



3sHealth
better together



Accessibility Plan

2025-2028

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To request an alternate format, please contact the 3sHealth office

by email at info@3sHealth.ca or by phone at 306.347.5500.

Introduction

The Health Shared Services Saskatchewan (3sHealth) is committed to identifying, removing, and preventing accessibility barriers for individuals who work at or access 3sHealth's facilities, programs, and services. The Government of Saskatchewan introduced *The Accessible Saskatchewan Act*, which came into force on December 3, 2023. The Act requires 3sHealth to publicly post an accessibility plan to remove and prevent accessibility barriers for persons with disabilities.

In the spirit of "Nothing about us, without us," 3sHealth engaged with the employees, leaders, visitors and clients who access 3sHealth facilities, programs, and services to inform the actions outlined in the organization's first accessibility plan. A public survey was conducted between December 5, 2024, and January 24, 2025, to seek feedback from individuals, including persons with disabilities, to assess accessibility barriers at 3sHealth. During this time, individuals accessing 3sHealth facilities and services were invited to participate by receiving the online survey link either in person or through our call centre interactions. A paper-based survey was also made available for those who requested it. We also invited employees, committee members, and plan members to participate in the survey. A total of 83 responses were received, with 11 respondents reporting accessibility barriers, while 72 reported no barriers.

During this engagement, we heard about physical accessibility barriers that people experience related to entrances, parking, and navigation when accessing 3sHealth's building. We also heard about technology, information, and communication barriers related to finding and understanding information about 3sHealth's programs and services. For example, people told us that websites can be confusing, making it hard to find and access information. People also told us that their challenges with reading comprehension affected their ability to use and interpret procedural documentation. People also shared their experiences with attitudinal barriers and being treated differently due to their disability.

3sHealth worked to consider the feedback received and identified actions that the organization will take over the next three years to improve the accessibility of 3sHealth's facilities, programs, and services.

Accessibility barriers

The Accessible Saskatchewan Act defines a barrier as "anything that hinders or challenges the full and equal participation in society of persons with disabilities."

There are many types of barriers that persons with disabilities may experience, including physical barriers, information and communications barriers, attitudinal barriers, and technology barriers. Definitions and examples of each barrier type are outlined below to help people understand the experiences of persons with disabilities.

Physical barriers

Physical barriers exist when spaces are designed in ways that prevent or limit mobility or access.

For example:

- Hosting public events at a venue that is only accessible by stairs.
- Parking lots with no curb cuts that make it difficult to access sidewalks.
- Washrooms that lack accessible stalls or automatic door openers.

Information and communications barriers

Information and communications barriers exist when information or material is shared in a way that is not accessible to all people.

For example:

- Using small print that is hard to read.
- Websites and documents that are not accessible for screen readers.
- Videos that do not have closed captioning.

Attitudinal barriers

Attitudinal barriers exist when people act or think based on false assumptions.

For example:

- Not including persons with disabilities in decisions that impact them.
- Making assumptions about a person's ability to communicate or do things for themselves.
- Avoiding a person with a disability for fear of offending them.

Technology barriers

Technology barriers exist when technology is designed in such a way that it cannot be used by a variety of people.

For example:

- Inaccessible phone menus or messaging systems.
- Websites that are not compatible with assistive devices (screen reader, speech-to-text, etc.).
- Mobile apps that are not accessible.

Accessibility goals and actions

3sHealth has taken some steps to improve the accessibility of its facilities, programs, and services. However, we recognize that progress will be ongoing as we aim to become a more inclusive organization. This plan outlines the actions that 3sHealth will prioritize over the next three years to remove accessibility barriers that persons with disabilities experience. 3sHealth will work to complete the actions outlined in this plan and raise awareness about accessibility across 3sHealth.

Goal 1 – Improve employee knowledge and awareness of accessibility

Increasing employee awareness about accessibility and understanding the importance of inclusion are key to improving the quality of services provided to all individuals, including persons with disabilities.

Actions for 2025-28:

- Develop new accessibility-focused training for 3sHealth employees to increase accessibility awareness and promote a more inclusive and accepting work environment. This includes providing leadership with specialized training on disability awareness, inclusive communication, reasonable accommodations, and strategies for fostering an accessible work environment. Ensuring that managers and employees are well-versed in these areas will contribute to a culture of inclusivity and support for individuals with disabilities. This training will help employees identify and remove accessibility barriers, more confidently interact with persons with disabilities, and create more inclusive spaces for all.

Goal 2 – Improve physical accessibility

3sHealth recognizes that accessible buildings are an important part of improving the accessibility of 3sHealth's services. 3sHealth aims to create barrier-free physical spaces by addressing issues related to parking, entrances, walkways, and service counters.

