

Checklist for Improving the Accessibility of your Healthcare Services

As you review the items in this list, keep in mind that it is desirable to have healthcare services that are accessible, not only for your patients who have a disability, but also for family members with a disability who may attend your patients (with or without a disability) and also for visitors who may have a disability.

- Are there designated parking spaces close to the building (at least 3.9m wide) and convenient drop off points for patients with a disability?
- Are the curbs lowered to allow wheelchairs and scooters easy access to the building?
- Is there a ramp into the building if the entrance has stairs? Are there handrails with a minimum width between rails of 87cms?
- Are there automatic doors with buttons appropriately placed?
- Is there a wheelchair accessible elevator in the building?
- Are there handrails on all walls and stairs?
- Are the doors and hallways wide enough (at least 80cm clearance) to accommodate wheelchairs and scooters?
- Is the reception counter low enough to accommodate someone in a wheelchair or scooter?
- Do staff know how to interact with a patient with SCI (e.g., don't touch equipment unless given permission to, how/where to park a wheelchair)
- Are appointment slots long enough to allow issues to be dealt with thoroughly?
- Is there an examination table that can be adjusted for height and/or a ceiling lift?
- Is the washroom large enough to accommodate someone in a wheelchair or scooter? Have grab bars? An alarm button for assistance if required?

As of January 1st, 2012 all Ontario medical offices have to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Other useful resources:

lezioni, L.I. & O'Day, B.L. (2006). *More than ramps: A guide to improving health care quality and access for people with disabilities*. Toronto: Oxford University Press. (esp. Appendix 3)

Jones, K.E. & Tamari, I.E. (1997). [Making our offices universally accessible: Guidelines for physicians](#). *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 156(5), 647-656.