declarations of a



state of emergency, conducting a review of successes and failures in relation to persons with disabilities and their access to health care.

The public is encouraged to provide feedback by either completing an [online survey](#) or emailing a written submission to healthSDC@ontario.ca by August 11, 2021.

Should you wish to provide feedback on these recommendations and require assistance, please contact [Andrew Zabrovsky](#), [Sarah Eves](#), [Sunny Khaira](#) or [your regular Hicks Morley lawyer](#).