



Community Living Durham North

Accessibility Work Plan

Attitudinal Barriers

Our core business is, and has always been, to support people with intellectual disabilities to be valued, included, and active members of their community. This ongoing commitment has begun to remove those attitudinal barriers. However, early on there was unrest when we opened a new group home, and sometimes we were met with community opposition; today that kind of resistance is far less common.

Our role in our local communities has earned us a place on the Accessibility Advisory Committees of both the Uxbridge and Scugog Townships.

Our plans for 2024:

- We will ensure that a manager or director continues to represent CLDN on the above-mentioned advisory committees.
- We have recently become aware of a problem not previously recognized as such. An increasing number of new hires use English as a second language, and some speak with an accent. Supported people, who may already be prone to erecting barriers based on race or ethnicity, are voicing their dissatisfaction. They are the customers in this scenario, but they are not “right,” and we need to find a way to effectively support our employees. We will tackle this problem in 2024 and will begin by finding or creating some plain language EDI training for supported people.

The above priorities continued into our 2025 work plan.

Environmental Barriers

In March of 2023 we added a Fragrances protocol to our Employee Health and Safety policy. We worked with our Joint Health and Safety Committee on this innovation. The policy is non-coercive; most of our employees work in group homes, and we cannot forbid perfume to the people who live in those homes.

In 2022 and 2023 we spent some \$70,000 combatting mold issues at 6 different group homes. These problems originate with water seepage caused by leaky roofs, leaky pipes or inadequate window wells, of which a number were repaired or replaced in 2022 and 2023.

Our plans for 2024:

- We will continue to address water damage and mold issues as problems are diagnosed. Such problems do not go away; they only get worse.
- Noise can be a serious problem in some group homes because of a supported person's mental health or the behavioural issues they are displaying. In 2024 we will continue to invest in third party behavioural expertise.
- One person is particularly resistant to these therapeutic approaches and it has been decided that he would do better in a one-person apartment. For financial/logistical reasons, this means a basement or 2-car garage renovated to create suitable bachelor quarters. No obvious, unrenovated spaces present themselves, but in 2024 we will look for opportunities.

The first priority continued into our 2025 work plan. The second priority also continued, with ongoing investment in third-party behavioural services and the implementation of an excessive noise protocol in required settings in April 2025.

Architectural or Physical Barriers

In 2022 and 2023 we spent approximately \$233,000 addressing accessibility issues in eight different program sites, including:

- An accessible ramp at day program site
- A ramp at group home that required regrading and re-paving of driveway
- Reconfigured front entrance at group home
- Widening of doorways at two different group homes
- Removal of carpet and installation of laminate at group home
- Renovation of washrooms at five different group homes

Our plans for 2024:

- Group Home A requires an accessible wheelchair van, tracking in the bathroom, and a new reinforced front door.
- Group Home B requires a walkway extending from the driveway across the front and side of the home and joining the ramp in the back yard. The walkway will need a double handrail. A gazebo in backyard required to make backyard accessible (no shade).

- Group Home C requires gazebo in the backyard to make backyard accessible (no shade); also, install retractable awning on the back deck.
- Group Home D needs to be renovated and made more accessible; (remove wall between kitchen and living room).
- Group Home E has an automatic opener on its accessible front door which needs to be fixed or replaced. It needs an accessible outdoor space on the property with a gazebo. One bathroom needs to be renovated to include an “Arjo” bathtub. <https://www.arjo.com/en-ca/products/hygiene/bath-systems/>
- Group Home F requires a renovated main bathroom that accommodates a Jacuzzi tub, walk-in shower, accessible toilet and bidet. It also requires a ramp to the front door, ceiling tracking in certain bedrooms, a ramp off back deck, an accessible front door, and sound proofing between up and downstairs.
- Group Home G requires a bathroom reno and installation of “Arjo” tub.
- Group Home H requires a ramp at the back deck and a new wheelchair van.
- Group Home I requires a kitchen renovation (a more open concept to allow safe access to more than one person). Also, an improved back up system that provides more battery back up in the event of power outages.
- Group Home J requires a ramp from door to driveway, and an extension of driveway to facilitate easier parking and manoeuvring of people with accessibility issues.
- Group Home K requires a bathroom renovation to accommodate a bathtub more accessible for supported people and staff. An outdoor patio space for the lower apartment would allow people to enjoy their outdoors and improved privacy.

In 2025 the following was completed:

Group Home A received an accessible wheelchair van as well as a new reinforced front door. Group Home B had extensive work completed to ensure the outside space was accessible from all entry points. Group Home C received a retractable awning on the back deck. Group Home D had their kitchen renovated. Group Home E had necessary repairs complete to their automatic front door opener.

Additionally, Group Home G had a bathroom renovation completed. Group Home H received a new wheelchair van. Group Home J had a ramp installed from the front door entrance to the driveway. Group Home K had a renovation completed to their bathroom to accommodate the homes accessibility needs.

Employment Barriers

Community Living Durham North is an inclusive workplace, and we value contributions from all employees.

Our job postings state that upon request accommodations will be offered to an applicant during the hiring process.

All current employees and volunteers have completed, or are in the process of completing, AODA Accessibility training and this training is now assigned to all new hires and volunteers as part of their orientation package.

The Human Resources Department offers modifications to duties and schedules to assist employees to remain in the workplace.

Our Plans for 2024

- HR will add this statement to the employment page on our website: “Upon request CLDN will accommodate the needs of people with disabilities in our hiring process.”
- When our HR department is setting up interviews, we will inquire if any accommodations are necessary.
- HR will provide workplace information in a more accessible format should an employee request it.

The first priority was completed, and the other priorities continue to be implemented.

Communication Barriers

Helping people who have a Developmental Disability to communicate more effectively is part of our day-to-day work. Individualized strategies are a common feature in written Personal Support Plans.

We also have policy statements to the effect that we will offer accessible formats, and communication supports to employees, when called upon, and that we are open to receiving feedback from the public in person, electronically, by traditional mail, or over the phone.

The above continued into our 2025 work plan.