Achievements to date:

3sHealth made accessibility improvements to its office space during its move to a new leased office space at the Delta Hotel in November 2023. These improvements include all-new leasehold improvements constructed according to the most recent building code requirements, adding visual fire alarm signals for hard of hearing employees, and designing the visitor interview/meeting room to accommodate visitors who use a wheelchair or a walker.

Actions for 2025-28:

- Evaluate 3sHealth's office space to better understand current accessibility barriers and to identify areas for improvement. Regular assessments will help pinpoint barriers and prioritize upgrades. Evaluate the use of accessibility certification tools from the Rick Hansen Foundation.
- Collaborate with property owners to provide additional accessible parking spaces and clear navigation routes. Improving parking availability and signage will enhance accessibility for all users.
- In collaboration with property owners, develop strategies to increase braille signage in elevators and applicable areas, and make accessibility improvements to reception areas in 3sHealth's office space.
- Engage with property owners to identify and remove accessibility barriers. 3sHealth will collaborate with property management to encourage accessibility improvements. Advocate for facility upgrades, offer training to property managers on accessibility best practices and establish a reporting mechanism for employees to document accessibility concerns that need to be addressed by property management. Educating facility managers will lead to proactive and sustainable solutions.

Goal 3 – Enhance information and communication accessibility

To ensure that all individuals can easily access and understand information, 3sHealth will improve the clarity and accessibility of communications across all platforms. As many individuals access information through digital platforms like websites and social media, it is important to make sure that digital content is understandable and accessible on the devices that people use.

Achievements to date:

When redesigning the 3sHealth.ca website in 2019-20, the new site was created using Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), the international standards for making web content more accessible, as a guide.

Actions for 2025-28:

- Evaluate tools that may help assess 3sHealth's website accessibility and identify difficulties that people experience when using the website. 3sHealth will continue to review and improve the accessibility of its websites and web-based services.
- As per the Act, 3sHealth will provide documents in accessible formats upon request. This could include braille, audio, large print, and other formats that enhance inclusivity.
- Investigate the cost/benefit implications of securing a WCAG audit to ensure 3sHealth.ca is accessible to individuals with disabilities and identify potential gaps. In the interim, all new website content will be created to meet accessibility standards wherever possible, and future updates will work toward closing any remaining compliance gaps.

- Incorporate questions requesting feedback on the plan into 3sHealth's annual employee engagement survey and periodic customer surveys to regularly assess accessibility barriers at 3sHealth.

Goal 4 – Address attitudinal barriers

3sHealth seeks to foster an inclusive workplace culture by increasing awareness and understanding of accessibility challenges.

Actions for 2025-28:

- Require members of 3sHealth's planned employee-led Diversity Inclusion and Belonging Committee to provide ongoing feedback on accessibility matters. This will include assessing and improving accessibility efforts by gathering feedback from employees, clients, and visitors. Their role will include identifying new accessibility barriers, recommend practical solutions, and ensure that initiatives are informed by those directly affected, fostering a more inclusive and responsive work environment. Employee input will help identify new barriers and recommend actionable solutions.

Goal 5 – Improve technology accessibility

Ensuring digital platforms and tools are accessible to all users is a key priority for 3sHealth.

Achievements to date:

As part of our new leased office space, 3sHealth upgraded its network and internet infrastructure. 3sHealth also provides free Wi-Fi for visitors to help them access information. This ensures persons who are deaf and hard of hearing can use internet-based sign language interpretation services and allows visitors to access information and forms on their mobile devices without impacting their mobile data usage.

Actions for 2025-28:

- Evaluate potential enhancements to digital systems to support tools such as screen readers, voice recognition software, digital tools designed to improve sound quality for individuals with hearing impairments, and keyboard-only navigation to improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities. It may also involve updating software to include accessibility settings and integrating adaptive technologies (like speech-to-text or text-to-speech functionalities) and captioning services that provide text alternatives for spoken communication. Updating systems will enhance usability for individuals relying on assistive devices.
- Evaluate the provision of alternative digital communication options for employees and clients. Expanding digital communication channels, such as chatbots and video conferencing with captioning, will improve access for individuals with diverse needs.

Conclusion

3sHealth remains committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment. This plan will be reviewed and updated every three years to ensure continuous improvement. We welcome ongoing feedback from our community about accessibility barriers that impact the lives of persons with disabilities.

Contact us

Please contact the 3sHealth Office to share any feedback, questions, or comments you have on our accessibility plan, or to request an alternate format of this document.

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