

## Accessibility Plan 2023 - 2028

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this plan is to increase access to services and minimize barriers to participation for people with disabilities within St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care. The goal of health equity and inclusion is driven by the 2005 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

This act communicates principles in inclusion and minimum standards organizations must comply with. AODA is intended to improve opportunities for people with disabilities and to provide for their involvement in the identification, removal and prevention of barriers to their full participation in the life of the province. These legislative requirements will advance the province towards its goal of becoming fully accessible by 2025.

In fulfilling our mission and in alignment with our values of dignity, respect, service, justice, responsibility and enquiry, St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care is committed to continuously make improvements in areas such as policies, programs and practices including services for residents and their families, staff, healthcare professionals, volunteers and members of the community with disabilities along with the provision of quality services to all.

### SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

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#### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*strives to meet the needs of its employees and customers with disabilities and is working hard to remove and prevent barriers to accessibility.*

#### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*is committed to fulfilling our requirements under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This accessibility plan outlines the steps*

*we are taking to meet those requirements and to improve opportunities for people with disabilities.*

*Our plan shows how we play a role in making Ontario an accessible province for all Ontarians.*

*The plan is reviewed and updated at least every 5 years.*

*We train every staff member as soon as practicable on AODA / Accessibility policies after being hired and provide training in respect of any changes to the policies.*

*We maintain records of the training provided including dates on which the training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.*

## **Aim**

This plan summarizes the measures that the Villa has taken between 2018 and 2023 and the measures to be taken from 2023 - 2028 to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities who live, work in or visit St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care, including residents and their family members, staff, health care practitioners, volunteers and members of the community.

## **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care – History:**

The cornerstone of our mission was established in 1879 when founders and pioneers of Canada's health care system, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Hamilton opened the House of Providence to care for the elderly and disadvantaged.

Reverend Father John McNulty aspired to create a welcoming, caring home for seniors. He had his eye on *Coleman's Castle*, a regal, stately home located in the heart of Dundas. Built by wealthy businessman, the late James Coleman, the property was surrounded by a beautiful ravine and lots of land. The manor house towered over all other buildings in the area.

With only \$8,000 in his pocket, Father McNulty started a tradition that would last for 92 years. That year, the inaugural *House of Providence Picnic* raised the additional \$2,000 he needed and on August 22, 1879, Father McNulty purchased the home for a cool \$10,000 and gifted the House of Providence

to the Sisters of St. Joseph's of Hamilton. The House of Providence Picnic became the highlight of the Dundas Social season, and attracted a crowd of thousands every year.

The Sisters not only ran House of Providence for the elderly but also took in orphan children and nursed those who suffered from a variety of illnesses. It quickly became a resource for the entire community. The Sisters were devoted to serving all those in need, people of all faiths. Their compassion and care were met with great generosity from citizens and civic leaders from Dundas and the surrounding areas.

When the original building was practically destroyed in a fire in 1900, the community rallied together and reconstructed the House of Providence in just one year. 1970 marked a new age for the House of Providence, with the construction of a new and modern building renamed St. Joseph's Villa. The former House of Providence was demolished only a year later after a second fire left it beyond repair.

St. Joseph's Villa transformed with the construction of two new additions of the Margaret and Charles Juravinski and Neil and Anne McArthur Family wings. Orchid Garden, a 12-bed unit was opened in January 2015, expanding the Villa to our current home with 390 long-term care beds. The St. John Vianney Residence was built in 2016 to provide a home for eight retired priests.

The Villa has expanded our campus of care to include a 10-bed hospice that opened in 2021.

The Legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph continues to inspire our service and care for this community. "It is an honour to serve the sick."

### **Mission:**

*Living the Legacy – Compassionate Care. Faith. Discovery.*

### **Vision:**

*On behalf of the individuals and families we are privileged to serve, we will:*

- *Deliver an integrated high-quality care experience,*
- *Pursue and share knowledge,*
- *Respect our rich diversity,*

- *Always remaining faithful to our Roman Catholic values and traditions.*

### **Values:**

*We commit ourselves to demonstrate in all that we undertake, the vision and values that inspired our Founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph.*

*These are:*

- *Dignity*
- *Respect*
- *Service*
- *Justice*
- *Responsibility*
- *Enquiry*

## **SECTION 2: Past Achievements to Remove and Prevent Barriers**

### **Methods used to identify Barriers on the St Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

Barriers identified by resident, employees, member of the public can provide such feedback through, reception, Residents' Council, Family Council via telephone, email, mail of fax or in person. Currently compliment/concerns are welcomed to ensure that we are continuously improving our process and service in a manner which is equitable and accessible for all.

**Accessibility barriers** can include any of the following types of barriers:

- *Attitudinal barriers* include negative attitudes and assumptions about persons with disabilities.
- *Systemic barriers* include policies and procedures that create barriers to full inclusion.
- *Information, communication and technology barriers* include communication formats that are not available in accessible formats (e.g., screen reader compatible, braille, plain language, etc.)
- *Built and physical barriers* include elements in the physical environment that create barriers for persons with disabilities (e.g., lack of a ramp or

elevator to access different levels, door widths that prohibit access for users of mobility devices).

St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care has completed the following accessibility initiatives from 2018 – 2023.

### Customer Service

- Methods used to identify barriers at St Joseph's Villa
  - Barriers identified by resident, employees, family members, board members and any visitor can provide feedback on accessibility (and other areas) utilizing our "Tell us how we are doing" form which is located at all entrances of the Villa and Margaret's Place Hospice including the entrances onto all resident home areas. This was developed in collaboration with residents and families.
  - We can also accept feedback verbally in which a staff member can submit the request on behalf of someone else.
  - Feedback can also be submitted through our St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care website (online form) at [www.sjv.on.ca](http://www.sjv.on.ca)
  - Feedback also received in differing committees within the home, including our Residents' Council, Family Council.
  - Compliment/concerns are welcomed to ensure that we are continuously improving our process and service in a manner which is equitable and accessible for all. Every request is reviewed and addressed within 24 hours to a maximum of 10 days. If the request/suggestion is larger in nature that will cause a delay in response/resolution a letter is sent to the person who submitted the suggestion indicating why the delay and when they should expect a response.
- Creation of new palliative care carts that are made available for the resident home areas for families whose loved one is palliative. These carts include a variety of items such as beverages and snacks.

### Physical Environment

The physical environment is a crucial component of our accessibility plan as we continue to look for ways in which we can improve the environment to ensure it is easily navigated by any persons. Some of our recent initiatives include:

- The addition of mirrors in the elevators to assist with persons to see who is coming on and off of the elevator. At times, persons in wheelchairs will

have their back towards the door (as this is the way they entered) and cannot see who is behind them when the door opens again. The mirrors assist with this and help someone to navigate safely.

- Exterior Signage – with resident feedback and collaboration, it was suggested that the exterior signage required an update. Together, it was determined what was needed from an accessibility standpoint including the addition of speedbumps, speed signs and no parking signs.
- We are fortunate to have had a donor to allow us to replace current doors with an automatic door option. This has definitely assisted persons to navigate throughout the building and especially onto the resident home areas.
- Smoking Areas – we have designed new smoking areas to encourage residents, staff and visitors to smoke away from the entrance doors. These new spaces, have a nice aesthetic appeal and are protected from precipitation as it has a roof and a side (or two) covered. These have been approved by Public Health Smoking bylaw teams.
- Family Initiated Work Order System where family members and residents can submit a workorder if something is broken and / or needs repair.

## Information, Communication & Attitudinal

It is critical to convey important information to all persons who are affiliated with the Villa (i.e. residents, families, staff, volunteers, visitors), we have implemented:

- “In the Loop” is a weekly communication shared with everyone updating on current outbreak status, new information, programs, resources, etc that persons need to be aware of. This is sent via email and posted throughout the Villa (i.e. elevators).
- Weekly Friday Flyer – is a staff-based communication that is sent out weekly that provides important information to staff that relates to their jobs (i.e. policy updates, etc). This is shared to all email users and posted on program/staff areas.
- Three “*In Touch Link*” screens have been strategically placed in the Villa in order to maximize exposure to residents, families, visitors and staff. (1 at the Juravinski wing entrance, 1 at the Main entrance at the cafe seating area and the 3rd on Ground floor at the McArthur entrance.)
- Message for registered staff is sent electronically via Point Click Care system.

- At General orientation all new employees receive training about AODA legislation requirements.
- Annual mandatory education for all staff covering all important aspects of AODA legislation and tips to communicate with those with varying disabilities.
- Involvement in Research Studies that can improve communication between hospitals and LTC homes. The Villa was part of this study from the birth of the project called Amplifi and now this is used province wide.
- Watsons Communication systems – is an online device that can receive demands from the user utilizing verbal commands. This was trialed in our LTC facility to ensure effectiveness in a health care setting and now used in Margaret’s Place Hospice.
- GPA training allows us to utilize approaches when dealing with residents and/or visitors that are demonstrating aggressive behaviours.
- Behavioural Supports Ontario (BSO) was a piloted program at the Villa and is now a Province wide program led by Villa staff.
- Started an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDI) with resident and family involvement. Different initiatives are rolled out throughout the year.

## Architectural

- Air Cooling System - As per the Fixing Long-Term Care Homes Act and Regulations, 2021, Section 271, St. Joseph’s Villa Campus of Care discloses that all Long-Term Care resident rooms have air conditioning. St. Joseph’s Villa Campus of Care has recently completed a Chiller project through generous ICIP (federal/provincial) funding, as well as utilized provincial Infection Prevention and Control and Minor Capital allocations to enhance aging existing air conditioning infrastructure, including the replacement of several system compressors and transition from window units in older building areas to permanent ductless air conditioning systems. The Villa’s building automation system tracks all building temperatures in common areas, and a schedule is in place to check resident room temperatures in addition to this. In the event that any area reaches a temperature of 26 degrees Celsius, this is reported immediately to the Manager of Maintenance and Engineering and the Chief Operating Officer for immediate actions.
- Roofing Project – this is a phased approach in upgrading asphalt on the rooftops.

- Sprinkler System – as per fire code regulations, the Villa has installed/upgraded an internal sprinkler system.

## Employment

We have a non-discriminatory perspective during the interview / onboarding process and throughout a person's time within our organization. If a staff member discloses that a modification is required, a form is filled out independently or with support from our Human Resources team. This form provides pertinent information to Villa management on what accommodation is required to support the staff member and the work that they have been assigned to do. The Villa ensures that they can accommodate the request to the best of their ability within the resources that are available. In addition to creating a process to support accessible employment for people with disabilities, a plan to provide workplace emergency response information to employees with a disability is also undertaken.

## Transportation

When a resident requires accessible transportation, the staff at SJV, along with family members can help to make arrangements with an external service provider to complete the transportation i.e., Patient Transfer, Darts and wheel chair taxis. The HSR has bus service near 2 entrances to the Villa and these buses are wheelchair accessible.

## SECTION 3: Strategies and Actions

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St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care plans to accomplish the following to meet the requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and to remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities:

### Customer Service

#### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*is committed to providing accessible customer service to people with disabilities. This means that we will provide goods, services and facilities to people with disabilities with the same high quality and timeliness of others.*



*Here are some of the initiatives that we are planning to initiate in order to comply to the Customer Service Standard:*

- Customer service training with Thrive group was offered to all management and now will be launched with all front-line staff.
- EDI initiatives have been added to our Strategic Plan and goal is to initiate one initiative every quarter. A focus on EDI education will be added to the 2024-25 Quality Improvement Plan.
- The Villa participated in the GERAS fracture prevention student in 2023, and now moving forward we will continue to utilize their prescribing chart to prevent future fractures amongst our population. We can utilize the frailty assessment scores during transitions of care.
- Exploring the option of training a few staff members to lead dance with senior groups for brain health and mobilization.

## **Physical Environment**

### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*is committed to providing an accessible physical environment to people with disabilities. This means that we will continue to look for ways in which we can improve our environment, some of the initiatives that we are planning to initiate include:*

- To explore new maintenance work order online tool that can track all work orders to ensure barriers are addressed in a timely manner and broken equipment is repaired
- Will be involved in a Research Project to Enhance Our Understanding of How the Physical Environment Impacts Long-Term Care Resident Quality of Life especially for those living with Dementia.
- Renovating shower rooms with shower cabinets to prevent water damage on the home areas
- Continue to explore bariatric opportunities which will consequently lead to some renovations/adaptations required

## Information, Communication & Attitudinal

### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*is committed to providing excellent communication for everyone. This means that we will continue to look for ways in which we can improve our communication by:*

- To ensure communications utilize 16 pt. font.
- Review our pamphlets to ensure plain language is used, symbols and pictures are used to get our message across.
- Make information available in other formats such as pictograms.
- Arrange seating in meetings/recreational programming allowing those with hearing impairments to sit close to facilitator to read lips or use an amplification device as appropriate.
- When asking for feedback such as with annual satisfaction surveys, ensure there are a variety of ways to collect the information.
- Lack of understanding of roles – starting “Did you know” with all departments that will be shared with all.
- Staff training computers available for staff to use to complete mandatory trainings and / or workshops.

## Architectural

### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*is committed to improving the accessibility in all new areas / renovations on the St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care. Initiatives such as:*

- Accessibility requirements will be incorporated into the design and renovation of current or future renovations/builds.

## Employment

### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*is committed to providing an accessible work environment with hopes of initiating:*

- Welcoming job applications in a number of ways (not online only).
- Continue to work with employees and find out ways that we can accommodate them if and when needed this will be done by talking with the staff member regarding specific needs
- Working towards the Ministry initiated 4 hours of resident care – will work to improve staffing levels to ensure that the Villa reaches this expectation by 2025.
- Continue to embed an equity analysis into all recruitment processes to remove any unintended accessibility barriers.
- Continue the practice of preparing individualized accommodation and emergency response plans for Villa employees with disabilities.
- Foster a culture of employee engagement and inclusion through analysis of the Employee Engagement Survey and the development of action plans in partnership with the EDI Committee.
- To organize opportunities where the leadership team can participate in the Woodland Culture Centre training/education.
- The Villa strives to take part in research opportunities, including coping and resiliency in healthcare workers in collaboration with St. Joseph's Health System.

## Transportation

### **St. Joseph's Villa Campus of Care**

*is committed to providing an accessible physical environment to people with disabilities. This means that we will continue to look for ways in which we can improve our environment, some of the initiatives that we are planning to initiate include:*

- To work on volunteer recruitment to assist residents to and from special events

## **SECTION 4: Conclusion**

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This accessibility plan identifies both the successes and achievements that have taken place over the past few years. It also shares a plan of action that will help the Villa to continue to break down barriers effectively and in a timely manner. This action plan includes a general plan of what we will strive for, knowing that we will continuously add to this plan as feedback is received.

### **For more information**

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For more information on this accessibility plan, please contact:

Deborah Fernandes, Administrator  
905-627-3541 x2224 or email [dfernandes@sjv.on.ca](mailto:dfernandes@sjv.on.ca)

Our accessibility plan is publicly posted at [www.sjv.on.ca](http://www.sjv.on.ca)